

Community Input – October 26, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Address	Question/Comment
Scott Caro and Kevin Allender	1176 N. Beverly Lane	<p>As we read the email communication from Dr. Bein last Friday, October 23, we agree with the opening paragraph which credits the students, staff and families for support as we transition to the hybrid model. We have a son in first grade and appreciate the commitment and dedication from our son’s teacher every single day. The SD25 educators are truly committed to creating the best environment for our children. We cannot say that we feel the same about the leadership of the school district. We are extremely disappointed with the lack of progress being made to get our children back to school every day!</p> <p>As elected positions within our community, we would like to remind the SD25 schools board members of their role, as stated on the Illinois Association of School Boards website: “To provide local citizen control over education at a point as close to the parent and child as possible.”</p> <p>Over the past three months we have heard many parents and community members ask the school board to step up and take a leadership role in opening our schools and getting our children back into the classroom.</p> <p>As of today, nothing has changed which is the reason we are writing this letter to the school board. This is not difficult! Schools in our community, state and country have figured out how to conduct in person education. We are requesting the board take ownership and provide local citizen control over education in order to get our children back in school every day.</p> <p>It’s unfortunate that we continue to be stuck on analyzing the “right” metrics, charts and data to determine when to return to in person learning, while other schools are focused on metrics that drive academics and student success.</p> <p>We will be extremely disheartened if the next board of education update does not contain the words, “here is the plan and date that SD25 will begin five day in person learning.”</p>
Adam & Janelle Thoma	1164 N. Hickory Ave.	<p>We believe the priorities of the district are off track. Health and safety metrics have been the focus of the district this school year, however it is not the district's job to create or disseminate health and safety metrics, that is the responsibility of the ISBE. So long as the ISBE recommends in-person education to be held there should be no reason not to hold school. The only metrics that the district should be focused on are education metrics: standards and enrollment. Hybrid was touted as a stepping stone - a way to identify and work out issues with providing in-person education. While it has gone better than remote learning, it is still not what our students deserve.</p> <p>We implore you to focus all efforts on getting students into the classroom full time and stop second guessing the ISBE guidelines. Other districts who made in-person education a priority have figured it out. Private schools and preschools have figured it out. Our schools have the capability to provide excellent education when they are fully functional. Please reprioritize and put our students first. Please bring back quality in-person education to District 25.</p>
<p>The following comment was received after the submission deadline and was not included in the October 26, 2020 Board meeting.</p>		
Jenni Von Tobel	403 N. Douglas	<p>I have 3 daughters in D25, two of whom receive special services for both math and literacy. They LOVE the days that they are in school and struggle academically as well as socially on the days that they are at home. I'm writing to request that parents are given a choice for 5 day, in person school.</p> <p>As you see neighboring schools who are able to provide in-person learning for their students including all the schools on the North Shore, our neighboring communities and the private schools in our own community, I'm pleading with you to offer parents and teachers a choice for full day learning. Even if some schools go back remote for 10 days during an uptick in cases, they will then resume full time and provide the students the learning environment that they need.</p>

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		<p>I am hopeful we can do the same asap - allow the parents the choice for full time in person instruction. And if and when the cases change over the next 6 months, we can adapt as needed. I've watched board meeting after board meeting where incredible creative solutions have been offered from community members - architects, psychologists, risk management professionals and more. We as a community are able to adapt together and make it work to the best of our collective abilities for those who choose to participate in full day instruction.</p> <p>The point is that we need a choice for the parents and the many teachers who are saying they want to be in person. If it's unclear to the board how many parents and teachers that is, perhaps another survey would help gather that information.</p> <p>I urge you, the School Board, to pick a date so that we can move forward with full in person learning.</p> <p>It goes without saying but is certainly worth saying that their teachers are incredible and I am moved to tears nearly every day as I listen to them patiently instruct the kids in front of them at school, and simultaneously the ones at home on a computer. They are amazing and I hope they are being supported with everything they need right now.</p> <p>Thank you for the time you put into this decision making - please move forward with that decision.</p>