

Dear LPSD Covid Council and Lake and Peninsula School Board,

I am writing on behalf of the LSAC at Tanalian School. We would like to respectfully request that you, once again, consider our wish to be returned to our site-specific Smart Start Plan (SSP) while operating in the Green Zone.

We understand your continued goal to keep our communities and district as healthy as possible in these unprecedented times. We also understand one of your main goals in guiding our district during Covid-19 issues has been to honor and respect the local wishes of every local village and keep policies as in line with village wishes as possible. We appreciate and greatly respect both these goals and guiding convictions, and in light of them we ask that you extend that principle to us and let us return to our SSP, as we were in the fall of 2020.

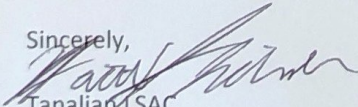
As we have watched and researched, we see that the State of Alaska and the Country at large have been trending down in the number of Covid-19 cases. The State of Alaska, according to statista.com who gets their reports directly from state and county governments, is the 46<sup>th</sup> lowest in the nation for number of Covid cases, and 48<sup>th</sup> lowest number of Covid deaths compared to all fifty States to date. Our district has no current Covid cases and our village has not had a case since December. In addition, the State of Alaska has opened up the option of vaccination to the entire public (over 16) so all our concerned citizens have or already had access to the Covid-19 vaccine. The CDC is now saying vaccinated at-risk people (such as teachers) can meet in small groups inside with low-risk unvaccinated people (such as students) without a mask. So, with many of our locals already vaccinated and any others able if they wish, our schools are more protected than earlier in this school year. Our state and local communities have done well to minimize the spread of Covid-19. A return to more local control seems reasonable, safe, and justified.

We are aware we only have less than 40 days left of school but we prefer to look at this as preparation for next year rather than just indefinitely staying the course. No one really knows when the pandemic will be over and we might be able to return to some semblance of normal. The precedence we set now will likely follow us into the next school year. Therefore, letting local villages make decisions as to what fits best with their needs and traditions will likely prepare us for the best start to next year and set our children up for the best academic success--our ultimate, shared goal.

Please understand that we are not requesting to disregard Covid-19 protocols and care for the health and safety of our community. For example, we have already discussed the option of wearing masks while in school except in individual classrooms when concentration and focus are most needed as a reasonable compromise. We still plan to follow District protocol and best practices for sports and travel so our students can benefit from that aspect of academic life. We are simply requesting to return to our SSP so we can make safety protocol and decisions based on our current village needs, while taking into account all Federal, State, and District mandates. Our local Covid Council is ready and able to take up the challenge of guiding us in health and safety.

Thank you for your time in these matters and your constant efforts to keep our children, our teachers, and our communities safe, healthy, and learning.

Sincerely,



Tanalian LSAC