

**Remote Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack School District, SAU #26
Thursday, January 19, 2021**

Present: Chair Guagliumi, Vice Chair Barnes, Board Members Schneider, Rothhaus, and Hardy. Also present were Superintendent McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell, and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Guagliumi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Guagliumi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Guidelines for Public Participation for Remote Meeting

Chair Guagliumi stated public comments could be sent to publiccomment@sau26.org or by going to sau26.org where a meeting link was provided. She said all comments would be read and written into the record but noted the name and address of the speaker had to be provided.

3. Public Participation

Vice Chair Barnes read the following e-mails into the record summarized below:

Ms. Lisa Mungovan, 14 Lamson Drive

I understand that the need for Merrimack students to return to full in-person learning for many various reasons. I, however, am writing to you to consider not doing so for the safety of students, teachers, and our greater community. My concerns come with the larger in-person class sizes for teachers and the lack of mitigation that will occur while maintaining 3-feet or less in the schools.

Teachers have not yet been vaccinated and it is imperative to take into consideration the health of all those who want to make full in-person learning safe and effective. Many will argue that students are not getting that sick in this global pandemic which may be true but I worry that many children will bring the virus home to someone older or compromised or a teacher may bring it home to someone older or compromised. I feel 3-feet or less is simply not safe. First, allow the teachers to be vaccinated. Secondly, I have great concern about remote students. While my 2nd grader is thriving in remote learning and has developed a wonderful relationship with her teacher, the class size currently for remote students allows the teacher to also help each individual student easily and also allows for students to easily participate. My concern with potential cohorts for full-time is a larger class size in remote learning which will make learning so much more difficult in an already difficult situation.

I also hope that the consistency of the same teacher will remain as these relationships are so important for student education.

Stu and Kim Moncrieff, 2 Fields Farm Road

As parents of a Merrimack 3rd grader, we appreciate the Board's efforts to return to in-person instruction at the elementary schools, however, a return to full-time seems overly aggressive at this time when cases and local transmission are at their highest levels since the pandemic began. Compared to the hybrid model the full-time model will result in 2 times the number of students in each room and 2.5 times the number of days in class. This abrupt change goes against the cautious approach that the Board has enacted thus far. We ask that the Board consider a return to the hybrid model with a full-time return delayed until the virus rates improve.

Ms. Christine Lyna, 8 Glenwood Lane

Thank you Merrimack School Board for taking into consideration the transition to in-school learning for kindergarten through 4th grade. As an educator in another district where pre-kindergarten through 5th grade has been in-person since September, I strongly feel that this is the best option for our youngest learners. Other school districts that are in-person have been successful in keeping both our young learners and staff safe through consistently following COVID-19 protocols. Overwhelmingly, the pre-kindergarten through 5th-grade students in the district that I work do a great job of following protocols of 6-feet distance (3-feet when 6-feet cannot be met) washing, sanitizing, and mask-wearing at all times. Because of the great work that our teachers do in Merrimack, there is no doubt that our students will continue to be safe and their academic and social and emotional learning will be enhanced due to increased in-person learning which we all know is the ideal environment for all learners, especially our youngest students.

In districts where in-person learning is taking place full-time, there is little to no school transmission and the vast majority of the COVID-19 cases are from outside of the school environment. I firmly believe and have seen from experience that our students can be in school safely five days per week.

Ms. Leah Pereira, 2 Heidi Lane

I am writing as a parent with three children currently attending fully remote school in Merrimack. As it is unclear so far whether or if the changes coming will affect the schedules of fully remote learners I'd like to ask that the Board make a serious effort not to further disrupt these children's school year with further changes. My eldest is a high achiever at the high school and was already forced out of the school part-time in order to have access to her AP (Advanced Placement) classes. Due to the delayed start and compressed schedule she is already working hard six to seven days per week and has no further time for extra Zoom classes. My middle child is getting just what he needs from remote instruction now and would not benefit from further disruption and my youngest has special needs and is especially sensitive to scheduling changes and uncertainty. She is thriving at the moment and would struggle to adjust again if her week was changed at this point.

In a year that has already caused a significant amount of stress, loss, change, and uncertainty for all of our kids, I strongly request that the Board not further change a remote system that is working.

