

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

School Board Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2021

Brian Cerniglia, Vice President of the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education, called the meeting to order on October 7, 2021 to accept a motion to adjourn into closed session at 6:47 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); The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).



Public Hearing on the Waiver of Administrative Cost Cap



Regular Meeting

Brian Cerniglia, Vice President of the Arlington Heights School District 25 Board of Education, called the meeting to order 7:42 p.m. on October 7, 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, Rich Olejniczak, Anisha Ismail Patel, and Greg Scapillato

Board members excused: Scott Filipek

Others Present: Dr. Lori Bein, Superintendent; Stacey Mallek, Assistant Superintendent for Business/CSBO; Dr. Brian Kaye, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Planning; Dr. Peg Lasiewicki, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Dr. Becky FitzPatrick, Assistant Superintendent for the Department of 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.

Recognitions and Presentations

The principals from Dryden and Greenbrier Elementary Schools, Ms. Akemi Sessler and Ms. Donna Bingaman, presented information about their respective schools. Ms. Sessler showed the enrollment by grade, and talked about the theme at Dryden, "Empowered to Learn/Be a Light". They are excited about learning and playing in-person, the RULER social emotional learning, and all of their new resources.

Ms. Bingaman showed the enrollment by grade, and talked about the theme at Greenbrier, "Let your true colors shine!" They are excited about introducing the RULER program to the students and families, having all of the students back in the building, and the new literacy and math resources.

Mr. Conley entered the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

The Board thanked the principals for their presentations, and it was noted that the Board toured Dryden Elementary School this week.

Community Input

- Greg Lendy addressed the Board regarding students' rights
- Ilya Fishman addressed the Board regarding child vaccinations.
- Kim Dyer addressed the Board regarding addressing a petition question on next agenda.
- Brittany Polihronis addressed the Board regarding full day Kindergarten, changes in school buildings and communications to parents, and the policy on lunch.
- Ewa Wojcik addressed the Board regarding the emotional and social implications of wearing facial coverings by students.
- Jerry Berger addressed the Board regarding the Governor's mandate.
- Rachel Schwartz addressed the Board regarding the effectiveness of masks.
- Nikki Richmond addressed the Board regarding the choice for children to wear masks.
- Marianne Corcoran addressed the Board regarding making masks optional.
- Nick Richmond addressed the Board regarding the metrics it would take for the Board to make masks optional.
- Karen Wolff addressed the Board regarding not having any more mandates or legalities.
- Kerri Hood addressed the Board regarding close contacts and the remote academy.
- Erin Zurek, who spoke on the behalf of another parent, addressed the Board regarding the mask mandate.

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

Consent Agenda

Motion: A. Patel moved and G. Scapillato seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve those items on the Consent Agenda as follows: (A) Personnel Report and Addendum to Personnel Report; (B) Invoices; (C) Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes of September 23, 2021; (D) Public Hearing on the Budget Meeting minutes of September 23, 2021; (E) Regular and Closed Session Meeting minutes of September 23, 2021; (F) Hold Closed session minutes of March 18, 2021 and April 29, 2021 through June 30, 2021, and April 8, 2021 per Board Policy 2:220-E1; (G) Release Closed session minutes of January 1, 2021 through February 25, 2021 and April 8, 2021 per Board Policy 2:220-E1; (H) Destruction of Audiotapes July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 per Board Policy 2:220-E1. The motion was amended to correct the year of item (H) to 2019.

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

Communications:

The following reports were given:

- NSSEO – Ms. Faso reported that NSSEO has a committee that is currently working on COVID testing and professional learning; and they are also planning for the 2021-2022 in-person opportunities. Families can sign up to attend a Harvest Festival on October 30, which will be held at the Sunrise Lake Outdoor Education Center.
- IASB – Ms. Patel reported that the Joint Annual Conference will be held in November. She asked Board members to review the resolutions before the November Board meeting; and the Board will discuss what decisions to take back to the resolutions committee at the conference.
- ED-RED – Mr. Olejniczak reported that the ED-RED luncheon meeting was held last month. He explained ED-RED's legislative initiatives.
- Board Governance – Mr. Cerniglia read an excerpt from the Board Governance Framework regarding Board Protocols.
- Other Board Communication – None

The following reports were received:

- PTA – Ms. Barbieri reported that at the Regional PTA event was held this week and many District 25 units received awards in several categories. The volunteers were thanked. Reflections projects will be due during the first week of November.

