



Rockwood National Education Association
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September 23, 2020

To the Directors of the Rockwood Board of Education and Dr. Mark Miles:

The Rockwood National Education Association (RNEA) Officers and Executive Board Directors would like to thank you for your leadership during these unprecedented times. You are tasked with making difficult decisions pertaining to the academic growth of over 20,000 young people, and the health and safety of students and employees alike.

As we plan for many of our students to return to in-person learning and how best to provide quality education for both *At School* and *At Home* learners, we know our students deserve teachers who can be dedicated to the unique needs of students in each setting. As such, the Rockwood National Education Association is formally asking the Rockwood School District to prioritize the exploration of solutions to improve the proposed instructional model and commit to a Return to Learn plan which allows us to meet the needs of all our learners, be they *At Home* or *At School*. Both groups are deserving of a high quality Rockwood education. Our teachers continually go above and beyond for our students; however, as proposed, if the teacher's attention is divided, the logistics make it impossible to invest fully in either, and the reality is that neither group of students will receive the quality education our patrons have come to expect.

Our families have communicated the desire for regular interaction and direct instruction with the teacher as a best practice during remote learning. With the proposed Return to Learn plan, students who select the *At Home* platform may receive fewer synchronous opportunities. Students learning at home will have limited interaction with their teacher and classmates. K-2 students who already struggle with the technology and who are more dependent on adults will need even more attention from their caregivers during the school day, and we know this presents a challenge for our families. When able to attend a "live" session, the teacher's attention will be divided between the two sets of learners, and our *At Home* students will be more "viewers" of a lesson than active participants as they are currently. With teachers dividing their time between *At School* learners and *At Home* learners, both groups will receive less direct instruction. Instruction grounded in best, research-based practices is the goal of all Rockwood teachers, but this is unachievable in the current plan as teachers cannot accommodate the needs of all learners in two separate learning platforms with the current structures.

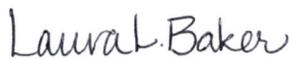
Rockwood curriculum and technology departments tested how two separate learning platforms, "dual instruction", might work and found instructional concerns with our proposed Return to Learn plan. The time it took for a teacher to present the lesson to both *At Home* and *At School* learners was significantly greater; therefore, if we move forward with the proposed Return to Learn plan, our pacing must be altered, paring down the richness and differentiated nature of

our Rockwood curriculum, resulting in many students, those who have readiness to move through the curriculum, and those who need additional activities to fully learn a concept or skill (both *At Home* or *At School*), potentially becoming frustrated and disengaged.

RNEA values transparency. We believe our parents deserve to understand the impact of the proposed Return to Learn instructional plan. The reality of this model is that it neglects the virtual learner when the teacher is instructing the in-person students and in-person learners are neglected when the teacher is focused on at home learners. Our *At Home* students should have a learning structure that more closely mimics, and allows us to enhance, the direct instruction virtual format we are currently providing. Our *At School* students should have a learning structure that is similar to the dynamic educational environment that is a hallmark of a Rockwood education. We believe it is our responsibility to provide personalized attention to both groups of learners.

Our teachers are asking for Rockwood leadership to do “whatever it takes” for our students to reach their potential. We ask for your commitment in finding a solution that prioritizes staffing for *At Home* AND *At School* instruction, so we can meet the unique needs of our students in both settings. We believe our community will support such a plan, which does not compromise the high quality Rockwood educational experience our patrons appreciate and expect.

Respectfully submitted,
Rockwood National Education Association Executive Board



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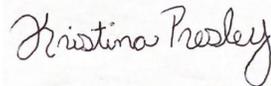
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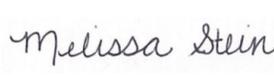
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