



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333
August 9, 2021

William Marshall
Judicial Watch, Inc.
425 Third Street, SW
Suite 800
Washington, District of Columbia 20024
Via email: bmarshall@judicialwatch.org

Dear Marshall:

This letter is regarding your Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of May 7, 2021, assigned #21-01237-FOIA, for (see attached original request).

We located 12 pages of responsive records (12 pages released in part). After a careful review of these pages, some information was withheld from release pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §552 Exemption 6.

EXEMPTION 6

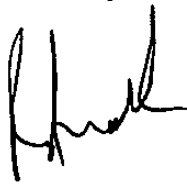
Exemption 6 protects information in personnel and medical files and similar files when disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The information that has been withheld under Exemption 6 consists of personal information, such as phone numbers and email addresses. We have determined that the individual(s) to whom this information pertains has a substantial privacy interest in withholding it.

You may contact our FOIA Public Liaison at 770-488-6277 for any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with the response to this request, you may administratively appeal by writing to the Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, Suite 729H, Washington, D.C. 20201. You may also transmit your appeal via email to FOIARequest@psc.hhs.gov. Please mark both your appeal letter and envelope "FOIA Appeal." Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted by November 7, 2021.

Page 2 – William Marshall

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Andoh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Roger Andoh
CDC/ATSDR FOIA Officer
Office of the Chief Operating Officer
(770) 488-6399
Fax: (404) 235-1852

Enclosures

21-01237-FOIA

Submit New Request

Requester Details

To modify request details please update your requester profile or contact the our office for assistance.

William Marshall

Senior Investigator
 Judicial Watch, Inc.
 425 Third Street, SW
 Suite 800
 Washington, DC 20024
 Phone 202-646-5170
 bmarshall@judicialwatch.org

Requester Default Category: Educational

General Information

Action Office	HQ
Action Office Instructions	CDC/ATSDR FOIA Office 1600 Clifton Road, N.E., MS D-54 Atlanta, Georgia 30152
Request Type	FOIA
Requester Category	All Others
Delivery Mode	E-mail

Shipping Address

Street1	425 Third Street, SW
Street2	Suite 800
City	Washington
State	District of Columbia
State (Other)	
Country	United States
Zip Code	20024

Request Information

Description	1.All emails exchanged between CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky and email accounts ending in aft.org and/or nea.org. 2.All emails exchanged between CDC Principal Deputy Director Anne Schuchat and email accounts ending in aft.org and/or nea.org. 3.All emails exchanged between CDC Acting Associate Director for Communications Abigail Tumpey and email accounts ending in aft.org and/or nea.org. 4.All emails exchanged between CDC Associate Director for Policy and Strategy Robin M. Ikeda and email accounts ending in aft.org and/or nea.org.
Date Range for Record Search:From	03/01/2020
Date Range for Record Search:To	05/07/2021
Description Document Consent	

Fee Information

Willing Amount	\$25
Fee Waiver Requested	Yes
Fee Waiver Request Reason	Judicial Watch is a non-profit, non-partisan 501(c)(3) educational foundation, promoting transparency, accountability and integrity in government and fidelity to the rule of the law.
Willing to Pay All Fees	No

Billing Address

Street1	425 Third Street, SW
Street2	Suite 800

City
State
State (Other)
Country
Zip Code

Washington
DC
United States
20024

Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

Other Information

Name William Marshall
Company Judicial Watch, Inc.
Phone 12026414981
Fax
Email Address bmarshall@judicialwatch.org
Street1 425 Third Street, SW
Street2 Suite 800
City Washington
State District of Columbia
State (Other)
Country United States
Zip Code 20024

Expedite Information

Expedite Reason

From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues
Sent: Fri, 9 Apr 2021 22:39:34 +0000
To: Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD)
Subject: Automatic reply: Requesting Meeting about Variants

I will be out of the office until Monday April 12th. Please text or call my cell with time-sensitive needs that cannot wait: (b)(6)

Warm regards,

Kelly

From: Pringle, Rebecca [NEA]
Sent: Mon, 8 Feb 2021 18:30:55 +0000
To: Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD)
Cc: Bilal-Threats, Daaiyah [NEA];Pugh, Carrie [NEA-CAO-CE];Solomon, Joel [NEA-CAO-CBMA];Kelly, Teresa [NEA]
Subject: CDC Guidance

Dr. Walensky,

I hope you are well and staying safe.

I am writing to request an advance copy of CDC school-related COVID-19 guidance that I understand are to be released this week. We will, of course, keep them confidential until they are public. I want to be prepared for any media or internal questions that come after they are released.

Any other information you can offer about the timing of their release is appreciated.

Thanks,
Becky

P.S. Our team will be briefing CDC and White House staff today on our embargoed vaccine research. I will be sure you receive the research memo with our findings after they meet today.

