# TEA Tidbits--October 2, 2020

Dear TEA members,

## Thompson SD quarantine list

TSD has begun maintaining a [list of schools and areas that are under quarantine.](https://www.thompsonschools.org/page/22565?link_id=0&can_id=047b18ab66ee4249651eba0de142b82a&source=email-tea-tidbits-for-today-85&email_referrer=&email_subject=tea-tidbits-for-today) Each quarantine should be accompanied by a notification to staff and the school community. I hope you find this useful.

## Mask noncompliance

Every family has signed an "in-person learning acknowledgment" detailing the requirements for safely returning to school, and understanding that failure to comply can result in disciplinary action. Having said that, please work to understand the root causes of non-compliance for each student, recognizing that not all refusals are about the mask (especially at the early elementary level), and visit with your principal regarding students who are noncompliant to develop a plan. If you need support with a habitually noncompliant student, please contact your AR to develop a plan.

## CEA Election Recommendations

The Colorado Education Association has made the following recommendations on statewide ballot initiatives. As always, these are recommendations based on how the measures relate to public education, not how they might affect other issues that you might care about. Please vote your conscience.

Prop 118 (Paid family leave): Yes. This will help our families and our members across the state by providing paid leave for parents.

Prop EE (taxing vaping products): Yes. The proceeds will help fund early childhood education.

Amendment B (repeal Gallagher Amendment): Yes. This will stabilize our property tax receipts, which is good for school districts and reduce the amount the state will need to backfill, and give local governments flexibility to redistribute the tax burden between residential and commercial property taxes.

Prop 114 (gray wolves reintroduction), Prop 115 (late-term abortion ban), Amendment 77 (gaming) and Amendment C (Bingo employees): No position. These measures fall outside of CEA's areas of advocacy, and so no position was taken. Vote your conscience.

Props 116 and 117: No. These issues, if passed, would negatively impact education funding for decades to come.

Amendment 76 (change from "every citizen can vote" to "only a citizen can vote"): No. Why? CEA doesn't have any problem with the language on its face, but one of the unintended side effects of the language change is to disenfranchise our high school seniors. Currently,  students who will be 18 by the time of the general election can vote in the primary when they're 17; with the new language, 17 year olds would not be able to vote in the primary, and thus would not have a say in who is on the ballot in November when they are 18.

## TCO update

This week, TEA, high school counselors, and high school administrators began meeting to discuss short and long term planning for TCO. Many issues were discussed, including (but not limited to) providing curriculum flexibility, staffing, eligibility, and full-time status of students. These conversations will continue.

## Hybrid learning, planning, and technology

I know there are still a lot of questions on how this model will work. TEA has spoken with Learning Services on the confusion around the expectations. Some clarifications came today, and more should be coming sooner rather than later. I encourage you to keep it simple. Teaching the students in front of you is your primary objective for the day, and you can only control what you can control. You cannot be in two places at once, nor should you try to be--do not try to teach two lessons at once.

## Spacing

There is some confusion regarding physical distancing in classrooms. From our member rights team, some clarifications. Please ask your building administrator for assistance if your classroom is not set up for maximum distancing, or if your class size makes it challenging.

1. There should be 6' between you and the first row of students.
2. Students must be facing forward.
3. There should be at least 3' of space between seated students.
4. Tape should be used to mark off shared work surfaces. (supplied by school)
5. Unused furniture can be disposed of or stored. Work with your principal to disposition any furniture that needs removed.
6. TEA is working with district leadership regarding mealtime safety, specifically surrounding eating in classrooms.
7. If any staff member needs help with safety in the classroom, they should go to the principal, then the level director, to get the safety issue managed.
8. Todd Piccone and his staff have said they will come look at any classroom. If, after working with your principal, you still have concerns, invite Todd and crew (copy your principal) to your classroom.

This is one of the most stressful periods in history to be an educator, a parent, a student, or really, a human being. The pandemic affects us all, and affects us all differently--none of us live in isolation. I encourage you to continue to support each other as colleagues, to work together to find solutions, and to avoid turning on one another and pointing fingers. This situation has caused much anger and frustration, and we understand and hear you. This Association has worked tirelessly over the last six months to create the safest possible environment for our students and staff, and will continue to do so. All re-start plans have trade-offs, and none of them are perfect--you have my word we will continue to work and speak on your behalf.

**Solidarity!**

Sincerely,

## https://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/51019/c/147/images/Andy%20professional%20pic.jpg

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