

NNSTOY

TEACHERS LEADING

Hello,

"Teachers are not expendable. Our jobs—our lives—need to matter here. We may do heroic work, but we are not actual superheroes. We are human beings. Our humanity needs to matter."

—Meghan Hatch-Geary, 2020 Connecticut Teacher of the Year

NNSTOY released the numerical data from our survey on reopening school buildings on August 10th. Those results have been shared in multiple ways already, from letters to Commissioners of Education to a [retweet by NEA President Lily Eskelsen García](#).

The Survey Committee has also examined the insights our 280+ respondents shared in the open response questions, and we wanted to share our members' words with you directly. As always, our Teachers of the Year and Finalists have spoken with courage and eloquence, with a mind for systems-level thinking and a heart for children, families, and our colleagues. Many of our colleagues are experiencing extreme fear right now as they return to face-to-face instruction in the midst of a pandemic that has not abated.

As a membership organization, NNSTOY will never have complete agreement among all members but several strong themes emerged from the open response comments on the survey:

- Proceed with caution.
- Value the lives of children, their families, and their teachers.
- Involve teachers directly in decisions about when and how to reopen school buildings.

The slides, [linked here](#), include 12 compelling quotes from our members, followed by the graphs of our results. Please feel free to share these slides, quotes, and numbers on social media, with your professional networks, and in your advocacy work with policymakers, administrators, the media, and the public.

School is not a building. Our humanity matters.

Thank you for all that you do to strengthen policy, practice, and advocacy through the lens of equity. Stay safe out there.

Respectfully,

Justin Minkel
2007 Arkansas Teacher of the Year
Government Affairs Committee Chair

Bob Williams
2009 Alaska Teacher of the Year
NNSTOY Acting CEO

[View the Slides](#)