From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues
Sent: Tue, 23 Mar 2021 04:01:59 +0000
To: aux7@cdc.gov;Cucchi, Sean (CDC/DDNID/NCCDPHP/OD);Masseti, Greta M. (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP)
Cc: Beth Antunez, Legislation;Tear Jones Murphy, Office of the President
Subject: Letter from Randi Weingarten
Attachments: RW Dr Cardona and Dr Walensky COVID Distancing Guidelines 032321.pdf

Dr. Walensky:
Please find the attached letter to you and Dr. Cardona from President Weingarten. Please let me know if you or your team have any questions.

Warm regards,

Kelly

Kelly D. Trautner

Senior Director | Health Issues

(she/her/hers)

T: 202-393-7991 | F: 202-783-2014 | E: ktrautne@aft.org

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March 23, 2021

The Honorable Dr. Miguel Cardona
Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Dr. Rochelle Walensky,
Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Dr. Cardona and Dr. Walensky:

I noted Friday's shift in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance around physical distancing in schools with keen interest. As we have shared with you previously, AFT members trust the CDC and their union above all other entities to provide them with accurate information that will keep them, their families, their students and their communities safe during this pandemic.

As you also know, although I was very worried about the implications of the shift, I reserved judgment until we could review the new studies that were presented. We have done that this weekend, including those in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* as well as the studies cited in the Institute for New Economic Thinking's "New CDC Guidelines to Reopen Schools Could Be Dangerous."¹

We appreciate that the body of knowledge regarding the impact of COVID-19 in school environments is expanding, but we are not convinced that the evidence supports changing physical distancing requirements at this time. Our concern is that the cited studies do not identify the baseline mitigation strategies needed to support 3 feet of physical distancing. Moreover, they were not conducted in our nation's highest-density and least-resourced schools, which have poor ventilation, crowding and other structural challenges.

One thing the studies were clear on is the need for layered mitigation if there is a shift to reduce physical distancing. Now that we have had a chance to review the research, we conclude that any shift from 6 feet to 3 feet must be accompanied by, at a minimum, universal and correct masking; effective ventilation; thorough cleaning of buildings; regular COVID-19 testing of teachers, staff and students; effective contact tracing and quarantine/isolation protocols; and the availability of vaccines to all people in schools who are eligible.

Weakening one layer of layered mitigation demands that the other layers must be strengthened. We strongly urge you, in any discussion of this shift, to forcefully insist on strict and strengthened adherence to the other mitigation strategies.

¹<https://www.ineteconomics.org/perspectives/blog/new-cdc-guidelines-to-reopen-schools-could-be-dangerous>

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Department of Education and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Dr. Cardona and Dr. Walensky/COVID-19 Distancing Guidelines/Page 2 of 2

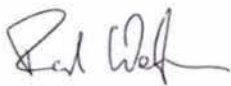
After months of mixed messaging and misinformation, consistency from our public health officials is a welcome change. But as educators with the expertise on how physical distancing works in schools, we have immediate logistical questions:

- With the guidance that students can be 3 feet apart from each other but adults should remain 6 feet from children or other adults, what is the expectation for the teacher in a classroom—that she remain in one spot at the front of the room the entire day, not moving about the classroom?
- How will paraprofessionals work in reading circles or other small-group settings? Does this also apply to bus drivers and school bus protocol—i.e., will students be 3 feet from each other on buses, but 6 feet from a bus driver or a bus attendant?
- With the increased number of in-person students, can we end the practice of concurrently teaching in person and simulcasting to students at home. Alternatively, can we provide guidance on the negative effects of this practice?
- What is the expected timeline for implementation of these changes? Many school systems are just returning to in-person instruction right now, after significant planning—for bus routes, staggered schedules, etc.—based on 6 feet of physical distancing. Even with the significant investment of American Rescue Plan money, districts lack the human resources and institutional planning ability to make changes like this quickly. Is this something that can be implemented in the fall, or perhaps the summer?

We ask that the Education Department, in conjunction with the CDC, release a national checklist outlining the enhanced mitigation strategies that must be in place if we move to 3 feet physical distancing, and provide details about how to ensure that 3 feet of physical distancing is implemented properly. We also request that the CDC conduct comparative studies on mitigation efforts in urban, densely populated schools that do not have up-to-date ventilation systems and have been systematically under-resourced for decades. This will help in planning for summer and the next school year.

AFT members want to trust the CDC to keep all of us safe, and to trust the Education Department to have students', families' and educators' well-being as its goal. Your responses to this letter's requests will help ensure this. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Randi Weingarten
President

RW : emc opeiu #2 afl-cio

From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues
Sent: Wed, 17 Mar 2021 00:35:02 +0000
To: aux7@cdc.gov
Cc: Jane Meroney, Legislation
Subject: Randi call

Good evening, Dr. Walensky:

Randi is hoping to schedule a call with your folks about reopening issue, including maintaining mitigation protections and what might be needed in the context of higher vaccination numbers.

