

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT 25
1200 S. Dunton Ave.
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005

School Board Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2021

Scott Filipek, President of the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education, called the meeting to order on July 15, 2021 to accept a motion to adjourn into closed session at 6:10 p.m. The meeting was held at the Dunton Administration Building, 1200 S. Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

The meeting was noticed for closed session to discuss: The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity, 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1); Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21); Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).



Regular Meeting

Scott Filipek, President of the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education, called the meeting to order 7:39 p.m. on July 15, 2021. 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, Gina Faso, Scott Filipek, Rich Olejniczak, and Greg Scapillato

Board members excused: Anisha Ismail Patel

Others Present: Dr. Lori Bein, Superintendent; Stacey Mallek, Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO; Dr. Becky FitzPatrick, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning; Dr. Peg Lasiewicki, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Chris Fahnoe, Director of Technology and Assessment; Brad Katz, Information Technology Specialist; Lana O'Brien, Recording Secretary; staff; press; and community.

Recognitions and Presentations - None

Secretary Pro Tem

Since Ms. Patel was not present, Mr. Filipek asked for a motion to appoint a Secretary Pro Tem for the meeting.

Motion: C. Conley moved and B. Cerniglia seconded the motion to appoint Gina Faso to serve as Secretary Pro Tem for the meeting. Mr. Filipek asked for any more nominations and there were none, so the nominations were closed.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

The Board moved the Superintendent Report to earlier in the meeting, after the Communications to Board members.

Community Input

- Jack Mungovan addressed the Board regarding masks being optional in school for the fall.
- Laura Culley addressed the Board regarding fall Covid guidance.
- Maryann Zaleski addressed the Board regarding guidance not being law, and that masks should not be mandated based on our Illinois laws.
- Erin Zurek addressed the Board regarding the law of enforcing masks and the choice of parents to mask children.
- Marianne and Elise Corcoran addressed the Board regarding not wearing masks in school.
- Melissa Cayer addressed the Board regarding Consent Agenda supporting documents in BoardDocs.

Public comments were also received electronically. All comments are given to the Board in full and posted on the website.

Consent Agenda

Motion: R. Olejniczak moved and C. Conley seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve those items on the Consent Agenda as follows: (A) Personnel Report; (B) Treasurer's Report (C) Invoices; (D) Regular and Closed Session Meeting minutes of June 10, 2021; (E) Extension of Intergovernmental Agreement for Food Service for District 26 to 2021-22

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Communications:

The following reports were given:

- NSSEO – Ms. Faso reported that a successful groundbreaking ceremony was held for the gym at Timber Ridge.
- IASB – Mr. Filipek reported that the Joint Annual conference will be held in-person this year in November.

- ED-RED –Mr. Olejniczak reported that the state is still waiting on the governor to sign several bills, which he highlighted. He noted that State Senator Ann Gillespie and State Representative Mark Walker will hold a meeting at the Dunton Administration Building next week. The ED-RED kickoff luncheon will be held in September. Ms. Mallek shared that she and Dr. Bein met with the new head of ED-RED today, and noted that regular monthly meetings may not start up again until November.
- Board Governance – Mr. Filipek read an excerpt regarding Board Member Development from the Board Governance Framework.

The following reports were received:

- PTA – Ms. Barbieri explained a summer recharge program “Be a Learning Hero”, that was created for Kindergarten through 8th graders. She also asked that families visit their school’s website to join the PTA.
- ABC25 – Ms. Faso noted that if anyone has not joined ABC25 yet, it can be done during student registration.
- ATA – Ms. Berg showed a video of summer learning activities during Summer U. It was a wonderful summer of learning, and she described some of the classes.

Committee of the Whole Reports

Superintendent Report

2021-2022 School Year Update

Dr. Bein provided a report to the Board for the 2021-2022 school year. School districts received updated guidance from the CDC and IDPH on July 9, 2021. She noted that the ISBE Resolution effective for the 2021-2022 school year full in-person learning is the top priority and a remote option should be available for students who have not received a vaccine and need to quarantine. She reviewed the general updates, which include exclusions, masks, close contacts, and Covid screening. All other school operations will return to pre-pandemic procedures.

She reviewed the CDC and IDPH recommendations, which does not require masks be worn indoors by individuals who are not fully vaccinated. The current CDC order that masks must be worn by all riders on a bus applies to all public transportation including school busses. There are also still requirements for masking during some inside sports, and we are waiting on IDPH/IHSA for any updates. Close contacts are now defined as within three feet of a positive case. She reviewed quarantine and exceptions information.

Dr. Bein reviewed the mitigation strategies that have been used in the district, and are very important moving forward. They include education and communication; the ventilation system; cleaning and disinfecting; hand washing and hygiene etiquette;

three-foot distancing where possible/practical; contact tracing procedures; and hosting vaccine clinics when they are available for students. We will continue to encourage sick individuals to stay home, and test for symptomatic individuals if the state continues.

Considering the excellent mitigation strategies we are skilled at implementing and our district data from June and July, the district recommends the following: open school fully with all pre-pandemic procedures and activities; educate the community about IDPH's recommendation of masks for unvaccinated individuals, but; communicate that mask wearing for students is at the parent's discretion; communicate that mask wearing for adults is at the individual's discretion; communicate that flexibility continues to be important in case the health department guidance changes; provide for three-foot distance where possible; and partner with the health department on contact tracing and quarantine procedures.

Currently, procedures for Policy 7:280, *Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease*, include notifying parents that if a child is not immunized based on religious beliefs, Illinois public health code stipulates that District 25 informs the parent of specific procedures to be followed if there is a case of a vaccine-preventable disease reported at the child's school. She reviewed information on remote classrooms for quarantining, and noted that the district may need to hire up to three long-term substitute positions if expected middle school exclusion numbers increase.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion on quarantining being optional or mandated; the district's risk exposure based on the new guidance; a communication plan to educate parents on exposure/exemption; how lunch service will work; locker room access; contact tracing; and vaccination status of individuals. It was noted that if changes occur, the district may need to be flexible.

Motion: R. Olejniczak moved and G. Faso seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendation to open school fully with all pre-pandemic procedures and activities; educate the community about IDPH's recommendation of masks for unvaccinated individuals, but; communicate that mask wearing for students is at the parent's discretion; communicate that mask wearing for adults is at the individual's discretion; communicate that flexibility continues to be important in case the health department guidance changes; provide for a three-foot distance where possible; and partner with the health department on contact tracing and quarantine procedures.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Student Learning

Approve the Curriculum Equity Audit

Dr. FitzPatrick noted that the district's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy directs the district to design and implement a curriculum to embrace and support diversity and cultural competence within our learning community. The district issued a Request for Proposal to ten professionals/firms for a Curriculum Equity Audit, and one proposal was

received. After checking references, the district recommends an agreement with Public Consulting Group LLC to conduct the audit of the K-8 Literacy curriculum, K-8 Social Studies curriculum, and the Library Media Center collections to ensure they reflect the diversity of students and families in our community. Dr. FitzPatrick reviewed the phases of the project, with the final phase being completed by January 2022. She also noted the tasks that PCG will perform.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion on the request for proposal; stakeholders being included in the process; the flexibility to engage with PCG after the audit is complete; and the standard that PCG is going to use to assess. Dr. FitzPatrick stated that best practices and research will be utilized. Dr. Bein added that they will reflect back to us on what they learned, and that Dr. FitzPatrick and Ms. Mallek bargained a lower cost.

