

## **ARLINGTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT 25**

1200 S. Dunton Ave.  
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005

### **School Board Meeting Minutes September 23, 2020**

#### **Regular Meeting**

Brian Cerniglia, President of the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education, called the meeting to order at 7:46 p.m. on September 23, 2020. The meeting was held at the Dunton Administration Building, 1200 S. Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Illinois. Roll call was noted and the Pledge of Allegiance said.

Board members present: Brian Cerniglia, Chad Conley, Erin Johannesen, and Rich Olejniczak. Scott Filipek and Anisha Ismail Patel were in attendance via Zoom.

Board members excused: None

Others Present: Dr. Lori Bein, Superintendent; Stacey Mallek, Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO; Dr. Brian Kaye, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Planning; Dr. Becky FitzPatrick, Assistant Superintendent for the Department of Student Learning; Dr. Peg Lasiewicki, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Chris Fahnoe, Director of Technology and Assessment; Adam Harris, Head of Communications and Story Telling; Brad Katz, Information Technology Specialist; Lana O'Brien, Recording Secretary; staff; and community.

#### **Community Input**

- Fran Volpe, 1380 Oakwood, Des Plaines, is a retired teacher and grandparent of child that will be in the district soon. She feels that remote learning is not good for students, and that interaction is important.
- Leah Ross, 532 S. Phelps Avenue, is a part of Reopen Schools and stated that her children want to go back to school, and that parents will always worry about their children's health. We want them in school for their health and well-being. The goal should be to have students in school full time, and remote families to still have their options.
- Renee Schlenhardt, 306 N. Derbyshire Avenue, respects District 25. She wants the children put first, and would like transparency on what the barriers and issues are. She wants to see what the full day in person learning will look like, and wants in quickly. She thanked the district for everything that is being done.
- Marianne Corcoran, 739 S. Roosevelt, is a part of Reopen Schools and a psychologist. She is concerned about children at home that are being abused, and feels that there should be a check in 5 days/week so abuse can be reported. There is also an increase in anxiety and depression, and the community should protect the welfare of our children.
- Dr. Bein read a comment that was emailed from Barbara Pollard, address provided. She stated that she does not believe sending students and teachers

back to in-person learning would be keeping their health and safety as a first priority, and is pleased with the way remote learning has been handled this year.

- Mary Ann Zaleski, 944 N. Fernandez Avenue, thanked Board for all they do, and has utmost respect for everyone in the District. She is a certified teacher and is homeschooling her children, and wants to know what is school going to look like next year. She feels that remote learning is not in the best interest of our children, and that we should take the precautions and try to be in person.

Mr. Cerniglia thanked everyone for their comments, and stated that no one in the district wants children out of schools.

#### Committee of the Whole Reports

**Student Learning** – No Report

**Student Services** – No Report

#### **Business and Finance**

##### Amendment to the Transportation Agreement

Ms. Mallek stated that she presented the transportation amendment to pay the bus company a prorated amount of the contract to make sure they are ready to serve us when we are ready. At the last meeting the Board asked for additional language and information, and she went back to the bus company with the information.

The updated language includes a disincentive should the bus company not be ready to service the district with a 14-day notice. Dr. Bein noted that the changes are in red, and reviewed the specific changes. Board members asked questions about and discussed the updated language in the amendment. Ms. Mallek and Dr. Bein were thanked for accommodating the Board so quickly to address the issue.

**Motion:** E. Johannesen moved and C. Conley seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the amendment to the contract with Cook IL for bus transportation services for the 2020-21 school year.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; S. Filipek, yes; E. Johannesen, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; A. Patel, yes. Motion passes 6/0.

**Facilities Management** – No Report

**Personnel and Planning** – No Report

**Superintendent Report** – No Report

**Motion:** E. Johannesen moved and R. Olejniczak seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; S. Filipek, yes; E. Johannesen, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; A. Patel, yes. Motion passes 6/0.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Submitted,

Lana M. O'Brien  
Recording Secretary

Approved: October 15, 2020

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President  
Board of Education

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Secretary  
Board of Education

Date minutes available for public inspection: October 16, 2020

Date minutes posted on District website: October 16, 2020

Community Input Emailed

Name	Address	Question/Comment
Rachel Pollard	Address Provided	<p>I am writing to express my extensive concerns regarding the district’s apparent plan to return to in school instruction/hybrid model for students this fall/winter. As a member of the Arlington Heights community, I am concerned about the continued re-opening of our community, and this certainly includes our schools. COVID cases continue to rise in this country and yet we continue to re-open non-essential establishments. Unfortunately this community has chosen to prioritize going out to dinner over their children and teachers safely returning to school.</p> <p>To begin, I fully acknowledge that this is an impossible situation. I completely understand there is not a way to address the concerns of every teacher, administrator, community member, and student. There is, however, a way to prioritize the health and safety of the aforementioned individuals. At this moment, I do not believe sending students and teachers back to in-person learning of any kind would be keeping their health and safety as a first priority.</p> <p>I am extremely My daughter, who is a 6th grader at South, seems very engaged and loves her classes. She enjoys being placed in breakout rooms so she can work in a small group setting and build relationships with her classmates. She is still able to get the “middle school experience” because she is changing classes and meeting new friends. One of my concerns is that once some students return to in person instruction, those who choose to stay remote will be limited in the number of students they meet with each day. This will limit the important social interactions that our children are craving.</p> <p>As shown by sixth grade orientation, having students in person is not a safe or sustainable way to provide instruction. I sent my daughter to orientation in person, despite my concerns, only to find out later that a student who attended was diagnosed with COVID. I have full confidence that the South Administration and Staff did everything they could to keep all children safe, but this shows how COVID is not something that we can control. If this had happened during in person instruction, an entire grade level and their teachers would have been quarantined, leaving parents struggling to find last minute childcare, teachers scrambling for lessons, and students without consistent instruction. Even if my child is remote, this situation will put her teachers health at risk, which would create a disruption in her learning.</p> <p>Finally I am concerned about the time of year that we are choosing to bring students back to school. As the weather gets colder, and our patience with this pandemic thins, it is very likely that teachers and students’ families will begin to spend time indoors with people outside of their household. The holidays are coming up, which will only encourage this behavior more.</p> <p>When school closures first occurred in March, I, like many others, believed that we would be out of school for two weeks or maybe a month at most. It was beyond the realm of possibility that I would be writing a letter to our Board of Education six months later, urging you not to send students back to school. As a parent, I understand the impact of not holding in-person classes. I understand that my child cannot learn at the same rate, or at the same level, as when they are in the classroom. But I also understand that a classroom of students, spaced out “to the best of our ability”, is not going to provide for a productive learning environment.</p> <p>I understand that I can opt to keep my child home, but this goes beyond that choice. She will be isolated from other students who are in-person, she will miss out on connections from the teachers who are focused more on students in front of them, and her teachers</p>

Name	Address	Question/Comment
		<p>will be put at additional risk of becoming sick. Additionally, as a community member, I am invested in keeping the community safe. I would obviously love to have my child go back to school, I would love to be able to go back to my office as well, but unfortunately no matter how much we wish those things could be safe, they are not. We're moving forward with a survival of the fittest attitude and we should all question why we're willing to put our children on the front lines of a deadly pandemic.</p> <p>If the worst should happen, and we are asked if we did everything "to the best of our ability" to mitigate a tragic situation, I do not feel we can answer that question with an honest "yes." We can prioritize health and safety, while continuing a robust, remote model for this school year. That is "to the best of our ability." Thank you for your consideration and time.</p>