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**Re: COVID, DL, etc**

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**Johnna Gonzalez** <johnnasimpson@gmail.com>  
To: "Chiappetta, Jeremy" <jchiappetta@blackstonevalleyprep.org>  
Cc: Beth Dowd <bdowd@blackstonevalleyprep.org>

Wed, Nov 18, 2020 at 9:36 PM

Thanks Jeremy.

Hi Beth! Hope you're well! Here's what I'd like to share with the board:

Dear Board Members,

My name is Johnna Gonzalez and I'm a parent of two ES2 scholars - a kindergartner and a 3rd grader. Firstly, I'm incredibly grateful to the board, BVP leadership, and our wonderful teachers for your transparency and effort during COVID. I know you've had to make impossible decisions with inadequate choices, all knowing you won't make everyone happy. As you vote to determine if BVP should continue to offer partial in-person learning or move to distance, I imagine you'll weigh several factors. I'll leave the potential health risks to medical experts, and the staffing/logistical challenges to Jeremy and team, but would like to share my experience with in-person learning during COVID.

I've seen some speculation about the quality of in-person learning during COVID and questions about if it's *really* much more effective than distance learning. I worried about this myself when considering our options at the start of the year. I want to be clear - even with the COVID restrictions, my children are having a wonderful experience in person. Both kids adore their teachers, are thriving socially, and are bursting with enthusiasm to go to school each day. My 3rd grader's writing ability has improved significantly, and my kindergartner is learning to read.

By comparison, distance learning is incredibly stressful, particularly for my kindergartner. There's little joy in kindergarten over zoom. My five year old does not have the attention span to sit in front of a computer for more than a few minutes and requires 1:1 support from a parent to stay even partially engaged. Even in our incredibly privileged situation of having two parents working full time from home, juggling his learning and our work responsibilities is unsustainable. This setup will never be as effective as an in-person teacher. I can't imagine how difficult this must be for parents and children in more challenging situations. I also recognize that for some families, distance learning is working beautifully.

I understand that even as you recognize the benefits of in-person instruction, you may still move BVP to a more restrictive plan due to health risks or staffing issues. I'd ask that you consider keeping the school's youngest and most vulnerable scholars in school as long as possible.

Many thanks,  
Johnna Gonzalez

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