Motion: G. Faso moved and R. Olejniczak seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Curriculum Equity Audit as submitted.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Student Services

Special Education Report

Dr. Peg Lasiewicki noted that the purpose of the presentation is to provide the Board with an overview of the Department of Student Services. She reviewed the many services that the department provides. The continuum of services, which are available in every District 25 school, were explained. District instructional programs include Early Childhood, Communications, Foundations, Integrated Services, Extended Resource, and Individualized Learning Program.

The district also partners with NSSEO for students whose needs cannot be met in the local public school district due to intense level of academic, behavioral, or functional needs. Private therapeutic day schools, residential placements, and home/hospital services are also provided.

ISBE sets goals and collects data on the four educational environments, and the district's overall performance was met at 80%. ISBE is redefining their state targets. Dr. Lasiewicki participated in the Positive Pathways focus group led by Dr. Judy Hackett of NSSEO.

Dr. Lasiewicki described the staffing of the Student Services department. The current number of certified staff including resource teachers and instructional teachers at each building was shown. These numbers may fluctuate year-to-year. She reviewed the various support staff and related services staff in all of the schools.

A chart from June 2021 was shown with the number of students receiving special education by building, broken down by IEPs, speech only, special education placements, and non home-school students. Non home-school are students receiving

special education services outside of their home school. District 25 supports all students in their least restrictive environments.

State assessment information, as well as the proficiency and gap analysis for students with IEPs from 2019 was shown. Dr. Lasiewicki explained the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and reviewed the three tiers. Looking forward we ask several questions, and will work together as a department to investigate our options.

We are also looking to bring Special Olympics to District 25. She described what has been done to date, and explained the Partners in Athletics at Thomas Middle School and Ambassadors Programs at South Middle School. We will bring back further information to the Board on stipends for a coordinator and coaches. Dr. Bein added that we have looked into Special Olympics partnerships in the past, and at that time parents felt that the program was already addressed with NWSRA.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion on the state assessment information as well as parental support. Dr. Lasiewicki was thanked for her presentation.

Mr. Filipek left the meeting at 9:30 p.m. and returned at 9:33 p.m.

Business and Finance Consolidated District Plan

Ms. Mallek explained that this is a requirement that the Illinois State Board of Education began last year which will consolidate and streamline the federal grant management process. She explained that Phase I of this plan is the Consolidated District Plan, which allows grantees to answer one set of planning questions to meet the requirements of the federal grants. One of the assurances that District has to provide under the plan is a date the plan was presented to and approved by the Board.

A Board member asked the likelihood of receiving the funds. Ms. Mallek explained that these are federal dollars, so the funding in the grant is our allocation. Dr. Bein explained that this is the amount we have received approval for, and the information submitted is how we plan to use the funds.

Motion: G. Scapillato moved and R. Olejniczak seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Consolidated District Plan for Fiscal Year 2021-22 as presented. Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Facilities Management – No Report

Personnel and Planning Additional Middle School Cross Country Coach Stipends

Dr. Bein spoke on behalf of Dr. Kaye. We currently have two cross county coaches at each school, but are working with upwards of 180 middle school students. Cross country is a popular sport, and there is a need for additional supervision for safety.

Motion: B. Cerniglia moved and C. Conley seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve two additional Cross Country Coach positions (one for each middle school) by adding two additional stipends at the value identified in the Professional Agreement with the Arlington Teachers Association.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Superintendent Contract Amendment

Dr. Bein stated that the Personnel Department noticed that the \$7,864 payment that is made instead of the Board's payment for insurance was transposed in the contract to read \$7,684. An amendment is presented to the Board to correct this typographical error so that the contract reflects the correct annual amount of \$7,864.

Motion: R. Olejniczak moved and B. Cerniglia seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent Contract Amendment as presented.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Community Input

- Christy Witherow addressed the Board regarding masks and the tone of the presentation.
- Maryann Zaleski addressed the Board with questions on masks and quarantining.

Future Agenda Items

Topics with Dates to Be Determined

Dr. Bein reminded the Board about the upcoming Committee of the Whole meetings, and explained what occurs at a Committee of the Whole meeting. There will be a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for the Board before the August 12 meeting. There will be an in-depth meeting regarding Kindergarten before the September 2 meeting.

New Topics

A Board member asked when they might expect to hear more information on the Special Olympics, and Dr. Bein noted it would be in August or September. A Board member noted that no decisions are made at Committee of the Whole meetings. Dr. Bein added that they are just for discussion and open conversations. There will also be a public comment section during a Committee of the Whole meeting.

Motion: R. Olejniczak moved and C. Conley seconded that the Board of Education move into the Closed session at 9:51 p.m.

Roll Call: B. Cerniglia, yes; C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; S. Filipek, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 6/0.

Motion: G. Faso moved and C. Conley seconded that the Board of Education adjourn closed session at 10:53 p.m.

Roll Call: C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 4/0.

Motion: G. Faso moved and C. Conley seconded that the Board of Education adjourn the regular meeting.

Roll Call: C. Conley, yes; G. Faso, yes; R. Olejniczak, yes; G. Scapillato, yes. Motion carried 4/0.

The Board adjourned the regular meeting at 10:53 p.m.

Submitted,

Lana M. O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Approved: August 12, 2021

