



# WISEBURN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Blake Silvers, Ed.D., Superintendent**

Board of Trustees

Neil Goldman, President • Nelson Martinez, Vice President/Clerk  
Roger Bañuelos, Member • JoAnne Kaneda, Member • Israel Mora, Member

March 16, 2021

Dear Dr. Matthew Wunder and the Da Vinci Schools Board of Trustees,

We submit this letter publicly to you in the interest of transparency and urgency on behalf of our shared community. As elected members for the Wiseburn Unified School District, we have an obligation to listen to our community members and to be diligent about transparency of purpose and organizational processes. We are elected as the voice of our community to carry out our fiduciary responsibilities. For that reason, we are writing to you today to amplify the concerns of our community and to request action that responds to and rectifies these concerns.

To date, the Wiseburn Unified School District Board of Trustees have received numerous communications regarding the lack of a comprehensible plan for the return of students to our high schools. Last Wednesday, March 10, at the Da Vinci Schools Board Meeting, staff shared a plan that was perfunctory, nebulous, and ineffective as it relates to how DV Schools will bring high school students back this year. After correspondence from the community to the WUSD Board of Trustees and the DV Schools Board of Trustees, DV Schools, and Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Wunder released another communication dated March 12, 2021. The letter served as a *Phase II Reopening Update* that provided no further clarification as to the plans DV Schools have created to bring students back as we reach the Red Tier in the Blueprint for A Safer Economy. As an organization that serves the Wiseburn community, the March 12, 2021 correspondence further frustrated families as there was no alteration, no promise of revisiting a reopening plan, and no acknowledgement of the many concerns shared by community members. The situation has become inflamed due to the lack of transparency, the lack of community engagement, and the apparent lack of leadership within the DV Schools.

We recognize the difficulty of reopening amid the pandemic and know that public health guidance has changed throughout the past year. However, these complex times require educational leadership that challenges all stakeholders to stand in solidarity for what is in the best interest of the mental, physical, academic, and social-emotional well-being of our students. In fact, DV Schools sent out a survey to capture the temperature of students and families related to their desires to return. It was abundantly clear in the survey and in recent correspondence shared with both Boards and executive leadership teams that families want their students to come back with safety measures in place, as also recommended by federal, state, and local health officials. Thus, it seems disingenuous that survey results and community feedback would be given such little attention. To date, many of the emails and letters that have been sent to DV Schools have not been addressed. We expect, at the very least, we owe it to our community to be responsive to their feedback and requests for information.

It leaves the Wiseburn Unified School District Board in a very challenging position as the authorizer and oversight agency for DV Schools. You serve our community students as their only high school option in WUSD. For that reason, we request and/or commit to the following:

- That the DV Schools leadership team immediately begin the process of planning for an extensive return to school for all desiring students at the three high schools – DV Science, DV Communications, and DV Design. This request is underscored by the fact that we are in the Red Tier and many businesses, including indoor dining, movie theaters, gyms, etc. are open as depicted by this [link](#).
- That the DV Schools leadership team present a comprehensive plan for reopening schools to the Wiseburn USD Board of Trustees at a Special Board Meeting on March 23, 2021.
- That the DV Schools leadership team communicate with the community as to how the plan will be implemented and how it will work in serving students’ instruction at school.
- That DV Schools having provided access to vaccines for all employees require teachers to return for in-person instruction.

While we sincerely respect the work that DV Schools has done for many years in Wiseburn, we are at a tipping point. **The organization was born out of the Wiseburn Unified School District for the sole purpose of serving our students grades 9-12.** Through their recent actions, the DV Schools team appears to have deviated from this purpose. WUSD is steadfast in holding the team accountable for the observed lack of preparation and transparency that is owed to our community. With decisive action as outlined above and by following the recommendations of all public health officials, DV Schools can begin to rectify their oversight, to bring students back for in-person learning, and to heal the divisions between DV Schools and our community.

Sincerely,

Wiseburn Unified School District Board of Trustees

Dr. Neil Goldman  
Mr. Nelson Martinez  
Mrs. JoAnne Kaneda  
Mr. Roger Bañuelos  
Mr. Israel Mora