- ABC25 –Ms. Faso reported that October 15 is the deadline for teachers to submit grant submissions. ABC25 is also in need of volunteers.
- ATA – Ms. Berg showed pictures from Ivy Hill Elementary School, and talked about many of the happenings there.

Student Learning – No Report

Student Services

Special Education Local Education Agency Determination

Dr. Lasiewicki stated that the Illinois State Board of Education provides an annual assessment of the district's implementation of the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which ensures that districts are performing with respect to the provision of special education and related services. The indicators and scores were reviewed, and the district meets requirements, with a total score of 24 out of 27, and an overall percentage of 88.89%.

The LEA data shows that District 25 has earned a Score of zero in the area of Indicator 6a, Early Childhood Service Delivery Settings. Dr. Lasiewicki explained the reasons for receiving this score, and based on a review of our projected data for 2021-22 school year, the ISBE Principal Consultant for Early Childhood noted that we would not need a remediation plan.

District 25 received an overall score of 3 for Indicator 5a, Least Restrictive Environment. The state target for indicator 5a changed after ISBE determined their target was set too high stastically. AHSD 25 has now received 54.60% for Indicator 5a. Our ultimate goal is to increase this percentage of students receiving special education services in the least restrictive environment.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion on clarification of line items on the matrix, and continuing to improve Special Education. Dr. Lasiewicki was thanked for the report.

Business and Finance

Employee Benefits Renewal for 2022

Ms. Mallek noted that the Benefits Committee, which includes Mr. Conley and staff across all groups, held two meetings. The proposed renewal increase was 3.0% on a blended average. Two factors impact the premiums: 1) The Board has a negotiated cap of 6% on the increase in premium they will pick up each year, and 2) the employees have to pay a minimum of 3% of premium for single insurance and 33% of premium for family insurance. Based on the renewal premiums and these factors, the employee cost for single insurance will increase from \$25.93/month to \$26.87/month and family insurance will increase from \$626.76/month to \$643.35/month. The Insurance Committee is recommending moving the HMOIL plan to the same self-funded arrangement as the regular PPO plan.

The renewal increase is consistent with medical inflation/trend of 5.2% and pharmacy trend of 8.8%. The renewal is calculated based on the most recent 24 months of claims data. This includes calendar year 2020 experience, where claims fell significantly below budget due to COVID. Calendar year 2021 is already exceeding the anticipated year-to-date budget, and we expect calendar year 2022 to continue to run high. Based on this, the Insurance Committee is recommending some changes to the pharmacy plan that have no additional cost but will impact utilization on high-cost drugs in anticipation of a large increase for 2023. We also have the two alternate health insurance plans with different benefits and lower premium costs. These two stand-alone plans will increase slightly. The district has a three-year rate guarantee with VSP for vision insurance, so premiums will remain unchanged. Delta insurance increases were reviewed, and there will be no change in cost for life insurance.

A Board member noted that the new prescription plan is very common, and will help reduce the Board's costs. Board members asked questions regarding the effect of the pandemic on our insurance claim history.

Motion: A. Patel moved and G. Scapillato seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the "RESOLUTION for the Continuation of Various Insurance Coverages for the 2022 Calendar Year".

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

Resolution for Waiver of Limitation of Administrative Cost Cap for FY22

Ms. Mallek explained that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, anticipated costs for the 2020-21 school year were significantly underspent. Anticipating a more typical budget for those same costs in 2021-22 causes the increase between last year's actual to the current budget to exceed the 5% administrative cost cap limitation. District 25 is identified by ISBE as having administrative expenditures per pupil in the 25th percentile and below for all districts of the same type. As a result, the Board of Education has the ability to apply for a waiver of this School Code mandate for the 2021-22 school year after posting required notices and hosting a public hearing on the subject. The information was posted on the website, in the newspaper, and sent to the local legislators. Ms. Mallek's office was thanked for all of the work they are doing.

Motion: A. Patel moved and C. Conley seconded the motion that the Board of Education approve the Resolution for Waiver or Modification of Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/17-1.5 For Limitation on Administrative Costs for School Year 2021-22.