President
Board of Education

Secretary
Board of Education

Date minutes available for public inspection: August 13, 2021

Date minutes posted on District website: August 16, 2021

Community Input Received Electronically

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the July 15, 2021 Board Meeting
Jennifer Durkin	<p>Now that the CDC has made the recommendation that fully vaccinated students and teachers should be able to attend in person school without masks, I hope D25 will follow suit. I know this really just affects Thomas and South at this time, but please allow our fully vaccinated students to attend school without masks. Often times decisions are made with a broad brush, not taking into account the differences between the elementary and middle schools. The older kids have had the opportunity to get their vaccination, and attending school and school events without masks is a fantastic incentive to get this done.</p>
Svetoslava D Gregory	<p>Please consider a UNIVERSAL masks or no masks policy across the district to avoid creating DIVISION amongst vaccinated vs non vaccinated students.</p>
Erin Kalaway, RN	<p>It has come to my attention that District 25 may be in violation of the CDC's guidance on sun safety. "Every hour of every day one American dies of melanoma (a type of deadly skin cancer) - that's almost 10,000 people per year." (skincancerprevention.org)</p> <p>The CDC says: Skin cancer - the most common type of cancer in the United States - is largely PREVENTABLE. School is a place where young people can learn important sun safety lessons that can make a difference lifelong.</p> <p>Here is their official guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create a supportive, caring environment where sun-safe policies and practices are integrated with other health and safety education and practices. - schedule recess times when UV exposure can be minimized. - require students to wear hats, sunscreen or sunglasses. - recognize that sun exposure is [yet another] occupational hazard for school employees who spend time outdoors. - conduct sun safety in-service training and programs for all staff about UV radiation effects, risk factors for overexposure and sun-protection habits. - plant trees and build shade structures such as canopies at existing buildings. <p>https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/pdf/sunsafety_v0908.pdf</p> <p>I expect that if you plan to strictly implementing the CDC's guidance on COVID, you will also give EQUAL attention to the issue of sun safety. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.</p>
Katie Rausch	<p>Our children deserve a school year with as much normalcy as possible. As a parent of 3 children in D25, I urge you to make masks optional this fall and put a stop to quarantining our healthy children. It's not necessary, in fact, the social/emotional and educational impact is far greater. The achievement gap has increased and will continue to when you take away in person learning for absolutely no reason to our healthy kids. Your job is to do what is best for our kids. Follow the data! Sadly my children are not looking forward to school this fall, I don't blame them. Masks make the feel sick! Actually studies show that masks are harmful. It's not healthy. August and September are usually hot months, what will you do as a district? Whatever you do make it universal because I saw some teachers and schools do mask breaks while others kept our children masked all day in extreme heat. Administration must do a better job communicating to teachers the expectations, it must be consistent throughout the district.</p>
Leah Ross	<p>Let's consider what we know at this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> **The vaccinated can give and get Covid. **The vaccine for children is not nearly fully approved to become a mandated and scheduled shot. **Adults are recovering from mild Covid. Herd immunity is building. **Children are not a risk group.

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the July 15, 2021 Board Meeting
	<p>**There is a lot of medical speculation about dosing and about lack of need for two shots for children and the younger age group has only begun to be approved for vaccination, bringing into question what really also is safe for our adolescents given their age proximity to the younger group. Families all have very strong feelings about this and it should be left to personal discretion.</p> <p>You as a school board cannot nor should not be asking any child in the building to prove if they've been vaccinated. Those vaccinated can get Covid and also spread it. Children, vaccinated or not, we know are not a Covid risk in health symptoms nor viral load and spread. They are not the problem and it's time our local leaders stood up for logic and looked at our community and the real risk of Covid (variants will always exist and yes viruses mutate (this one always has) and if the new variants are apparently pushing through the vaccine then why in the world are our leaders acting like being vaccinated is the end all be all solution to this virus?)</p> <p>Many can and have vaccinated. Many cannot or will not. Many will wear masks and many should not and will choose not to. I don't have a child younger than fifth grade, but the thought of kindergarten, first and second graders wearing masks as a requirement continues to disgust me. Their emotional and educational needs are far more important to their health than the nearly zero risk Covid presents to them.</p> <p>Complete control over a virus is not a control our school or political leaders can have. Adult vaccination has mitigated the spread. If anything, adults have had and continue to have the responsibility here to be vaccinated or consider vaccination. Stop participating in and feeding the charade that our children are the problem.</p> <p>Look at our local environment and please design the right school year despite extreme recommendations from our health organizations. The CDC also recommends children only go out to recess when UV exposure is low and that all children wear hats and sunglasses for recess...do school boards mandate sun protection or do schools send emails to simply recommend it? You all know the answer to that question.</p> <p>Make the decision as a board...guidance is guidance and local leaders have been given their autonomy to direct as they see fit. A family can prove far easier and more evidentially that their child has been harmed by masks and Covid restrictions in schools than they can prove that a child or a family member got Covid from a school and schools have also been proven to be an unlikely source of spread. This is not your battle to fight nor your protection to guarantee. We have far bigger risks in life and spend little to no time thinking about those risks daily.</p> <p>Children and adults will respect each other in regard to mask wearing and we know some are compromised and must continue to mask protect. Our community is full of wonderful families with multiple and varied needs. Our schools are full of good children who will understand with amazing teacher leadership that some wear masks and some do not. It must be left to choice and comfort. Every own family's assessment to protect through vaccination and mask wearing is that family's own personal choice. I don't know who is vaccinated and who is not nor should I nor have I ever been able to know this. Schools cannot expect this level of control either until this vaccine is proven absolutely safe and necessary for children and it is approved for the mandated school schedule for annual wellness and physical reporting. We are not there yet and we might never be. And if you require masks for all no matter vaccination status, I hope every vaccinated child's parent speaks up because I suspect for many that's the entire reason they likely vaccinated their children...to be able to free them from Covid controls and restrictions.</p> <p>The only way to guide this school year is through offering choice and respecting everyone's choices and the large gray area we are in at the moment. Common ground is found in the middle. Not in the extremes. In the middle. Choice and respect is in the middle. There are too many reasons families</p>

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the July 15, 2021 Board Meeting
	<p>might have chosen to not vaccinate their children and too many reasons some adults may not be vaccinated...and too many reasons these children do not want to nor can sustain mask wearing on a daily basis during long hours in school buildings. Offering choice is your way to lead with logic, dignity, respect, and strength; it really is the only direction to go considering choice accommodates all needs on the various spectrum of self protection and care during this time and it follows the scientific information we have in this moment.</p> <p>Choosing an extreme in regard to mandating, all wearing masks, mandating vaccination proof, and mandating forced testing is no way to lead this school district into this coming school year. You're all in a very tough position and have been through the wringer since Covid's appearance in our world. Leading the way for choice at this point is your closest way to please and respect all despite this impossible position of leadership you've all found yourselves in. Thank you.</p>
Jaime Yeh	<p>Our local school district should make the decisions at the local level for this school year's mitigation strategies. The CDC, IDPH and ISBE have specifically provided for school districts to make their own determinations and guidelines based on local vaccination and infection rates.</p> <p>In Arlington Heights, we should start the school year with optional face mask guidelines for unvaccinated students and staff. Face masks should not be mandatory.</p> <p>We must also adjust Covid testing requirements and end quarantine rules for healthy students.</p> <p>Cases are no longer a metric to drive policy.</p> <p>Kids across the U.S. and around the world have been in classrooms with no mask requirement for over a year. Peer-reviewed studies show there's no benefit to masking kids. Simply put, a decision to mandate masks for yet another year will cause kids harm without any proof of any benefit.</p> <p>The CDC has stated masks are not necessary for the vaccinated.</p> <p>Kids' risk of getting Covid is less than a vaccinated person.</p> <p>Should kids wear a mask forever? Why? If not, when will they be able to stop? What is the metric that we will use to answer these questions? This needs to be determined and communicated to the parents of our district.</p> <p>Our children have complied with the mask mandates in school for a year now. They had no choice, if they wanted to attend in person school. The actual science is now catching up. Kids are not at serious risk of getting Covid, nor do they drive the spread. School closures and masks are not only unnecessary, but they are potentially damaging our kids for a lifetime. We should be celebrating that our children are far less likely to be harmed by Covid. We should be thankful. We should be jumping at the opportunity to keep their lives as normal as possible.</p> <p>We must keep things in perspective. As adults we must be in charge of risk tolerance for our kids. There's no justification for restrictions on kids in school that weren't implemented in prior flu seasons. If we cannot end these mandates on our kids now that all adults have vaccine access, when can we? Please consider all of the data when you make your decisions about the 2021/2022 school year. We are all counting on you.</p>
Desiree Barnett	<p>Please consider making masks optional for the upcoming school year. We've had a chance to protect the most at risk population. Children have such a small reaction to this virus, continuing to mask them is unfair.</p>

