**CDC’s call to open schools is “political and unethical.” If he wants schools to re-open, the CDC director should spearhead a national plan for testing and tracing.**

(NEW YORK) Hastings Center President Mildred Z. Solomon issued the following statement regarding the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s latest statement on re-opening schools during the pandemic:

The CDC has urged reopening schools, a recommendation based on politics, not science. It is unethical to suggest reopening schools without creating the conditions for them to do so safely.

CDC Director**Robert *R.* Redfield must lead or resign.** If the director of the CDC wants schools to open, even in places with high community transmission, he should be offering the nation a plan for widespread, reliable, and fast-results testing; large-scale contact tracing; and universal precautions such as masks. But these precautions are not in place, and CDC’s world-renowned expertise is nowhere to be found. We can and should open schools but only if we double down on these important measures.

Schools are critical parts of communities across the country. They urgently need federal assistance to modify their buildings, classrooms, and staffing so that they are safe for learning. Schools in high viral transmission areas should remain online, and federal funds should be allocated to help them do so effectively. Congress is currently debating a relief package for schools, but funding may only end up going to schools that re-open in-person. That would basically hold a gun to the heads of school leaders in areas with raging disease incidence, who know their students should not return in person yet.

Children, teachers, and families deserve safe schools and communities across the United States. The nation needs and deserve effective CDC leadership.

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