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

Facilities Management – No Report

Personnel and Planning

Staffing Update

Dr. Kaye updated the Board on staffing for the school year. He reviewed the FTE employee category comparison and building comparison. He showed breakdowns of each group with filled and unfilled positions. He reviewed the certified open positions as of October 3, and the non-certified positions as of October 4. He thanked the administrators for their time with interviewing. Dr. Kaye noted that a Food Service employee recently passed away and will be missed.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion regarding extended assignment substitutes and the Remote Academy; Teaching Assistant qualifications; and a clarification on food services hours. Dr. Kaye was thanked for the report.

Superintendent Report

2021-2022 School Year Update

Dr. Bein provided an update to the Board on the 2021-22 school year. She showed the district COVID dashboard which is updated every Monday. She noted that information is changing daily, and explained the trend over time in detail.

She discussed the Shield testing, which includes the number of tests and the number of positive identified through the testing. As of today, there are over 1,600 students enrolled. Testing is going very smoothly, thanks to the parent volunteers, district administrators, and students. Shield testing can be challenging for the Early Childhood and some Kindergarten students. She noted that it takes approximately two minutes for middle school and five to eight minutes for elementary students to take the test, not including going to and from the test. Results are received in less than 24 hours, and often in the same day.

The class sizes in the Academy Programs were reviewed. Students in 3rd through 5th grades check into the original teacher, and then are split into groups, utilizing an additional teacher.

The guidance for lunch is still that schools should maintain three feet distance to the greatest extent possible. Close contacts have been changed to six feet distance for contact tracing when masks are removed during lunch. Schools are making modifications during lunch, and include being outside where possible, utilizing more interior spaces, and reducing time without masks. The goal is to reduce the close contacts.

There is a lot to celebrate this year and include classroom activities, sports and clubs, field trips, PTA events, ABC25 Grants, and the GetBurbed Challenge plans. Dr. Bein thanked the Board for their commitment, including the upcoming Board Development meeting next week.

Board members asked questions and there was discussion on the Remote Academy; Shield testing; how other districts are handling the opt-in for Shield testing; and feedback from teachers on testing. Dr. Bein added that anyone that is a volunteer or employee of

the district, and our local fire and police department personnel can come and test at our schools.

Strategic Plan – Family and Community Goal Update

Dr. Bein updated the Board on the Family and Community Goal update from the Strategic Plan. She read the goal and each strategy to help reach the goal. The team is a combination of parents, community members, administrators, and staff and is a very positive and productive group. The group began by brainstorming objectives. When the group meets later this month, they will continue to brainstorm, prioritize those items, and then will determine how to measure them. They will also create a family and community survey.

Community Input

- Kerri Hood addressed the Board regarding the Remote Academy.
- Marianne Zaleski addressed the Board regarding Shield testing feedback, classroom time, and the Remote Academy.

Future Agenda Items

Topics with Dates to be Determined

Dr. Bein read a request from a community member regarding the Unified Special Olympics Program starting Fall 2022. The Board approved stipends for the Special Olympics program at the last meeting. The district is interested in the unified program, but Special Olympics stated we should start with traditional program before we move to a unified program. Board members determined that the request can be added to the Special Olympics update agenda item that will be discussed in the spring.

Dr. Bein asked if the updated draft Board topics document meets the intent of the Board. Board members agreed that there should be a column on the left with the topic and a date in the right column, and that annual or typical topics should be color coded.

New Topics:

A Board member requested that the Board receive updates on the Remote Academy and Shield testing. A Board member requested that the Board send a letter to the Governor or ISBE regarding local control. The Board would like to have the discussion on a future agenda, and then draft the letter.

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

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

The Board adjourned the regular meeting at 10:52 p.m.