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the July 15, 2021 Board Meeting
Eileen Staehlin	I have three children being educated in D25, one of them has special needs. I heard there is talk about Special Olympics possibly coming to our district! I want to express my support for the Unified Champion Schools program through Special Olympics of IL! While the talk to add the traditional special Olympics single event program is a good start, I believe the UCS program will benefit all of the children in the district. There are many other neighboring school districts that have shown this to be a successful program and I would like to see district 25 do the same! Thank you!
Elizabeth Green	It was stated in the spring by Dr. Bein that the "plan" for the 2021-2022 school year was to fully re-open, for 5 day in-person learning in District 25. I urge the Board to fully implement this plan to re-open all D25 schools with no mask mandates (or at least mask choice), no saliva testing, no tracking of students and no singling out of the unvaccinated. Families in the district don't want to be fooled again as we were last year when the opening was delayed and full remote learning was implemented. We have seen from the 2020-2021 school year that after returning to full in-person learning, students and teachers can safely return to the classroom.
Sheryl Terril	Dear Board members, As a resident, taxpayer, parent, and voter, please change the masking and emergency use vaccine policies to optional for our children this upcoming school year and allow parents the ability to make the best choices for their children. Take the time to poll the community, research policies, and recognize the suggested guidances are not laws. It is up to the choice of local districts in representing their constituents. Please, stand by what you know is right, and represent the best interests of our children. Thank you for your service to our community and for your time.
Peter Woolsey	Follow the newest guidance from the CDC and IDPH as well as the examples set by our neighbors in Indiana, Wisconsin and Iowa and make masks optional for children in schools this upcoming year.
Frank Biga	Masking should be optional this school year. There should be no discrimination of any kind against unvaccinated students and staff.
Catherine Wood, MD	As a physician, parent and community member I strongly urge the district to follow the CDC guidelines regarding masking and vaccination status for students/faculty for the upcoming school year. Those that are unable or unwilling to be vaccinated still pose a risk to others and increase the risk of outbreaks/strain mutations in the coming months especially until we reach herd immunity.
Erin Zurek	Masks should be at parents discretion. All COVID-19 masks are authorized, not approved or licensed by the federal government; they are Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only. EUA products are by definition experimental and thus require the right to refuse. Under the Nuremberg Code, the foundation of ethical medicine, no one may be coerced to participate in a medical experiment. Consent of the individual is "absolutely essential". Any EUA mandate requiring individuals to wear face masks conflicts with Section 360bbb-3(e)(1)(A)(ii)(I-III), which provides that the person must be informed of the option to refuse to wear the device. As young children, proper hand washing, and other mitigations in place are a better spread of disease. Children need to see facial expressions to learn social cues, need to see how the mouths work to learn how to speak properly. They need to breathe fresh air. They have never been the cause of concern/spread of Covid-19. All faculty has now had the option to be vaccinated if they so wish to, therefore there is no reason masks should be required, nor can they be per the information above. Please update the plans for the fall. Masks optional. Thank you for your time.
Kellee Janus	Please make masks optional. It's not right to force kids to wear masks for an entire school day. It's especially a concern for kiddos wearing glasses and having them fog up during class. This will distract kids from learning. Masks should be completely optional for parents and not the Board or administration to decide if it's necessary.
Lisa Soro	Masks should be optional for the '21-'22 school year, especially in middle school where ages of children start at 12 or close to.
Melissa Van Buren	My kids are looking forward to a "normal" school year. I would ask that you look at the data from district 25 and every other school district to see that it was unnecessary to quarantine close contacts. Don't make our children miss more education opportunities than they already have.

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the July 15, 2021 Board Meeting
Kristina Heaton	Since over 76% of d25 staff have taken the COVID vaccine, and all had it available to them, please make masks optional for students when the 21-22 school year starts. The Illinois State Board of Education recently communicated to officials at public schools across the state that school districts have the power to make masks optional this fall.
Agnes Kowal	Please consider removing the mask mandate for our children for the upcoming 2021 school year. Please follow the science and with the low risk of Covid for children remove mask requirements.
Angela Sisi	Please make masks optional for all grades!
Charlotte Wager	It is my opinion, from much reading and research, that the risks associated with elementary school children is so low that it is absolutely fair to ask that the board deliver a universal vote allowing parents to choose whether their children are masked or not. I say this with compassion and understanding that some people may wish to continue masking both themselves and their children. However, our young pose very little risk to the adults or their fellow classmates. The risks to reward just cannot be substantiated. If the board can prove, without a doubt, and can provide solid, reputable/credible data that supports masking our children is absolutely necessary then I welcome the read... and futher debate. However, it would have to be that my 9 year old poses grave danger to herself and those around her. Unmask OUR children.
Hope Tokarczyk	Please allow parents to choose what is best for their kids and let masks be optional. My children have not been wearing masks all summer. Masks only do harm to them and there are studies to prove it. There is zero data to prove that forcing kids to wear a mask is beneficial. Follow the science-unmask the children!
Jenica Polifka	It is my hope that the D25 board will consider the fact that children in elementary schools are not yet even eligible for COVID vaccines and will therefore require masking until such time as they are able to be vaccinated - in accordance with CDC guidance. It is my hope that you will also consider that vaccinated adults should stay masked around their entirely unvaccinated student population until kids under 12 are eligible for vaccines as well. We have spent the last year and a half trying to protect our children, families and communities from this deadly pandemic - let's not throw in the towel before the 2 minute warning especially when numbers are starting to rise again as the Delta variant is now the dominant strain and it's been proven that vaccines are not 100% effective. Our children have proven to us that masks do not make it impossible to learn, function or live.
Liz Jones	Please allow parents to make the best choice for their children—keep masks and emergency use vaccine policies optional.
Jen Anderson	To the best of my knowledge, no one on the school board is qualified to make public health decisions contrary to the CDC, IDPH and Cook County Health Department. Community health decisions need to be determined by those best qualified to make them, not based on which cohort of parents screams the loudest. There's already one variant sweeping through populations with low vaccination rates - places that rejected science and medical advice intended for the greater good and put their own wants and opinions first. Let's not follow in those footsteps.
Agnieszka Godlewska	Please make MASKS optional. Parents know the kids, their health, and can read about risks and rewards of such to make an educated decision.
Robyn Swanson	In regards to masking requirements, which has apparently become a hot topic.. With all due respect, it does not appear that any of the board members are qualified to render any decision contrary to the direction of the CDC, IDPH or Cook County Board of Health with regards to wearing a mask indoors by unvaccinated individuals. Community health policy, which includes school populations, needs to be determined by those best qualified to do so, not through heated public debate based on personal opinions. Let's not lose sight of the fact that all of our kids breath the same air. It is not reasonable to focus on the individual in the community setting of a school.
Erin Felten	Dr Bein & Board- Please provide us with a clear understanding of the upcoming school year in regards to Covid and Covid safety practices. I am here again asking for CHOICE. Give parents a bit more control of their