Mr. Bryan Townsend, 5 Merry Meeting Drive

I am writing to urge you to vote against the proposed model to return to full-time in-school instruction for grades kindergarten through 4th grade. Instead, I request that you offer the same option given to grades 5 and up or continue to offer a hybrid model. In August the Board agreed that the hybrid model (in addition to a fully remote option) represented the proper balance between providing effective instruction on the one hand and protecting the health of our children and school staff on the other. Importantly, limiting the number of children in school each day allows for proper social distancing protocols that medical professionals and government agencies alike agree that limit COVID-19 spread. The problem with eliminating this safe and effective option and instead of returning to full-time in-school instruction is that comes without providing parents any explanation for why now is the appropriate time to do so. Most concerning to me is that recent emails acknowledge that the district is still in the process of trying to address the potential impacts of this new proposal on existing health and safety protocols. Making this important decision without completing the process of evaluating the impacts on health and safety and assuring that a return to full-time in-school instruction is feasible under such circumstances strikes me as irresponsible because parents have not been provided with any basis to justify this decision I cannot understand why a return to full-time in-school instruction is appropriate now at a time where number one, the COVID-19 pandemic is at its height in the state, and the number of cases (including daily deaths) is far worse than when the hybrid model was deemed most appropriate; two, teachers have yet to be vaccinated and it is unclear what process will be completed; and three, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) has continued to recommend strict guidelines for in-school instruction including social distancing, which is 6-feet apart. In my view, these present realities for a return to full-time in-school instruction, especially when administrators are warning that all they can do under this proposal is make an effort to keep students 3-feet apart. This is not social distancing and it is not safe.

I responded to the recent survey answering that I will send my son back full-time in-school. This should not be read as a choice on my part and nor do I believe you should view responses to this survey as endorsing a return to full-time in-school instruction because it has neglected to provide any ability for parents to voice a preference to continue hybrid learning instead. The realities of work simply do not allow me to opt for fully remote instruction. I am asking that you please vote against eliminating the hybrid instruction, the option that has proven to be effective, workable, and provides for the safety of the students, my son, and staff. I understand and sympathize with the desire to return to full-time in-person instruction, however, to do so without giving parents the ability to voice their preference for continued hybrid instruction and without full and complete consideration of the health and safety impacts, it is quite simply, misguided.

Ms. Nicole Tomaselli, 11 Knollwood Drive

I am writing to let you know that I am in support of a change away from the hybrid model of instruction for kindergarten through 4th-grade students. Ideally, all of the students, kindergarten through 12th grade, would be offered the opportunity to return to school in-person or fully remote and I see this change as an important first step for incrementally and safely making that happen. In the last communication sent to families from the Superintendent, he stated that we should make improvements to our educational delivery wherever we think we can make them and I would agree. Please be reminded that we are not alone in this struggle. Districts all over the state and country are wrestling with the same staffing and spacing issues. We need to have a plan and long-term strategy that allows for as many instructional hours as possible for all of our students. We need to get this done. While the hybrid model may appear to reduce our class sizes thereby,

minimize the exposure risk, you have to wonder where all of the children are going on the three days that they are not in the schools care and abiding by the schools strict and safe procedures for masking, handwashing, and social distancing. Every time a student leaves “the bubble” that our schools are trying to establish they bring with them the additional exposure risks from the people and places who are caring for them. We are all better off keeping the “bubble” intact for as many days per week as possible. While some families have an adult who is able to work from home, many in our Town do not. As a Board, you must be made aware of the difficult choices some of our families had to make; either leaving children home alone, paying out-of-pocket for additional daycare coverage, exhausting sick/personal time banks, taking leave of absences, or shuffling children between friends and family to accommodate the three days per week that they are not in school. This is not a sustainable expectation to put on our families.

Developmentally, to expect that any child in kindergarten through 4th grade in the Merrimack School District has had an adequate exposure, modeling, or training this year to be able to do independent learning is ridiculous. Prior to the November 20th decision to go fully remote, my two hybrid learners had twenty days of instruction during the school year 2020 – 2021. In other districts, like Londonderry, who made a similar choice to go remote at that point, the students have been fully in and had sixty days of instruction up to that point. We simply cannot have it both ways. You cannot send students off to work independently when they do not have the established routines or the executive functioning to do so. We cannot continue on a path that only offers direct instruction two days per week. Our teachers should not be exposed to two cohorts of children, maintain planning, nor be exposed to two entirely different sets of potential contamination. All of our students need and deserve direct contact and instruction for four if not five days per week. If we cannot accommodate them spacing wise then we need to ask other districts how they are doing it. I think you will find that while our students are working independently, other districts are Zooming in the room to ensure that daily contact and instruction is happening. Here is a list of school districts that are fully in or fully remote according to an informational poll that was recently posted to the Educators of 603 Group:

Salem, Hudson, Littleton, Masenic, Londonderry, Pelham, Nottingham, ConVal, Sanborn, Kingston, Newton, Seabrook, Litchfield, Gilford, Chichester, Gilmanton, Henniker, Greenland, Rye, Newfound, Freemont, Epping, Groveton, Candia, Brentwood, Weare, Stoddard, Hopkington, Hollis, Brookline, Exeter, Kennsington, Newfield, and Stratham. Salem and Londonderry are our neighboring districts of similar size and population. If they can figure this out then we should be able to as well.

Ms. Caroline Herald, 31 Valleyview Drive

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the adults who have worked tirelessly to make education a priority for the children of Merrimack. I understand very well that the epidemic has not made this difficult job any easier. Despite some of the public rhetoric, I believe there is no need to rush back to full in-person learning, and additionally, I am pleased with Superintendent McLaughlin’s communication and consideration of the variety of constituents.

Ms. Naomi Halter, 10 Everest Drive

I am the parent of a 4th grader and a preschooler at Thorntons Ferry Elementary School and am writing to you to protest this switch to full-time in-person school. The data we have today does not support a return to full-time in-person school. On average right now in New Hampshire, there are 62% COVID-19 than there were in mid-November (461 – 744). The test positivity rate has

also gone up by 36% from 5.6% to 7.6%. In Hillsborough County, we are averaging 65 new cases per 100,000 residents daily which puts us in the CDC's higher risk category for in-school spread. Our test positivity rate is higher than the state's average at 8.6% and also falls into the higher risk category. Back in November, we were already seeing the effects of an increase in community spread with staff shortages and student absenteeism due to illness and quarantining. We haven't yet had a chance to evaluate how these new higher numbers will have an effect, let alone, full-time in-person school. Young children thrive on routine and the switch will disrupt that routine for the third time this school year. Furthermore, the increase in levels of community spread is likely to cause a fourth, fifth, and even sixth disruption when even more students and staff become ill or have to quarantine. A return to full-time school will add an incredible level of uncertainty that will negatively affect our children. Changing schedules constantly is also unsustainable for working parents who already have childcare in place for hybrid. Please reconsider this decision and continue to hybrid and use the next month to see what happens when we go back hybrid, give our teachers time to be immunized, and look at a return to full-time later in the spring when we are able to stay full-time.

4. Board Review of Draft Proposal of Revised District Instruction and Learning Plan

(Full Exhibit is Available on the Merrimack School District's Website)

Superintendent McLaughlin presented the School Board with a 30-page proposed Revised District Instruction and Learning Plan.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio stated the guiding principles for the plan included:

- To provide a safe re-entry for students and staff by maintaining a healthy school community that continues to follow the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and state guidelines.
- To provide a consistent learning and instructional model for all learners.
- To maintain a rigorous and flexible learning environment that can accommodate both in school and remote learning by utilizing up to date learning platforms and programs.
- To provide for a 4-day per week instruction at the 5-12 grade level with the use of 360 camera technology with a further connection to students remotely on Friday.
- To provide an option for K-4 students to attend on-site school 5 days per week (early release on Friday) beginning in mid-February as one option.
- To provide and support preventative measures to promote the safety of all staff and students. These measures will continue to include the mandatory use of masks by students and staff according to district policy, adhering to district travel/quarantine policy, and the observance of physical distancing (as much as

possible given increased student populations in the K-4 environment) and limiting group sizes.

