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# Give teachers more say in planning the return to classrooms

**Amber McGing, Bainbridge Island**

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Everyday, we as parents put our trust in educators to help guide our most precious gifts, our children. They share in the raising of our future.

My children were born premature and started at a developmental preschool. From the moment we stepped foot in the classroom we had a team at our side. Hand in hand, this team has been supportive in our setbacks and celebrates in our victories. We know it takes a village to raise a child.

Now it's time for us to stand by these exceptional people. As we continue to struggle through this pandemic, we must remember we were given the choice of online or in person learning. Things have changed. The goalposts moved. But what about the teachers? The staff? Where is their choice?

In recent surveys they have overwhelmingly stated they are not comfortable going back into the classroom without a vaccine. We are so close. And yet the marching orders have been given. Why can we not wait? The sacrifices they continue to make for our communities are astounding. Teachers are taking medical leaves of absence due to the situation. We are losing incredible educators.

The district's decisions make it clear that teachers are replaceable. To not give teachers a choice in their own health or the health of family members without massive repercussions, that is unconscionable. How could they not feel devalued? Yes, this is hard. But we owe them a choice. I will continue to stand hand in hand with our teachers as they have always stood hand in hand with me.

*Amber McGing, Bainbridge Island*