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	<p>own children, and allow for children to choose if they wear a mask or not. Forcing this upon students is unneeded as staff is vaccinated. Please allow for our kids to get back to normal. Thank You</p>
Lindsay Nugent	<p>Greetings Board and Dr. Bein, I hope you have all been enjoying your summer vacations. I write asking that you please make the right calls and do your best to make sure the 2021-2022 school year is closer to pre-pandemic years. For middle school students who started 6th grade in 2019, they will have known nothing other than covid disruptions for their whole middle school experience. At the very least, continue to allow students to go maskless while outdoors. Get rid of zoned recess. As far as quarantining and close contacts go, allow students to submit a negative test to return to school. Healthy kids should not be stuck at home!!! At this point in the pandemic, this seems only logical. We cannot stall our progress and should only be moving forward. Keeping forward progress in mind, I believe the district should follow Barrington and Elmhurst and make the masking of students optional for the upcoming school year, regardless of vaccination status. Leave it up to the parents, guardians and families to decide what is right for them. Arlington Heights is no different than these other towns, and towns across the country, who have decided to drop the mask mandate. In fact, all summer I've noticed parents allowing their unvaccinated children to go unmasked from Target to dance recitals. The decisions are up to you, Arlington Heights School Board District 25. Thank you for your time and continued dedication to our community.</p>
Dorothy Robak-lacch	<p>CdC recommends masks for the unvaccinated , that means the vast majority of all the students. Please protect students who are at high risk like my son.</p>
Deborah Freudenberger	<p>District 25 Board:</p> <p>I urge you to follow the school guidance from the CDC medical professionals who have been selected to make important decisions in regards to keeping our children and community safe based on their medical knowledge and experience.</p> <p>Per the CDC:</p> <p>*Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.</p> <p>*Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority.</p> <p>To create a safe return as the CDC promotes and to prioritize the largest number of students to return to in-person learning, the mask guidance for all unvaccinated individuals must be followed. Since children 12 and younger will not be able to be fully vaccinated by the start of school, elementary schools must require masks for all.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and careful consideration.</p>
Tracy Falconer	<p>Dear Board members,</p> <p>As a resident, taxpayer, parent, and voter, please change the masking and emergency use vaccine policies to optional for our children this upcoming school year and allow parents the ability to make the best choices for their children. Take the time to poll the community, research policies, and recognize the suggested guidances are not laws. It is up to the choice of local districts in representing their constituents. Please, stand by what you know is right, and represent the best interests of our children. Thank you for your service to our community and for your time.</p>
Jennifer Weglarz	<p>Masks should be optional for all children. By requiring masks for some and not others, it is considered discrimination. Some people are unable to receive the vaccine due to medical reasons, and if masks are required for those who are not vaccinated, the district is violating their rights to medical privacy by forcing them to reveal their private medical information to everyone. I would like to</p>

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	reference Illinois statue Health Care Right if Conscience Act, 745 ILCS 70/5 from Ch. 111 1/2, par. Sec. 5. Discrimination.
Alina Laurie	Hello, I call upon the elected school Board members to put aside their own personal feelings or anxieties and vote to represent the wishes of the kids and parents of Arlington Heights. Everyone in this community has been making their own decisions on when to wear mask and not wear a mask since June. Kids have played sports, attended camps, danced in competitions, taken family trips, all making decisions that work for their family. Trust the collective intelligence and on decency of the Arlington Heights parents. Vote to ensure the choice is left to parents and kids to either wear a mask or not wear a mask.
Amanda Bhansali	<p>Please abide by CDC and Illinois recommended policy of requiring unvaccinated individuals to wear masks in schools for the duration of the 21-22 school year.</p> <p>Yes, many adults and older children are vaccinated. However, our elementary students won't have that opportunity until second trimester at least. With new variants becoming more dominant, we cannot know how children will be potentially impacted by new strains in the short and long term.</p> <p>I love that school is in person for our children this year. Please maximize their in person attendance by limiting the spread of this disease: require unvaccinated individuals to wear mask in schools.</p>
Suzan Liu	Please make masks optional!
Jenni Von Tobel	Please make masks optional next year for both elementary and middle schools.
Lauren Buysse	I'n regards to mask policy for the upcoming school year. Until such time that vaccines are an option for all students at the school, masks should continue to be required to maintain as safe an environment as possible for all attendees.
Jennifer Campbekl	I appreciate what a difficult spot our educators are in. However, I hope they continue to base their decision on the science and facts. There are many students under the age of 12 who cannot be vaccinated yet and are therefore at a greater risk. Even if these children are in a household where all members who are eligible to be vaccinated have received both doses, they can still contract and spread the virus. While being vaccinated means you will not feel the worst effects of the virus should you contact it, you can still pass it to those who have not been vaccinated and put them at risk of experiencing the worst symptoms. The newest Delta variant, in particular, seems to be having the worst impact on youths. While I would love to trust that everyone is doing their part to keep themselves and others safe, it is simply not realistic to do so. Everyone has a right to make their own choices regarding their personal health. But should that be at the risk of others health and safety? Especially when it can be prevented by a gesture as simple and relatively harmless as wearing a mask? It seems that a vaccine will be available for the young members of our community closer to the end of the year, therefore the mask requirement would not continue indefinitely. I think it would be in the best interest of all to require mask in school building and on school grounds until the point in time when those under the age of 12 are able to receive the vaccine, should their parent or guardian choose that path.
Michelle Casillas	<p>Please let masks be optional, as parents we should decide what we want for our kids. This is not a law, it is a mandate and several districts have gone mask optional which is the way it should be. Alot of this doesn't make sense, for instance my daughter takes the taxi and up until the last month of the school year she was the only one in the taxi due to the "rules". Last month of school she would have another child in the taxi (6 feet apart cannot be obtained). For extended school year that just finished we didn't have any issues, masks had to be worn but in honesty now the taxi has three kids besides my daughter in a small van, no way to distance and the kids masks are either falling down or not on properly so what is the purpose?? Why would they need to social distance in class this upcoming school year but in the taxi they are sitting close to each other with masks half on. Doesn't make sense and they need to come off for those that would like that option, it is not good for them and my daughter gets a rash on her upper lip as well every so often from it.</p> <p>I also want to emphasize to please keep the children in special education in mind, special olympic,</p>