Submitted,

Lana M. O'Brien
Recording Secretary

Approved: November 11, 2021

President
Board of Education

Secretary
Board of Education

Date minutes available for public inspection: November 16, 2021

Date minutes posted on District website: November 16, 2021

Community Input Received Electronically

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the October 7, 2021 Board Meeting
Megan L. Kalweit	Why is the indoor mask mandate not being enforced at board meetings? It is appalling that those choosing to not wear masks are not being either asked to wear them or leave. If mask wearing is a problem the meeting is always live streamed. There is absolutely no excuse for this behavior being acceptable. Mandates are in place for a reason - to protect. Those who do not respect others enough to help protect should be asked to leave.
Nathan Ulery	The Indoor Mask Mandate needs to be enforced on all members of the public attending school board meetings. The anti-mask members of the public are trying to intimidate COVID cautious people by refusing to wear masks, thus removing their ability to provide public comments during the meeting while feeling safe. If a speaker removes their mask, the microphone should be cut as a warning and if they refuse or do it again, they should be removed from the building. If an audience member is seen without a mask, one verbal warning should be given and if the behavior continues, they should also be removed from the building. I understand this is a confrontational policy, but you cannot allow this intentional, planned, intimidation to continue and the indoor mask mandate must be enforced. If necessary, the Arlington Heights Police Department should be present at meetings to enforce the state mask mandate.
Nathan Ulery	The COVID dashboard does not provide the level of transparency required for parents to make informed decisions. Other school districts report on data daily -- instead of weekly. Because case reports are often delayed, they don't show up in the school-by-school data at all. As a result, parents are forced to reach out to principals to understand what is going, such as 3 cases with overlapping time frames at Thomas in the last 10 days. Other school districts are also sharing close contact counts so parents can understand how effective the mitigating controls are working. I urge the district to commit to better transparency and update the timeliness and completeness of the COVID dashboard.
Jen Anderson	<p>After attending several Board meetings during this pandemic and while a mandatory mask order is in place, I've grown tired of seeing the lack of enforcement of this policy in a public, tax-payer funded space. Board meetings are not Marianos or privately held public businesses with hourly workers. They are forums in which all people should feel comfortable and secure - and that's not happening when district leadership turns a blind eye to people flagrantly thumbing their noses at this mandate.</p> <p>The Board enforces other policies such as speaking limits, not attacking Board members verbally, etc. and though important, those are only Board guidelines, not state mandates. I'm asking you to enforce the mask mandate with the same degree of vigor - both for meeting attendees and for all Board members - some of whom set a very poor example for the public by also wearing their mask improperly.</p> <p>I think we're beyond the point of reminding adults to properly mask while in public spaces. Those who aren't doing this didn't simply forget to pull their mask up. Their actions are intentional and need to be met with a firm policy of either complying with the law or watching the meetings online from home where they can act in any manner they'd like.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
Cheryl Hampton	After having my child in the remote academy for 4 days due to exclusion for close contact, I would encourage the board to look to alter the remote learning environment. I feel that no more than 2 grades should be combined (currently 3) to ensure age appropriate material is covered (3rd grade math is quite different than 5th grade math). Additionally, I feel it should be family choice to receive assignments from the students regular classroom.
Amira Zaben	I'm writing to request changes to the district's Covid dashboard to make it more accurate and transparent. I'd like it to be updated daily and to reflect changes to number counts from previous

