



**Adult
School
Teachers
United**

Adult School Teachers United • PO Box 1115, El Cerrito, CA 94530-9998

For General Questions: ASTUquestions@gmail.com

*OUR MISSION: Organizing for Fair Representation and Support for
Adult Education Teachers in West Contra Costa Unified School District*

Fact Sheet Regarding Need for More Online ESL Classes for 2021-2022

Despite having polled their online classes and found that the vast majority of their adult students want to stay online for the 2021-2022 school year, English as a Second Language teachers at West Contra Costa Adult Education are losing their jobs if they won't agree to teach in person in the fall.

Adult ESL cannot go back to 100% in person for space reasons. Before the pandemic, the adult ESL program used space at many K-12 schools in addition to a small number of classrooms in adult school buildings. This year, for the safety of the children, the presence of adults on K-12 campuses is strictly limited. In order to reach the number of students it used to serve, the adult school must offer some ESL classes online for the 2021-2022 school year. However, not enough online classes are planned to meet student demand.

The majority of ESL students from last year prefer to stay online for 2021-2022. Of 207 students polled, only 12 wanted to return to in-person instruction. 190 preferred to stay online, and 5 were interested in hybrid learning.

The needs of adult school students are different from the needs of children. Adult students do not need in-person classes for their mental health. They do not need to be socialized. They do not need to be in class so others in their families can work. As adults, they are more vulnerable to COVID than children. As adults, they should have their preferences taken into account when planning services for them.

Adult students vote with their feet. There is no mandatory attendance for adults. If they don't feel safe coming to class, they won't come, and attendance will suffer.

Adult school students are traumatized by COVID. They come from communities with high infection rates, and have had family members get sick, have been sick themselves, and have lost loved ones.

Adult school teachers do want to serve students who want in-person instruction. Based on the preferences of students from last year who were polled, a small in-person program that can grow as the pandemic recedes, supported by a large online program for this year, makes sense. Students from last year, who prefer online, will make up the core of the program for this year. Students who want in-person learning are likely to come back slowly, especially with the pandemic spiraling out of control as it is now.

Adult School Teachers United seeks a better balance between online and in-person classes. Last year, all 28 ESL classes were online. This year, 17 in person classes and 11 online classes are planned. This plan creates many in person classes that may not fill. When an adult school class is too small, the class is closed, the few students lose their class, and a teacher loses their job. **A plan for 16 online and 12 in-person classes would serve the community better at this time, and would still provide plenty of opportunity for in-person instruction. This rearrangement of the class schedule would not cost any more money.**

Currently, ESL teachers who choose online teaching face harsh consequences. The teachers who were selected to teach the 11 online classes are being told they will never be able to return to their classrooms. Teachers who wanted to teach online but were not selected to teach an online class must either teach in-person or lose their jobs. At least four veteran teachers, who have been very successful with their students, stand to lose their jobs and be forced to leave the adult school.

Adult school teachers have serious reasons for wanting to stay online. They are concerned about the health of their students, their own health, and the health of their families. Some have health issues that make them more vulnerable to serious complications from COVID. Some teach children during the day and are concerned about transmitting the disease from one student population to another.

Online learning for adults protects all of us. If the state was still using tiers, Contra Costa County would be in the purple, or most restrictive, tier. We need to control community spread as much as possible. Providing adequate opportunities for adults to learn online would be part of that.

Adult School Teachers United requests that the Board of Education direct the Superintendent to direct the Principal of Adult Education to rearrange the fall schedule to provide more online ESL classes.

WCCUSD CEASE AND DESIST HIRING TEACHERS TO REPLACE ADULT ESL TEACHERS WHO ARE READY AND WILLING TO TEACH ONLINE! ALLOW ONLINE TEACHERS TO RETURN TO THEIR CLASSROOMS WHEN THE PANDEMIC RECEDES! SCHEDULE MORE ONLINE ESL CLASSES TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS!

For more information, contact us at ASTUquestions@gmail.com