Warm regards,

Kelly

Kelly D. Trautner

Senior Director | Health Issues

(she/her/hers)

T: 202-393-7991 | F: 202-783-2014 | E: ktrautne@aft.org

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From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues
Sent: Thu, 11 Feb 2021 16:25:06 +0000
To: aux7@cdc.gov;Johnson, Carole A.
EOP/WHO;sob8@cdc.gov;dawn.oconnell@hhs.gov;Martin, Carmel EOP/WHO;Tracey-Mooney, Maureen
EOP/WHO;McIntee, William T. EOP/WHO;'Okolo, Osaremen F. EOP/WHO';Gonzalez, Noe EOP/WHO
Cc: Randi Weingarten, Office of the President;Jane Meroney, Legislation;Marla
Ucelli-Kashyap;Beth Antunez, Legislation
Subject: RE: AFT Follow-up

Dr. Walensky:

Thank you for your continued openness to our suggestions and input. We would like to share some thoughts regarding the paragraph below which was apparently leaked from the imminent guidance on reopening schools:

“At any level of community transmission, all schools can provide in-person instruction (either full or hybrid), through strict adherence to mitigation strategies. Recommended learning modes vary to minimize risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission in school by emphasizing layered mitigation, including school policies requiring universal and correct mask use. The recommended learning modes (in-person, hybrid) depend on the level of community transmission and strict adherence to mitigation.”

It would be great to see the insertion some variation of the following: “In the event high-community transmission results from a new variant of SARS-CoV-2, a new update of these guidelines may be necessary.”

We are deeply concerned about likely implications this language will have in schools where strict adherence to mitigation strategies is lacking or is impossible to implement, particularly those schools in high-density, crumbling infrastructure areas, and particularly when community transmission is high. We don't believe that any current research has demonstrated that all schools in those areas can safely reopen.

In light of the new variants of the virus, we are concerned the absence of a closure threshold might put safety of adults and kids in school settings. There is not yet conclusive research to support that keeping schools open in those countries would have been a safe decision, though the Imperial London model seems to show infections among secondary school students in the UK spiked when the new variant began to spread. And we also know that, while infection rates are beginning to drop, the B117 variant is expected to cause a sharp uptick in infections- even becoming the predominant variant by March. The UK was forced to close schools in the wake of the variant spread; Germany had to make a similar decision to close schools. When teachers and school staff see that [travel restrictions](#) are being considered in the U.S., we expect even more hesitation about in-person learning. Even a “variant closing metric” would go a long way in allaying hesitation and fears related to reopening.

We really want to lend our efforts to helping restore faith in the CDC, and we believe you are off to a great start. We must, however, urge the inclusion of clear closure triggers in the imminent guidance. Provisions providing for when schools should close, like what is in place in New York City, instill some degree of confidence for those who are hesitant about returning to school. Embedding such a threshold bolsters transparency and is a must for ensuring parents and administrators can plan for a surge like we have seen in Great Britain and in Germany.

We look forward to continued collaboration with you and your team.

Kelly

Kelly D. Trautner

Senior Director | Health Issues

(she/her/hers)

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From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues

Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 12:36 PM

To: aux7@cdc.gov; Johnson, Carole A. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; sob8@cdc.gov; dawn.oconnell@hhs.gov; Martin, Carmel EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; Tracey-Mooney, Maureen EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; McIntee, William T. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; 'Okolo, Osaremen F. EOP/WHO' <(b)(6)>; Gonzalez, Noe EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>

Cc: Michelle Ringuette, Office of the President <mringuette@aft.org>; Jane Meroney, Legislation <JMeroney@aft.org>; Marla Ucelli-Kashyap <(b)(6)>; Beth Antunez, Legislation <bantunez@aft.org>

Subject: RE: AFT Follow-up

Dr. Walensky,

Thank you so much for your responsiveness to the suggestions made by Randi and our team. We are immensely grateful for your genuine desire to earn our confidence and your commitment to partnership. We will pass this message along to Randi. She will certainly be most grateful.

We look forward to continued dialogue and partnership as we continue our respective focus on safe reopening of schools and society.