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the October 7, 2021 Board Meeting
	weeks so that parents such as myself can make informed decisions for our children in D25. Thank you.
Katie Rausch	I have some concerns with the lack of instruction and opportunity for instruction while our children are stuck in quarantine. Please explain why parents, who choose or are able to help their kids, are NOT provided classroom lessons in math and literacy. This makes no sense. We know our children are behind, data proves it. Our remote academy is not enough. If you have a parent willing to help and ask for materials to be sent home, you support that! I'm a certified teacher and if my children are sent home for close contact, I will make sure I get the materials I need to teach my kids until they can go back. For years, teachers have always sent home work to sick children who have the flu etc. You need to work with parents, not against them. Dr. Bein, please talk with your principals about this. Also, please fix lunch!!! Please consider keeping them outside to eat. Please do what is needed to keep these kids in school!
Betty Levinsky	Hello, I would like to understand why children in D25 dont have the option to join their class via Zoom to continue their education while in quarantine. Kids in other school districts (for example SD23) have that option. What happens if a student is a close contact more than once? They may miss 3,4,6 or more weeks of school. Why is it OK for the kids to be behind? This need to be addressed ASAP.
Robyn Swanson	After the blatant disregard of the state indoor mask mandate by many attendees and speakers at the last BOE meeting, I am calling on the School Board and district administration to fulfill its obligation to enforce all public health policies, including masking in all D25 buildings including during public meetings. The mandate was put in place to protect the health and safety of the community as a whole. It is not open for interpretation. The order is clear. If a community member does not agree with the policy, they have the opportunity to watch the live stream broadcast and submit public comments via the district website.
Robyn Swanson	In regards to the D25 Covid Dashboard, I would ask that the administration make improvements to provide accurate, up to date active case information. District 214 updates their dashboard daily to include all active cases and quarantines through the previous day. This better illustrates the active Covid situation at each school. https://www.d214.org/Page/3831 Currently, the D25 dashboard is updated on Mondays to show the previous weeks reported cases either when an individual is first symptomatic or tests positive, whichever is first. Cases that come in during the current week that were determined to have started the week prior are not added and render the reported information invalid. The trend line is updated to reflect all cases at some point, but that is not transparent reporting.
Elizabeth Green	Please do NOT enforce Covid-19 vaccine mandates for D25 students.
Melissa Van Buren	Having children at Ivy hill, I have seen far too many healthy children being forced to be at home doing the quarantine academy because of how lunch is set up. We need to reevaluate how we have the children having lunch to decrease this. Thomas has children eating outside, I have heard some schools with tents. We need to come up with better for our kids. Second, everything I have heard of quarantine academy is horrible. We are forcing our kids to be behind their classes due to not allowing homework home from their teachers. We are punishing our kids for the administrations lack of forethought for how we are setting up lunch, which is the only time we do not allow test to stay.
Leah Ross	Thank you for leading the way into such a wonderful and successful school year for all kids so far in D25. My four children are exceptionally happy because of their wonderful and truly amazing teachers, coaches and administrators making this year as back to "normal" as possible and going the extra mile in all ways. Truly! I have four thriving children (three in D25 and one in high school) and I'm thankful. They love school and have not complained one day about wearing their masks so long for both their school days and during their sports endeavors (not because they

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the October 7, 2021 Board Meeting
	<p>like it or are used to it or are so damn “resilient and strong!”) Nope. Just because they have resigned themselves to knowing that strapping that thing to their ears gives them full access to all of the things that they love. School. Teachers. Friends. Sports. Clubs.</p> <p>But I’m skeptical. What more is coming? What more will those who seek to control the invisible ask of us as parents and of our children? When will we acknowledge the positive developments of our community being such a healthy place with low Covid positivity rates and transmission and a very high percentage of vaccinated adults? When will we all have the same risk assessment to see that our daily life safety does not and cannot rely on how humans wear a cloth or paper face covering correctly and most often incorrectly with no hope of ever fully monitoring and or correcting those to keep it completely over their mouths and noses in all places that humans might gather? The answer to that last question is never...so we need leaders to set the breaking point and set a promise as to when our children can see smiles again in their classrooms. Not only at recess. Not only when they take them down to eat or drink. But all day during their normal learning, socializing and communicating. We need leaders to give us this and fight for this and discuss this. Masks have been part of the pandemic process. I have respectfully followed the mandate; I tell my kids to do the same and there is no way they do it perfectly all day long. Masks have likely worked a little and not worked a lot. But there must be a threshold we cross when this ends? When?</p> <p>My 13 and 15 year olds are vaccinated (my other two are 10) and they still cannot remove their masks. And my parental concerns about that process and choice are just as valid as anyone else’s and I never diminish the worries and concerns across the vast spectrum of events and scenarios that parenting in this lifetime presents to us as loving mothers and fathers who would do anything to protect their children. My concern about my 13 year old son getting the vaccine (and wanting to wait for certain cardiology appointments and data) with his heart arrhythmia diagnosis is JUST as valid as a parent’s concern that her 10 year old can’t yet get the vaccine and she’ll be first in line for it. I took my time and my process should have been (and mostly was) respected in that process. But the reality is we all know our kids can’t have full access to their lives with the threats of unnecessary exclusions and quarantines, and we clearly see that even proving your vaccination status doesn’t allow you to send your child to school without a mask “on”. So other than being able to avoid quarantine (and of course Covid illness), what freedoms as a school district do you plan to provide? I would hope mask choice comes hand in hand with vaccine availability. It’s time to stop obsessing over exactly the moment and source and second in time that one child might infect another with a virus. Many other viruses including RSV and the flu are raging and will be worse the more we continue to try to so artificially and tightly control viral transmission amongst children. That’s truly scary and we will never live in a virus free world, never have, and will always prepare for winter sick seasons by bolstering immune systems in a variety of ways, including definitely for our family but not for all, flu shots. We cannot continue to live this way, attempting to prevent all transmission, and potentially labeling children and visibly making them identify as “vaccinated” or “unvaccinated” by drawing lines in the sand with connecting personal vaccine status directly to masks. I’m very worried that this is the road we are traveling down and I’d like to hear concrete discussion about how that can be avoided. When young elementary school children through age 11 can safely be vaccinated for Covid by family choice I think we will have finally reached a place in time in which we can unite and rejoice and come together after a long time divided. Or when? After the winter? After “the holidays?” After we all judge each other for gathering and traveling? When will we finally seek to heal? Is this the plan even? Is this the intention? I would love to hear about it. Thank you.</p>
Kevin Michael	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank you for reading the comments submitted online during the meetings. Please make this an official practice moving forward, regardless of the number of people commenting in-person. 2. The indoor mask mandate must be observed and enforced at all school board meetings. No one should feel unsafe attending a meeting in-person because there are people there being

