

Most of us agree that remote learning, for the majority of students, is not nearly as effective as in-person learning under normal conditions. But the changes that would need to occur inside our school buildings and the measures we would need to enforce throughout the day to keep students and educators safe in our schools now would eliminate most, if not all, of what makes "normal" in-person learning so great. During these unprecedented times, teachers would not be able to look over their students' shoulders to check on how they are doing with their work. Gone are days of collaborative group work, hands-on projects, partner work, and one-on-one conferences at the teacher's desk. Carpet time with interactive multi-sensory activities?... Gone. Teachers are terrified for their lives, their families' lives, and their students' safety as well. Anxious teachers trying to avoid the virus will be forced to lecture from the front of the room, with little semblance to the learning environment that they left last March. "Normal learning" is not an option this school year. As Red Clay School District has already concluded, teachers can and will do better with remote learning if given the opportunity this fall. No one will need to fear for their lives while learning remotely. Adding another layer of fear and anxiety to this crisis by forcing educators and students back into the school building before it is safe is not conducive to anyone's physical or mental well-being or education.

How can the district ensure the safety of our students, our families, and our colleagues in these possible scenarios? Too many unanswered questions.