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## **NYSUT Board Resolution Reopening Colleges and Universities Responsibly**

Whereas, in this unprecedented time as we combat a global health pandemic, the well-being and learning of our students is of critical importance, and the safety of staff and students must be paramount; and

Whereas, our campuses and their ancillary facilities need science-based plans that prevent colleges and universities from becoming the spreaders of COVID-19 within their campuses and the communities they inhabit; and

Whereas, the well-being and learning of our students, whether through in-person or hybrid course delivery cannot be achieved until we ensure that campus buildings only open in accordance with the latest scientific knowledge and health guidelines on how to ensure safety;

Whereas, all colleges and universities should adhere to the best practices outlined in the New York State Department of Health's June 20, 2020 *Interim Guidance for Higher Education During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency*, be it therefore

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue to advocate for strong, unambiguous, science-based safety guidance and re-opening metrics from the State that include:

1. The average daily campus infection rate among those tested for COVID-19 is below 5 percent.
2. Baseline testing for all students and employees before returning to campus facilities and a plan for conducting surveillance testing of employees and students to monitor for infection.
3. Contact tracing.
4. Effective social distancing protocols for all classrooms and other public spaces, including offices, elevators, and hallways.

5. Required mask-wearing in all public spaces, and clear plans for enforcement.

6. Daily self-screening and clear plans for responding to and assisting individuals who identify COVID-19 symptoms while in campus facilities.

7. Maximum use of telecommuting and remote teaching for all employees, especially those who are in a COVID-19 high risk category, have family members in high risk categories, and have childcare needs.

8. An authority empowered to trigger building and/or campus closure in the event of a positive case or cases in a school or college and/or a regional spike in infection rates or when public health standards aren't being met.

9. Adequate funding for and provision of proper safeguards and practices to protect health and safety, including face coverings and other PPE, access to well-stocked hand-washing facilities, resources and staffing to adequately clean and sanitize facilities and campus buses, and necessary updates to ventilation and building systems.

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue to compile health and safety resources to enable our locals to advocate within their campuses, provide instructional resources to enable our locals to advocate and inform decision-making at the local level, and conduct periodic tele-townhalls to further inform on these resources; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue using the news media, digital advertising and social media outreach to push back against those that refuse to adopt safe and responsible reopening plans; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT Field staff will continue to assist our locals in negotiating plans, working conditions and accommodations for vulnerable populations; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue to advocate for funding at the federal and state levels to fund campuses in order to protect the jobs of employees, including adjuncts, part-time professionals, and other employees who lack job security; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue to advocate for funding at the federal and state levels to ensure that safety measures are funded, and for childcare resources for our members who will return to in-person work; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will prepare a litigation strategy and process for enforcement when safety violations occur; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT is recommending and will support locals engaging in protests and other activism should the conditions in their workplaces be irresponsible and unsafe; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will continue to bring all necessary resources to bear, including providing information and tools, supporting affiliates in legal matters, and working with and educating other stakeholders, in advocacy for safe reopening plans – from the bargaining table, in Albany, NY and Washington, DC and in the courtroom – with the goal of securing safe conditions for all students, faculty and staff; and

RESOLVED, NYSUT will advocate with the governor's office to ensure that colleges comply with the requirement to engage unions in developing their reopening plan; and

RESOLVED, that in the fight to ensure the safety and health of NYSUT members, our students and our communities, we will use every action and tool available to us.