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	<p>make them feel good about themselves. So many parents tell me how their kids are made fun of because they look or act different, we can discriminate against these children. For those parents reading this please teach your child to be kind, it is not the teacher's job to teach this, kindness begins at home, have a talk with your child about this, many may not know that their child is the kid picking on another because they have special needs. Don't talk just about RACE, we need to talk about ALL the children and this includes our special community.</p>
Joanna Sopel	<p>Please make masks optional for our children</p>
Carly Lisinski	<p>Please let parents choose if they want their children to wear masks this school year.</p>
Beth O'Meara	<p>The Illinois State Board of Education recently communicated to officials at public schools across the state that school districts have the power to make masks optional this fall. Please make masks optional for all students this upcoming school year.</p>
Brian Lisinski	<p>Masks should be optional and be a choice that can be made independently by each family based upon what they feel is best for them.</p>
Marta Topolska	<p>I would like for mask to be optional.</p>
Marianne Corcoran	<p>A large part of anxiety is the unknown. Will I get the job? Will I pass the test? Will people like me? Covid has caused an immense amount of anxiety for the entire world over the last year and a half. Our kids are no exception. They watch our every move, they learn how WE react to anxiety, and they model our behavior.</p> <p>Our level of uncertainty as parents during Covid has waxed and waned but at this point we know that our kids have about a 0.005% of dying from Covid- that is a 99.995% recovery rate if they even get it at all. To me, not a risk taker, those are extremely safe odds to send my kid back to school and every single other activity in which they would like to participate.</p> <p>Now I know that not every parent has the same level of anxiety, because it does not occur in a vacuum, and I would never pretend to understand the complexities of their mental health simply because I am a psychologist. We learn quite a bit about our patients during treatment, but in the end, decisions are made by the patient. It is the same with you as a school board. You have your own strengths and responsibilities, but again in the end, you are not here to make our medical decisions. Creating an incentive program for those who are vaccinated is NOT within your wheelhouse. We appreciate your work on curriculum and budget, but we do not appreciate you encroaching into our personal lives.</p> <p>I started a MASK CHOICE petition Tuesday night at 10pm, and as of 10pm Wednesday night, less than 24 hours later, there were 460 signatures. Please take this to mean that I am not alone here. Just because I speak to you here every month and send emails weekly does not mean I am making this stuff up and I am a simply a squeaky wheel causing trouble.</p> <p>My family came to this district because of its reputation as one of the best for our children's learning potential. Please keep your focus on those wonderful parts of the district and leave the medical choices to the parents and our doctors. Choice is all I ask.</p>
Kerri Hood	<p>Look around wherever you go and see that most people are not wearing masks including children. Everyone is traveling and enjoying life again mask-free. Those that are concerned are wearing them, and that is their choice. We need to start looking at reality and be honest with ourselves here. The majority of teachers, staff, parents and children are not afraid to get back to normal and live their lives without masks or distancing. Stop just following the narrative that some virtue-signaling people pushed about needing remote or needing masks to protect the entire world, especially when many of those have been vacationing in Florida this summer mask-free. Those that want to be vaccinated have been or will be vaccinated. It is not up to schools to make decisions for families on what health risks they are willing to take. It is up to parents PERIOD on whether or not they want their children taking non-FDA approved vaccines or to wear masks. PARENTS make decisions. We as</p>

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	<p>responsible parents have already been consulting with our own family doctors on whether or not we should be vaccinated, and we as responsible parents are following their expert advice. Emotional blackmail of threatening to remove healthy kids from school if they are not vaccinated or wearing masks because they came within some magical distance of someone else is not ok. Get back to education and leave health decisions up to the families like they were before. Other districts have already made masks optional for this year - D200 Wheaton, D15 McHenry, Oswego and D220 Barrington so far. How will we know vaccinations are working, if we refuse to remove the mitigations?? Step 1, remove masks. Step 2 (after maybe 4 weeks,) remove distancing and exclusions. After experiencing this for some time, then you will have data to prove this was the right direction or if more tweaks need to be made. We can no longer accept some people creating irrational fear only when it comes to being in school. These same people are not afraid anywhere else. Move forward.</p>
<p>heidi steinike</p>	<p>I ask you to please strongly consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make masking OPTIONAL for ALL students and staff, both INDOORS and OUT as so many other districts have already confirmed they are doing. 2. STOP contact tracing and pulling HEALTHY kids out of school. It wasn't necessary last year and it most certainly won't be necessary this year. The numbers proved it. Last year 3811 were contact traced with only 5 resulting in positive cases. Of those 5 it is impossible to even confirm they in fact contracted covid from a fellow student. 3. Do not perform regular covid testing on our children. It is distracting and takes away from their learning and is 100% unnecessary, especially with the positivity rates at barely 2%. 4. Stop the unnecessary zoning of children during recess and any other time. Allow them to play freely about the playground , mask-free with anyone from any class. Zoning is unnecessary and has proven to detrimentally impact the social and emotional health of our children. 5. When a child does not feel well, please do not automatically assume it is covid and force all siblings to go home with the sick child and not allow any of them to return until a covid test clears all children in the family. This is unnecessary and disruptive. A child is MORE likely to have the stomach flu, strep, or a common cold/flu than covid.
<p>Jamie and Maureen Schmidt</p>	<p>To the Board: We are writing to express our concerns about the up coming school year. We do not wish to debate the "science" any longer. The "science" has become irrelevant to us as the "experts" have repeatedly changed their views in order to make the "data" fit their own agendas. We would like to make it very clear that a quality, in-person school experience is the only acceptable option for this fall. To us, this means an optional mask policy. Our child, who suffers from asthma and various allergies shall not be forced to wear a mask, for any length of time. We feel the mask is a far greater risk than any remote risk of severe covid symptoms. It is our responsibility to protect our child. Parents who are concerned about the virus can choose to mask their children. Teachers also have the choice to protect themselves with vaccines and masks. Their concerns do not hold any more value than ours, and they have no right to place an unhealthy burden on our child.</p> <p>My Child=My Choice. Our child looks forward to returning to school maskless and ready to learn. Thank you, Jamie and Maureen Schmidt</p>
<p>Natalie White</p>	<p>Masks should be at parents discretion. I agree with the following information that I recently read: "All COVID-19 masks are authorized, not approved or licensed by the federal government; they are Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only. EUA products are by definition experimental and thus require the right to refuse. Under the Nuremberg Code, the foundation of ethical medicine, no one may be coerced to participate in a medical experiment. Consent of the individual is "absolutely essential". Any EUA mandate requiring individuals to wear face masks conflicts with Section 360bbb-3(e)(1)(A)(ii)(I-III), which provides that the person must be informed of the option to refuse to wear the device."</p>

