

**JOINT RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ENDING CONTACT TRACING AND QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS
OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, Union County and Union County Public Schools are committed to protecting the health of all students and staff in the Union County Public School system and to maintaining consistently high standards of student learning and social development;

WHEREAS, the Union County community and parents have entrusted to Union County government generally, and to Union County Public Schools specifically, the provision of excellent school-based academic and social outcomes for Union County children;

WHEREAS, the data and evidence consistently and strongly support in-person learning as the best method for all students to achieve excellent academic outcomes;

WHEREAS, the data and evidence consistently and strongly demonstrate that students who are engaged in in-person learning have superior social and psychological outcomes over those students who are sporadically, suddenly, and repeatedly excluded from school due to quarantine requirements;

WHEREAS, the data and evidence consistently and strongly demonstrate that students who are sporadically, suddenly, and repeatedly excluded from school due to quarantine requirements have decreased academic performance, increased behavioral issues, and suffer emotional and psychological effects from the isolation and removal from peers;

WHEREAS, the large-scale impact of COVID-19 on millions of North Carolinians makes contact tracing and quarantine measures unduly burdensome for local public health officials and school staff, significantly detrimental to the school environment, and highly disruptive to North Carolina families, students, schools, and employers;

WHEREAS, the practice of quarantining children and excluding them from in-person student learning imposes substantial costs on employers, special burdens on parents, and is especially detrimental to single parents, legal guardians, and working parents and guardians;

WHEREAS, the practice of quarantining school staff and excluding them from in-person instruction and supervision imposes substantial costs and loss of learning due to diminished pools of available substitute teachers, instructional assistants, and building-level administrators;

WHEREAS, in light of the development and wide-spread availability of other effective measures of disease control for COVID-19, such as vaccinations and other treatments, contact tracing and quarantining have diminished in their utility as a primary and efficient mitigation measure for disease control;

WHEREAS, the presence of COVID-19 in our State and County is likely to persist well into the future without a known or defined end;

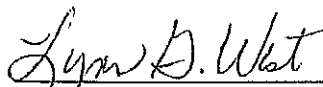
WHEREAS, the importance and continuation of isolation protocols for symptomatic individuals and those who test positive for COVID-19 or other communicable diseases are essential for the protection of healthy students, teachers, and staff;

WHEREAS, we support the work and guidance of our Public Health Director and will continue to partner with local public health officials to ensure appropriate responses if the data regarding impacts of COVID-19 on students and staff indicates a need for more intense strategic responses; and

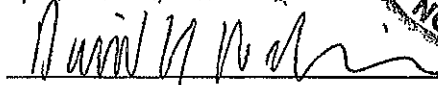
WHEREAS, Union County and UCPS will work together to safely, lawfully, and effectively seek to end quarantining of healthy, asymptomatic students and staff beginning January 19, 2022, to minimize the number of missed instructional days to achieve grade promotion.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of these and other relevant matters, the Union County Board of County Commissioners and the Union County Board of Education hereby jointly and resolutely call upon the State of North Carolina and the Department of Health and Human Services to take whatever actions are necessary to end the practice of contact tracing and quarantining of students on or before January 19, 2022.

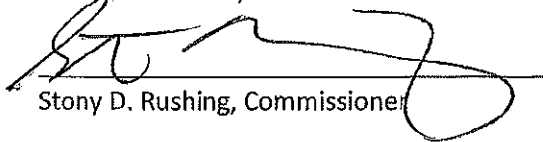
ATTEST:



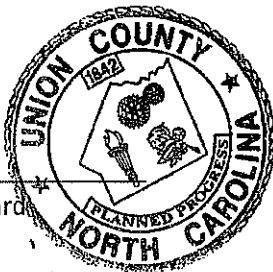
Lynn G. West, Clerk to the Board



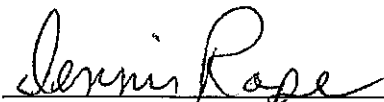
David H. Williams, Vice Chairman



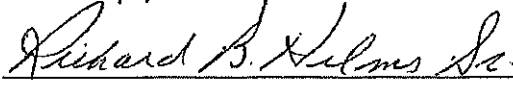
Stony D. Rushing, Commissioner



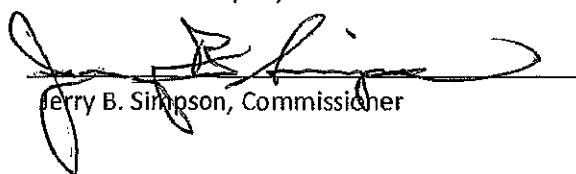
UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Dennis Rape, Chairman



Richard B. Helms, Sr., Commissioner

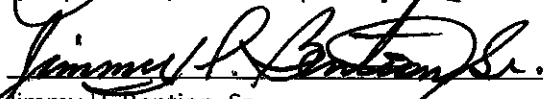


Jerry B. Simpson, Commissioner

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

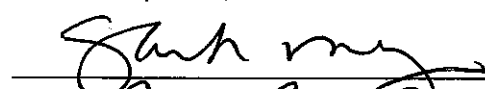

Melissa Merrell, Chairperson



Kathy Heintel, Vice Chairperson



Jimmy H. Bention, Sr.



Matt Helms

John J. Kirkpatrick, IV

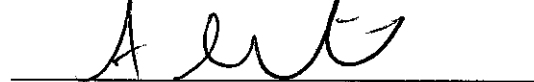

Sarah May


Joseph Morreale


Todd Price


Gary Sides

ATTEST:


Andrew G. Houlihan, Ed.D., Superintendent

Dated this the 7th day of December, 2021