



**KRISTI KRISTY**

**Knox County Board of Education, District 9**

September 7, 2021

Governor Bill Lee  
State Capitol, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
600 Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd.  
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

Thank you for your leadership during this challenging time. We recognize the seriousness of COVID-19 and its negative impacts across our community and state, and perhaps no one has been more affected than our children.

Knox County Schools recognizes that in-person learning is best for our students. District leadership and our Board have fought hard to keep the doors to our schools open for the past 18 months. While we understand that some large districts have not stressed in person learning, Knox County is the opposite. We hope your Department will make clear to every parent, teacher and school district the metrics you plan to use to grant waivers for schools to move to virtual. Knox County had a good system in place last year which gave us the flexibility to move individual schools to virtual when needed. Our students were in school. Instead of a one-off waiver program, you should look to Knox County Schools as a model and allow Districts the flexibility they need to have another successful school year.

Unfortunately, we had to move two of our high schools, Austin-East Magnet High School and Central High School, to virtual learning starting today. While we are appreciative the State is allowing the move to temporary remote instruction, we are concerned that prohibiting all extra-curricular activities further compounds the negative impacts on our students.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is optional, healthy, and keeps our students off the streets and involved in school. With this month being National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, we are concerned that restricting these opportunities will adversely affect our students' mental and physical well-being.

Respectfully, we are requesting that you re-consider prohibiting extra-curricular activities during periods of remote instruction or allow districts to make such decisions based on the situation in our community. Due to the time sensitive nature of this request, we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Knox County Board of Education Members  
Kristi Kristy, District 9  
Evetty Satterfield, District 1  
Jennifer Owen, District 2  
Daniel Watson, District 3  
Virginia Babb, District 4  
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