School districts are calling more employees back to work, and this “rolling return” will pick up speed over the coming weeks. Nobody can doubt the dedication to students and education of the people who work in our schools. Still, employees have a right, and a responsibility, to ask “Is this workplace safe?” If you’re being called back, here are some things that you should look for before you agree to report.

✓ Is access strictly limited and scheduled, so that there are only a few employees present at a time, and so they can maintain safe distances between them?
✓ Is the school or district providing effective security measures to enforce limited access?
✓ Are employees observing safety measures, e.g. wearing facemasks and other protective gear and observing social distancing?
✓ Is the district providing all necessary PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), including masks, gloves, appropriate protective clothing, etc., to employees?
✓ Are employees given close, easy access to hand-washing and sanitizing supplies, and the time to use them often?
✓ Are temperature checks required of everyone on entering, and are those entering asked each time about any symptoms they might have?
✓ Are employees with symptoms, or who are concerned they may have been exposed to the coronavirus, being sent home and being strongly encouraged to stay home, without fear of negative consequences?
✓ Are commonly touched surfaces cleaned and disinfected often and effectively?
✓ Is ventilation/air exchange in the building adequate and in good working order?
✓ Are there administrative/management personnel on site at all times to make sure precautions are being taken, and to listen to and act on safety concerns of employees?

✓ DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN THIS WORKPLACE?

IF YOU’RE BEING CALLED IN TO WORK AT A WORKSITE THAT DOESN’T MEET THESE STANDARDS, INCLUDING YOUR OWN FEELING OF SAFETY, THEN SPEAK UP. Let your supervisor know you have safety concerns, and that you would prefer not to report until they’re addressed. Inform the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA and/or your TSTA local of the problem. If you feel that you are being pressured to return to an unsafe workplace, let us know right away.