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	<p>Now that all faculty have had the option to be vaccinated, there is no reason that masks should be required. My ask is that you please update the plans for the fall to make masks optional. Each family should be given the OPTION to choose what is best for their children.</p> <p>There are many reasons ... of most importance to our family are the social and health reasons that should be considered. The need to see facial expressions for learning social cues and how to speak properly. The need for fresh air and not breathing in their own carbon dioxide over and over again.</p> <p>In addition, mask options should not be based on whether children are vaccinated or not, even for those under age 12. Vaccination and mask wearing should be a choice and should not teach our children inequities based on person life decisions. This should align with equity and inclusion practices and not go against those.</p> <p>Lastly, I hope we are looking at the data, and not solely reviewing IDPH guidelines. For example, Waukesha School District (Wisconsin) has been mask-optional for ~2 months pre- end of school. There's data that had shown that despite that, rates of exposure, etc. have not increased. There's no statistical harm in going mask-optional - if there is, I hope it will be shared if it is factored into decision making. Thank you for your time.</p>
Jacob White	<p>My wife recently submitted this and I wanted to make sure the message is heard so I am resharing:</p> <p>Masks should be at parents discretion. I agree with the following information that I recently read: "All COVID-19 masks are authorized, not approved or licensed by the federal government; they are Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) only. EUA products are by definition experimental and thus require the right to refuse. Under the Nuremberg Code, the foundation of ethical medicine, no one may be coerced to participate in a medical experiment. Consent of the individual is "absolutely essential". Any EUA mandate requiring individuals to wear face masks conflicts with Section 360bbb-3(e)(1)(A)(ii)(I-III), which provides that the person must be informed of the option to refuse to wear the device."</p> <p>Now that all faculty have had the option to be vaccinated, there is no reason that masks should be required. My ask is that you please update the plans for the fall to make masks optional. Each family should be given the OPTION to choose what is best for their children.</p> <p>There are many reasons ... of most importance to our family are the social and health reasons that should be considered. The need to see facial expressions for learning social cues and how to speak properly. The need for fresh air and not breathing in their own carbon dioxide over and over again.</p> <p>In addition, mask options should not be based on whether children are vaccinated or not, even for those under age 12. Vaccination and mask wearing should be a choice and should not teach our children inequities based on person life decisions. This should align with equity and inclusion practices and not go against those.</p> <p>Lastly, I hope we are looking at the data, and not solely reviewing IDPH guidelines. For example, Waukesha School District (Wisconsin) has been mask-optional for ~2 months pre- end of school. There's data that had shown that despite that, rates of exposure, etc. have not increased. There's no statistical harm in going mask-optional - if there is, I hope it will be shared if it is factored into decision making. Thank you for your time.</p>
Amanda Madsen	<p>Dear Board members, As a parent of two D25 students, I am asking you to change the masking and emergency use vaccine policies to OPTIONAL for our children for this upcoming school year and beyond. It is</p>

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	<p>essential that parents have the ability to make the best choices for their children.</p> <p>The suggested guidelines are not laws. Fortunately, local control over our schools is still in place. You have the power to shape school policy for our children and community. I urge you to think critically and listen to the concerns of your constituents. Please read and watch the following primary sources of credible information.</p> <p>Please take the following into consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Risks of masking Experimental Assessment of Carbon Dioxide Content in Inhaled Air With or Without Face Masks in Healthy Children: A Randomized Clinical Trial https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/27817432) Risks of vaccination in children https://www.canadiancovidcarealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Guide_to_COVID19_vaccines_for_parents_v5.pdf3) Dr. Richard Fleming's Event 2021 https://www.flemingmethod.com/recorded-event-2021-presentation-series <p>There are many more primary sources that I can gladly share with you upon request.</p> <p>Your roles within our community come with tremendous responsibility. I am asking you to please watch and read the above information with an open and critical mind, and to realize that protecting the health and rights of our children is paramount.</p> <p>Please ally with the parents in our community to ensure that parents have CHOICE to determine what is best for our children regarding masking and vaccination.</p> <p>Thank you for your service to our community and for your time.</p> <p>Feel free to email or call me for any questions or more information. Thank you</p>

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<p>Renee Schlenhardt</p>	<p>It is time for choice. The medical emergency is over, and our numbers locally continue to flatten. Parents should be the people responsible for medical decisions for their kids, not schools, or the state.</p> <p>I was disappointed by the Superintendent update from the last board meeting where it was discussed that only vaccinated individuals have mask choice.</p> <p>It's also disconcerting to hear that coercion is being used to "encourage eligible children 12+ to get the vaccine" so they won't be subjected to Quarantines (which have proven this past year to not be effective 3811 only resulted in 5 positive cases. The overuse of exclusions needs to be done away with. I know several people that have been quarantined multiple times, including an 8th grader who had COVID last Fall and she ended up missing her graduation and end of year activities. This is punitive and has a very negative impact on these students.</p> <p>It's time to approach things as we did pre-pandemic, as COVID is not going away.</p> <p>This JAMA study shows that masks are detrimental to children:https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2781743</p> <p>Let the parents decide on vaccine for 12+, and don't misuse "protocols" to punish those families that have a right to make medical decisions in consultation with their doctors, which may result in the decision to wait on the vaccine. Do you want to bare the responsibility if a child has negative medical reactions to the vaccine? Are you aware that it is not fully FDA approved? Masks need to be optional for all, students, parents, and staff. If you choose to continue to mandate them, you need to provide the specific law that proves you have the legal right to do so. Thank you</p>
<p>Karen Wolff</p>	<p>As other school districts drop the mask mandate for the upcoming school year, we should do the same. Parents who want their children to wear masks can have that choice, and parents who do not want their children to wear masks can also have that choice. It is clear at this point that children do not get sick from or spread this coronavirus. You've heard this time and time again. It's time to stop treating students as though they're the problem - they haven't been the problem for the past year-and-a-half, and it's time to let them be kids who can enjoy going to school every day. It's time to let them breathe again - literally and figuratively. Don't let talk of variants and vaccines convince you that children need to cover their faces. We know they don't, and we know schools do not have high incidence of transmission. To say you are simply following IDPH and ISBE guidelines is passing accountability onto someone else; as a district, we can and should make decisions at the local level. Your responsibility is to help create a positive, productive learning environment. All summer, people have been gathering together in stadiums, in restaurants, and in backyard barbeques without masks. Masking children this upcoming school year is not virtuous and it is not right. It should be a choice made by parents and students, not a mandate forced by this school district. Thank you.</p>
<p>Magdalena Martinez</p>	<p>Please allow parents to determine if they desire for their child to be masked. Language acquisition is an important factor to consider at the Pre-K to 8th grade levels. Articulation of language is particularly impacted by masks. Adults have a tolerance for masks, which is greater than that of a child. Many young children have sensory issues which make wearing a mask for lengthy periods of time even more challenging. The District should put its efforts into focusing on ventilation systems and air circulation efforts, along with other mitigations rather than solely focusing on masks. Parents have the ability to evaluate risk tolerance in relation to Covid for their individual family. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.</p>
<p>Michele Hilgart</p>	<p>I understand that there is a parent petition circulating to ask the district to make masking optional for all students in the fall. I am writing to respectfully ask you to hold the course on the indoor masking</p>