First and Last Name	Public Comment from the October 7, 2021 Board Meeting
	<p>allowed to disregard the mandate.</p> <p>3. I support the vaccine or testing mandate for Illinois teachers. While teachers leaving the profession may be missed by their students or colleagues, I would not want my children taught by anyone who has a problem with either getting vaccinated or submitting to regular testing. As a teacher myself, I would also not be comfortable working with another educator who has a problem with this policy.</p> <p>4. Regardless of the duration of the state mask mandate in schools, I encourage District 25 to keep masks as a requirement for all students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, until at least March of 2022, and perhaps beyond that if local numbers are not extremely low.</p>
Marianne Corcoran	<p>I would like to ask the board to stop bowing to an authority that does not have the power to mandate masks and quarantines on healthy children. I am the parent and I deserve the right to medicate, not medicate, vaccinate, not vaccinate, mask or not mask my own children based on our own personal and private history. I also have the right to send my healthy child to public school to learn when they are healthy. As before, as always, when they have symptoms, they stay home.</p> <p>You claim that you have decided this year to yield the medical decisions to the experts. You are allowing the CDC to say that we wear masks but in April 2021 the CDC said that they do not have any randomized clinical trials that prove that masks, double masks, or cloth masks can definitively prevent the COVID virus.</p> <p>SHIELD testing is financially benefiting our wealthy governor. What are the benefits to our children? The only ones you are “catching” are asymptomatic and so far it is 6 out of almost 1500 tests. This is suspiciously similar to the number of children quarantined last year (3800) and only 5 testing positive. If we were evaluating efficacy, I would say this is incredibly poor.</p> <p>Why are children not allowed to receive the actual work that they needed to keep up with the class while in quarantine academy? Instead they are sitting on a screen doing busy work and then their teacher has to catch them up when they return. This is unfair to the teachers.</p> <p>When will this end? What is the goal? We deserve an answer now.</p>
<p>The following comments were received after the submission deadline and not included in the October 7, 2021 Board Meeting.</p>	
Heather Molina	<p>As a D25 parent who had a child identified as a close contact to a positive covid case I wanted to write in with some comments. My son was identified as a close contact at lunch on Friday 9/24 along with 5 other students (6 total close contacts) due to the lunch seating configuration. We received the call Sunday night letting us know he was to stay home for the week and attend the remote academy. I quickly learned that I was not able to pick up his class materials for the week as per “district policy” he was to attend remote academy which does not cover the same material his class was learning that week. I urge the district to change this policy and allow parents to pick up their class material to work on during the week so that our students are not quarantined mentally as well as physically. A student who has done nothing wrong should not have their education taken away from them for a week on top of their social interactions with their peers. In addition, now that the district has opted to eliminate the “test to stay” policy, I urge the district to move our students to 6 feet apart at lunch in order to limit the close contacts and keep our kids in school. Every day that this is not done is more learning time lost for our students as we continue to have positive cases identified daily. I do hope that as the district sees that these children who have been deemed close contacts are not subsequently testing positive that you reconsider the test to stay option to better afford our children the best opportunity to learn.</p>