- To continue to provide in-school supports for our neediest/struggling students to the maximum extent possible.
- To maintain the REAL (Remote Education Academy for Learning) Program To support and encourage, as much as physical distancing limitations allow, a sense of belonging, significance in the classroom and school community, and to foster healthy, caring relationships between and among members of the Merrimack School District community.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio reviewed the proposed plan as summarized below:

- K-4: To return to five-days of in-school instruction, for those electing that option, by February 15, 2021.
- K-4: Return Monday through Friday to in-person instruction. Monday through Thursday will be full days of school. REAL Program will move to a 5-day model. Fridays will be an early release day (12:45 p.m.) of instruction and learning for all students. In the afternoon educators will meet in Professional Learning Teams to collaborate, plan and review data that will drive instruction and learning.
- Maintain a full-time remote learning option for those wishing to elect it.
- 5-12: Utilize recently acquired technology tools to support concurrent learning by combining cohorts while maintaining the two-day in school, two-day remote model.
- 5-12: Continue in the cohort model and, with the use of 360 cameras, have four days of concurrent instruction and individualized supports on Fridays. REAL Program will move to a 4-day instructional program and individual supports on Fridays. Friday mornings will be used by educators to work in Professional Learning Teams/Department meetings to collaborate, plan and review data that drives further instruction and learning.
- Maintain a full-time remote learning option for those wishing to elect it.
- Pre-school Program will remain the same and adjust based on student need.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio reviewed some of the possible consequences to the proposed plan as summarized below:

- Student classroom teachers may change.
- Masks must be worn at all times including on the busses.

- More limited social distancing opportunities for students in grades K-4 in classrooms, buses, etc. Reducing social distancing from 6-feet to 3-feet.
- Bus routes may change.
- Possible increased sizes in some live or remote classes based upon choices of students and availability of staff (particularly in grades K-4.)
- Continue to offer a remote option but discontinue the hybrid option.
- Staffing absences.

Vice Chair Barnes asked Superintendent McLaughlin what his personal feeling was regarding the proposal. Superintendent McLaughlin replied he felt the implementation of K – 4 should be delayed a little bit longer than the proposal suggested. He added, however, he felt it was important to present options which were what they were doing. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio said he was comfortable with the proposed plan but the question was when to implement it.

Vice Chair Barnes commented that she felt the district should maintain the hybrid and remote models for the time being as there was some sense of stability for the kids that was very important.

Board Member Rothhaus commented she felt the Board's decision needed to be based on the student's learning needs and be scientifically based. She said the common goal for all school districts was to get the students and teachers safely back into the classroom. She also said the vaccines were being made available so she did not understand why the students would not go back to in-school learning.

Superintendent McLaughlin said the results of the survey sent to parents of students in grades K – 4 showed in large part that families who were currently in the remote model were asking to stay remote and families who were currently in the hybrid model were asking to return to school full-time.

Board Member Hardy commented that other area districts were back to a full-time in-school situation. She said if the safety precautions were used correctly the risk was minimal and it was safe to return to school, especially for the K-4 population.

The Board collectively decided to discuss the topic further at the following two meetings.

5. Presentation of Suicide Prevention and Response Plan and Policy

Ms. Fern Seiden, System of Care Coordinator, introduced Mr. Bob Walrath, School Psychologist, and Ms. Sio Fuller, Social Work Intern.

Ms. Fuller explained that suicide was the leading cause of death among individuals between ages 10 to 24 years old.

Ms. Fuller said Chapter 193 J, the Suicide Prevention Education Law (formerly known as Senate Bill 282) was approved in August, 2019 and signed into effect on July 1, 2020.

6. First Reading of Suicide Prevention and Response Policy (JLDBB)

MERRIMACK SCHOOL BOARD POLICY (JLDBB)

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

- **Purpose, Intent, and Scope**

Through this policy, the district seeks to join with families and the community in this important work to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its students and the school community, understanding that suicide prevention is an integral component of the trauma-informed System of Care and Learning Supports that promotes student social-emotional health and wellbeing and equitable access to education. This policy supports federal, state, and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; to establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt ("postvention"); and to promote access to suicide awareness, prevention, and postvention resources.

In implementing this policy and plan, the Merrimack School District:

- Recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond graduation;
- Believes that only through a collaborative, proactive approach can the problem of youth suicide be addressed;
- Pairs this policy with other policies and laws that support the overall emotional and behavioral health of students.

A. District Suicide Prevention Plan and Biennial Review: The Superintendent (or "designee") has developed a committee to review a District Suicide Prevention Plan (the "Plan") to include guidelines, protocols, and procedures with the objectives of prevention, risk assessment, intervention and response to youth suicides and suicide attempts. This policy is intended to guide the development and implementation of the coordinated plan to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide; the Plan shall conform to the components required of public schools by RSA 193-J:2.

