

UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear UISD Board,

We hope all of you are doing well during these unprecedented times of teaching and learning. Trying to stay safe and continuing to educate students has been our number one priority. We have accomplished the task of remote teaching for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

As you might expect, the job of remote teaching is more than just looking at a screen filled with students. In most cases teachers have had to use their personal property to get the job done. This is not fair because we use our personal property and pay for our personal property for our personal business. Like you, we have family and live our lives with our families taking and sharing pictures and other correspondence on a daily basis. To direct us by mandating that we use our personal property to conduct school business infringes upon our privacy because the moment we use our personal computer or personal cell phone to conduct school business, that triggers the legal obligation for us to turnover our personal property to authorities for them to investigate whatever issues arise from our using our personal property. During these investigations, we will be ripped away from our most cherished possessions—our personal family pictures, our personal diaries, and our personal memories of our lost loved ones. Are those the conditions you want to create for us, your employees?

Like you, we have personal lives on social media. We are responsible persons and responsible employees. We know better than to mix our personal lives with our professional responsibilities. What may be totally acceptable in our personal lives can very well be questionable in our professional career. A picture of our family having a good time or a journal entry of a very difficult time could very well be the end of our career. I'm sure this dilemma of something questionable on your phone has caused you some concern. The difference, however, is that in the course of your work your personal phone is not subject to confiscation by authorities to the degree that it would be for a teacher who must make calls and send emails to students and/or parents on a daily basis. To direct us by mandating that we use our personal property to conduct school business not only infringes on our privacy, but it creates additional economic expenses by forcing us to use our personal wi-fi service. There are issues of bandwidth and internet speed when adding school-related activity to this mix, assuming we even have wi-fi service. Is this the kind of situation you want to create for us, your employees?

Continuing with the contractual changes promulgated and approved by your board action on May 13, 2020, you've directed us, your employees, to pay for lost or damaged equipment, when the current law is that a school employee doesn't not have to pay for equipment or supplies that were lost while in the course of conducting school business. Again, this is an economic loss to us, your employees, that prior to your board action would not have placed us in this predicament.

In light of our arguments against using our personal property to conduct school business, we respectfully ask that you remove those sections from the changes you've made to the 2020-2021 school year contract for us, your employees.

In education,

Laredo Teachers/Employees