Kind regards,

Kelly

Kelly D. Trautner

Director | Health Issues

(she/her/hers)

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From: "Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD)" <aux7@cdc.gov>
Date: February 3, 2021 at 12:04:56 PM EST
To: "Johnson, Carole A. EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "Berger, Sherri (CDC/OCOO/OD)" <sob8@cdc.gov>, "O'Connell, Dawn (HHS/IOS)" <Dawn.Oconnell@hhs.gov>
Cc: "Martin, Carmel EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "Tracey-Mooney, Maureen EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "McIntee, William T. EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "Okolo, Osaremen F. EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "Gonzalez, Noe EOP/WHO" <(b)(6)>, "Michelle Ringuette, Office of the President" <mringuette@aft.org>, "Jane Meroney, Legislation" <JMeroney@aft.org>, "Beth Antunez, Legislation" <bantunez@aft.org>, "Marla Ucelli-Kashyap, Educational Issues" <mucelli@aft.org>
Subject: RE: AFT Follow-up

Dear All,

I just wanted to circle back and extend my gratitude for the language you have provided us below. Regrets for my delay in reply but I wanted to be certain you knew it is being worked into (with just a few small tweaks) the school opening guidance. We have also included the executive summary you suggested.

Please know we are listening and working hard to ensure your confidence and partnership in this endeavor.

My very best,

Rochelle

From: Johnson, Carole A. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:24 AM
To: Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD) <aux7@cdc.gov>; Berger, Sherri (CDC/OCOO/OD) <sob8@cdc.gov>; O'Connell, Dawn (HHS/IOS) <Dawn.Oconnell@hhs.gov>
Subject: FW: AFT Follow-up

Dr Walensky – AFT followed up w suggested lang on accommodations per your exchange with Randi. I think this went to Lynn not you, so in case you did not see, pasted below. Thanks

From: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues <ktrautne@aft.org>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 7:27 PM
To: Johnson, Carole A. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; Martin, Carmel EOP/WHO

<(b)(6)>; Gershman, Lynn E. (CDC/OD/OCS) <veu4@cdc.gov>; Tracey-Mooney, Maureen EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; McIntee, William T. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; Okolo, Osaremen F. EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>; Gonzalez, Noe EOP/WHO <(b)(6)>
Cc: Michelle Ringuette, Office of the President <mringuette@aft.org>; Jane Meroney, Legislation <JMeroney@aft.org>; Beth Antunez, Legislation <bantunez@aft.org>; Marla Ucelli-Kashyap, Educational Issues <mucelli@aft.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AFT Follow-up

Good evening, Colleagues:

Thank you again for Friday's rich discussion about forthcoming CDC guidance and for your openness to the suggestions made by our president, Randi Weingarten, and the AFT. We are hopeful that lines of communications will remain open, and that we can serve as a true thought partner as you continue the important work toward safe reopening of schools.

You will recall that Randi committed to provide Dr. Walensky and the group with suggested language on the issue of accommodations for staff who are either themselves in the high-risk category, or for those who reside with a high-risk individual. We crafted the language below using a NIOSH document, as well as language in some of our agreements with school employers. Thank you for considering it.

- Employers should provide reassignment, remote work, or other options for staff who have documented high-risk conditions or who are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 to limit the risk of workplace exposure. Options for reassignment include telework, virtual teaching opportunities, modified job responsibilities, environmental modifications, scheduling flexibility, or temporary reassignment to different job responsibilities. These options should likewise be extended to staff who have a household member with documentation of a high-risk condition or who are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Policies and procedures addressing issues related to teachers and other staff at higher risk of serious illness should be made in consultation with occupational medicine and human resource professionals, keeping in mind Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) concerns.

Finally, we were able to review a copy of the draft guidance document over the weekend and were able to provide some initial feedback to several staff this morning about possible ways to strengthen the document. We are grateful for the agency's effort to bring some measure of organization and framework to guidance. We are likewise grateful for the inclusion of some of the mitigation efforts we have been calling for since last year. It is our hope that we can be engaged early in the process moving forward, as we believe our experiences on the ground can inform and enrich thinking around what is practicable and prudent in future guidance documents.

Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have questions or desire additional dialogue.

Warm regards,

Kelly

Kelly D. Trautner
Director | Health Issues
(she/her/hers)

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From: Randi Weingarten, Office of the President
Sent: Fri, 9 Apr 2021 22:56:45 +0000
To: Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD)
Cc: Berger, Sherri (CDC/OCOO/OD); Kelly Trautner, Health Issues; Tear Jones Murphy, Office of the President
Subject: Re: Requesting Meeting about Variants

Thank you Doc

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 9, 2021, at 6:39 PM, Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD) <aux7@cdc.gov> wrote:

Dear Randi,
Many thanks for reaching out. I'll connect with my team and work to make this happen.
My best,
Rochelle
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Randi Weingarten, Office of the President <rweingar@aft.org>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 5:28 PM
To: Walensky, Rochelle (CDC/OD)
Cc: Kelly Trautner, Health Issues; Tear Jones Murphy, Office of the President
Subject: Requesting Meeting about Variants

Dear Dr Walensky

On behalf of the AFT we would request a meeting with the CDC on the impact of the Covid variants, particularly what we are seeing in schools and communities.

Thank you

Randi Weingarten

Sent from my iPhone

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