1. Specific Requirements for Plan Contents: The District Suicide Prevention Plan shall include content relating to:

- a. Suicide prevention (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors,

- referrals);
 - b. Response to in-or-out-of-school student suicides or suicide attempts (postvention, suicide contagion);
 - c. Student education regarding safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, recognition of risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide; and help-seeking strategies;
 - d. Training of staff, designated volunteers, and contracted personnel on the issues of youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community;
 - e. Adherence to confidentiality protocols and statewide Code of Ethics for New Hampshire Educators;
 - f. Designation and identification of trained personnel within each school, to act as points of contact when students are believed to be at an elevated risk of suicide;
 - g. Information regarding state and community resources for referral, crisis intervention, and other related information;
 - h. Dissemination of the Plan or information about the Plan to students, parents, faculty, staff, and school volunteers;
 - i. Promotion of cooperative efforts between the District and its schools and community suicide prevention program personnel;
 - j. Such other provisions deemed appropriate to meet the objectives of this Policy (e.g., student handbook language, reporting processes, "postvention" strategies, memorial parameters, etc.).
2. Biennial Review: No less than once every two years, the Superintendent (or "Designee"), with input and evidence from community health or suicide prevention organizations, and District health and counseling personnel, shall update the District Suicide Prevention Plan.
- B. Annual Staff Training: The Superintendent (or "Designee") shall assure that beginning with the 2020-21 school year, and continuing annually thereafter, all school building faculty and staff, designated volunteers, and any other personnel who have regular contact with students, including contracted personnel or third-party vendors, receive at least two hours of training in evidence-informed suicide awareness and prevention. Such training may include, but is not limited to, such matters as youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, intervention, response procedures, referrals, and postvention and local resources.

- C. Dissemination: Student handbooks will include information about the District's Suicide Prevention Plan and how to access the Plan. The District Suicide Prevention Plan will be made available on the District's, and each school's respective websites.
- D. Statutory Considerations. In adopting this policy it is the intent of the District to fully comply with the provisions of RSA 193-J and to fulfill its statutory role in suicide prevention education as defined by RSA 193-J:2. In doing such, the District does not assume any duty beyond that set forth in RSA 193-J.

Legal References:

RSA 193-J: Suicide Prevention Education
RSA 193-F: Pupil Safety and Violence
Prevention ED 510: Code of Conduct for
NH Educators School Volunteers Policy
(IJOC)

1st Reading: January 19, 2021
2nd Reading:
Adoption:

7. Further Consideration of Proposed Warrant Articles

Chair Guagliumi asked if there were members of the Board who had recommended changes to the proposed Warrant Articles.

Board Member Schneider said he wanted to have a discussion regarding Warrant Article V. He further said he did not think Article V should be on the ballot because he felt there was an opportunity to use the relief money received to address a large part of it.

Warrant Article #5:

5. To raise and appropriate the sum of \$450,000 for the purpose of purchasing computers for the Merrimack School District to support the educational goals of providing a device to each student. (Majority vote of the School Board and the School District Budget Committee)

Vice Chair Barnes commented she felt the Board should do whatever needed to be done to facilitate it. She stated she felt it should remain on the ballot.

Superintendent McLaughlin commented that \$20,000 was identified in the operating budget for the purchase of additional computers.

Board Member Rothhaus suggested the item should be taken off of the Warrant. Chair Guagliumi stated she agreed that it should be taken off the Warrant.

Board Member Rothhaus moved (seconded by Vice Chair Barnes) to remove Article #5 from the ballot.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.

Board Member Schneider commented with regard to Warrant Article #6 (ventilation project) that Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell had presented three options in which to do the project. He said he would prefer that the important areas of the project be addressed and not wait ten years to complete it. He further said his preference would be the lease or the bond and promote the rationale why the choice was made and ultimately save the taxpayer's money.

Vice Chair Barnes commented she felt the lease-purchase was the best option.

Board Member Rothhaus commented she felt it was important to communicate the School Board's thoughts with the Planning and Building Committee.

8. Board Consideration of Formal Request to Governor to Prioritize New Hampshire Educators and Staff for Vaccinations

Chair Guagliumi asked the Board if they felt a letter should be sent to the Governor regarding educators and school staff receiving vaccinations in a timelier fashion. The Board collectively agreed and Chair Guagliumi said she would prepare a draft for the Board's review.

9. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- January 4, 2021

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Hardy) to approve the minutes from the January 4, 2021, meeting as presented.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.

