

On January 28th, 2021, the Representative Assembly of TABCO passed the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION: Affirming Local Decision-Making to Protect Community, School, and Member Safety

WHEREAS: On January 21st, Governor Hogan and State Superintendent Salmon announced significant revisions to MSDE’s Maryland School Reopening Guidance, now stating that “there is very little evidence that school reopening is a main driver of community Covid-19 spread” (p.2).

AND WHEREAS: This claim misrepresents the current scientific consensus on the role that schools play in community spread of Covid-19 and negligently promises safety during a worsening crisis.

AND WHEREAS: The guidance document presents a bevy of inaccurate, outdated, or misleading information analyzing the risk of in-person learning against the cost of remote instruction.

AND WHEREAS: The modified Maryland School Reopening Guidance document no longer articulates the critical role of local health departments and Boards of Education in accounting for the role of community spread in determining how to safely resume in-person instruction.

AND WHEREAS: During the press conference announcing this policy change, Governor Hogan referenced retaliatory action against educators in other states and stated that his office and MSDE would use “every legal avenue at [their] disposal” to ensure that Local Education Agencies immediately begin returning to in-person instruction.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the TABCO Representative Assembly rejects the incomplete, slanted analysis of safety promulgated by the Maryland School Reopening Guidance January 2021 Update.

AND BE IT RESOLVED: That the TABCO Representative Assembly condemns the suggestion that MSDE or the Governor’s Office are empowered to take retaliatory action against any Local Education Agencies, County health departments, or educators who soundly determine that it is unsafe to resume in-person activities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That TABCO shall adopt the policy of this resolution and the TABCO President shall transmit this policy to members, Baltimore County Public Schools, and the media in the fashion that she sees fit.

Additionally, the TABCO Representative Assembly passed the following Unifying Statement:

Our school communities are composed of interconnected, interdependent members: students, families, and educators. Therefore, the legitimate health and safety concerns which have led to students and families being provided a choice in returning must also be acknowledged as

legitimate for educators. We are not separate from one another. Through the lens of equity, and in consideration of the physical and social-emotional health of our educators, the same range of options must be given to these vital members of the school community.

The metrics and mitigation strategies in “Safety is Our True North” have been our baseline and guiding document, following the science. We should not be reopening based on an arbitrary date. Educators must have the opportunity to be fully vaccinated before returning. Educators must have the option to return to classrooms/worksites or to remain instructing virtually as long as BCPS families have that choice.