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	<p>requirement previously communicated for the fall.</p> <p>While the low rate of transmission may in fact make many parents comfortable with their children being unmasked indoors, the fact remains that there are still some children—even if it is a relatively small percentage—who are vulnerable to COVID and at risk for severe complications, as well as some vulnerable adults who are not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons. I wish you could see the comments I've seen shared recently in groups for parents of medically complex kids and children with disabilities. We are terrified that the district is going to force us to choose between keeping our children safe and retaining their access to a free and appropriate public education.</p> <p>The majority of students in D25 are not currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccines, and will not be eligible until sometime after schools reopen in the fall. The delta variant is rising quickly throughout the US making the risk of outbreaks much more likely, even among children, and particularly as fall approaches. It may seem compassionate and reasonable to allow parents to decide whether their children are masked, but we know from research that masks protect both the wearer and those around them, and for many of us who have vulnerable children or vulnerable family members at home, the risk of sending our masked children to school with mostly unmasked peers is too great. You will be trading healthy students' choice to forgo masks for the at-risk students' choice to attend school at all. Many of these students have already suffered the greatest degrees of isolation and learning loss throughout the pandemic, and have had their right to FAPE significantly challenged.</p> <p>The District has a responsibility to make decisions that protect all students. I ask you to please keep the indoor mask mandate in place until your most vulnerable students and those with vulnerable family members can be vaccinated. Once all students are eligible for vaccines, and parents have had the opportunity to choose whether or not to vaccinate their children, then it will be reasonable to give all parents a choice of whether they want to unmask their children and risk spreading the virus in schools.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration. Parent, Greenbrier and Olive Mary Stitt</p>
<p>The following comments were received after the submission deadline and not included in the July 15, 2021 Board meeting.</p>	
<p>Maryann Zaleski</p>	<p>Dear Board members,</p> <p>Although, there are multitude of topics that need to be addressed, I want to focus on the ongoing debate of mask wearing in the schools.</p> <p>As I have watched parents speak at the last few board meetings, advocating for their kids and educating people on how the district continued to exclude healthy children, and how statistics show that masks are useless in transmitting a virus, it became apparent to me on what could have been done differently while addressing the Board.</p> <p>The mistake made was the Board was asked to have mercy on our kids while they discuss decisions on exclusions and mask wearing. The truth is, we don't have to ask, and there should be NO debate. While many teachers and staff hide behind the various unions and groups in IL, and while ISBE has you in their back pocket, we the parents have a little something in our back pockets too, and it's called "the law".</p> <p>For those of you who are not familiar with IL law, allow me to educate you, and for those who know the law and are choosing to ignore it, let me refresh your memory. You see, the legislators make the laws and create administrative bodies that are given certain authorities to pass rules and regulations given by those legislators, in this case IDPH and ISBE, who then report to the governor, bringing me to my next point.</p> <p>A governors executive order is merely a rule of guidance, not a law. While you follow the CDC and IDPH recommendations, that's all they are is recommendations. Suggestions. Not mandates. They do NOT replace local and state laws. Since HB 2789 has currently not been passed into law, IDPH has NO powers within the schools. All an executive order does, is instill fear in uninformed</p>

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	<p>people who don't know the laws. It's just guidance in a revisal of public health guidelines. It means NOTHING legally. Its not a rule, regulation, or an adoptive standard within the IL administrative code Title 23.1.20.</p> <p>Are there any duly adoptive rules, regulations or standards in the administrative code that says masks are required? The last time I checked, the answer...is NO. Title 23 says nothing about virus or mask wearing that lawfully says you have to follow guidance. In addition, IL Law tells ISBE to create standards for schools. If you go to IL.gov and look up 105 ILCS 5/2.3.25, you will also see nothing about masks exists.</p> <p>Now, let me address the concept that per the governors orders, if not followed, the schools won't get funding, can be shut down, or won't be covered by insurance companies. That is totally false and untrue. You see, the schools are protected by Tort Immunity...so as long as your following Title 23 you have nothing to worry about. Title 23 of the administrative code is what you follow, correct? If so, please show the people where it says masks are required.</p> <p>What are you going to do if every child from K-12 comes to school without a mask? Do you slap them with a pink slip, send them home, expel them? Why place that burden on your teachers and staff? And if that's your choice, know that you are going to have a very busy year along with your attorneys if lawsuits are made against the schools.</p> <p>Masks should be optional.</p> <p>And does anyone actually understand the science behind the CDC's recommendations for the segregation of vaccinated vs. unvaccinated children in the same room? Here's a fact for you about the CDC. The CDC is a vaccine company, owns 56 vaccine patents, and buys and distributes \$4.6 billion in vaccines annually through the Vaccines for Children program. Thats not science. That's a business. Unfortunately, I don't have time to get into the Nuremberg Code today, but I encourage parents to familiarize yourselves with what it is.</p> <p>As I come to a close, I'd like to say to the parents: please educate your children at home every chance you get. Due to the some of the politics that have moved into our schools and the teacher's unions, unfortunately, we cannot leave ALL the decisions about our children's educations up to them. Teach your children to stand up for themselves and their rights, teach them to speak up when they see injustice, teach them to be compassionate and respect others, even if they think differently than you, teach them right from wrong, and teach them good vs. evil because while there is a lot of good in the world, there is a lot of evil as well, and sometimes we need to stand up to it no matter how difficult that might be.</p>
Emily Gromer	<p>It's time to unmask our kids. It's time for CHOICE! All families should be able to decide what is best health practice for themselves. Dr. Bein, you are NOT a doctor, and neither are any of our Board members. Masks and vaccines should be optional, always. Discrimination against the unvaccinated or those who choose not to mask, by implementing biased, unfair punishment and segregation measures, is illegal. Follow the science. Surrounding districts have already voted masks out for next year. Drop contact tracing as well. It's pointless. You simply cannot micromanage children and families within the school districts, when the minute they step out into public space, they are with each other, maskless, running around and living life. Stop trying to dictate what our children do by suppressing them and denying them their legal right to education, thru quarantining and failed virtual learning . Lastly, drop the politics in our district. Teachers should not be displaying political signs and propaganda in their classrooms, teaching CRT and creating more divide in our schools. It is disgusting.</p>