- January 5, 2021

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Vice Chair Barnes) to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2021, meeting as presented.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.

10. Consent Agenda

- Approval of Commitment to Religious Neutrality Policy (ACD)
- Approval of Revised Temporary Emergency Policy: Travel Guidance for Students and Staff (EBCVT)

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Hardy) to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.

11. Other

a. Correspondence

Chair Guagliumi stated the Board had received a number of pieces of correspondence regarding the agenda items in addition to those which were read into the record during the public comments portion of the meeting. She said there were a variety of concerns as well as some e-mails of support.

Vice Chair Barnes shared that she received an e-mail from a parent who wanted to find out where to search for the guidelines surrounding self-quarantining that was not travel related.

Board Member Hardy shared that she received an e-mail from a parent who asked about the student School Board liaison and why there wasn't one.

b. Comments

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Fabrizio stated Mr. Bill Morris, REAL Coordinator (Remote Education Academy Learning) had done a very nice job organizing a successful virtual visit with Commissioner Edelblut.

12. New Business

There was no new business to report.

13. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Barnes stated the Professional Development Committee had met on the 14th where they reviewed some new technology opportunities with Pear Deck.

Vice Chair Barnes also said they discussed the approval of designing an outdoor classroom at the James Masticola Elementary School.

Board Member Rothhaus shared that she attended the Healthcare Cost Containment Committee meeting via Zoom where they discussed different options for keeping people healthy.

14. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Vice Chair Barnes read the following e-mails into the record summarized below:

Ms. Erin Alukonis, 6 Mullikin Road

I am writing to address the importance of students returning to school in-person. Recently a petition was put together by hundreds of parents in the town and was sent to the Superintendent. After speaking to the woman who initiated the petition, she said she never received any return correspondence and she feels like voices are not being heard. Based on scientific evidence we know that school is the safest place for children during this pandemic. A remote option remains available for students who do not wish to return and it is so important for the children and parents who struggle in the current model to return to school (again, the safest place for children as reported by scientific evidence.) There are some students who do well in remote, however, most students do not. We are truly not meeting the needs of many students in the hybrid model and we need to return our students to school.

Superintendent McLaughlin pointed out that he never received a petition.

Mr. Mike Gagnon, 26 Hillside Terrace

My question to the Board is that you say your concern is about the children and they have already had their routines disrupted and now you want to possibly take their teacher away as well. How can you say they are looking out for the children if they want to take away the one consistent thing. To ask a 5, 6, 7, or 8-year-old to change teachers mid-year is not acceptable to their already disruptive school year. I am also concerned that grades K – 4 might not be able to maintain 3-foot but are asking parents to put their children as well as the teachers themselves in this environment. They should not be treated as guinea pigs to see if it works. The 5 – 12 model can be achieved in K – 4 as well. My wife is a teacher in another district teaching 3rd graders the way it is outlined in the 5 – 12 model that is proposed. I really feel this should be considered as well.

Ms. Tracy Lundstedt, 48 Cota Road

I have a middle school student with a hearing impairment. He has a 504 Plan and wears hearing aids all day long at school. I would like to know what the effects of the 360 technology will have on students with hearing aids in classrooms. I am concerned with potential audio feedback or a disruption in learning for him and other students within the classroom.

Ms. Corrine Royer, McElwain Street

I would like you to consider all students in your discussion of returning to school. My son is in fourth grade and has struggled with learning remotely/hybrid. He and so many other students would benefit significantly from full, in-person learning. Given the option of in-person or remote, it will help give all kids a chance to succeed. If parents don't feel safe or feel their children are thriving learning remotely they still have the option to keep their children remote. I hope we are able to get our kids back to school soon.

Mr. Stu Moncrieff, 2 Fields Farm Road

Could somebody please tell Mark that the survey sent out to parents did not include an option for hybrid? It was either fully remote or full in-person learning. It is completely misrepresenting the results of the survey and has no idea how parents who want hybrid may have voted.

Ms. Michelle Mackey, 46 Peaslee Road

Should we determine that the kids will be going back to school on a full-time basis, what would be the contingency plan should an entire class/classes be exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19. Based on the current policy they would need to be in quarantine for fourteen days before coming back to school due to the exposure. What would the learning/school days be like should that happen for those kiddos now at home?

At approximately 10:45 p.m. Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Hardy) to adjourn.

The motion passed 5 – 0 – 0 by a roll call vote.