

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
Timothy Schank	<p>I do want to thank all of you for your service to the board and the district, especially in light of the additional demands imposed by COVID-19.</p> <p>I am writing with regard to the board's ongoing consideration of a return to full in-person learning (with a remote model). As noted in my comment submitted for the last meeting, parents have been informed that the board will take a data-driven approach with regard to the learning options that will be available for District 25 students. Although I do not agree with the arguably more aggressive standards adopted by our board, I strongly oppose any deviation from that data-driven approach. For the safety of our students, faculty and staff, and the community as a whole, it would be incredibly irresponsible to begin transitioning to increased in-person learning until the applicable data clearly indicates that it is safe to do so. In the current climate, the district simply cannot select a date certain (including some point in January) for a transition to in-person learning.</p> <p>Additionally, during the last meeting, I was disturbed by the comments by the school board member who seemed to be the most vocal on this topic -- it's difficult online to tell exactly who is talking. Specifically, I take issue with his assertion that the administrative team's focus should be finding any available "creative" way to squeeze students back into the schools in-person. I think all of us parents want our kids to be back in school in person when it can be done safely, but that doesn't mean "in-person at all costs." The administrative team and board should be ensuring that our schools are fulfilling its educational mission while protecting the physical and emotional health of the students. A secondary concern (but a significant one) should be participating in the community effort to prevent the spread of COVID. It is overwhelmingly clear from any common-sense reading of the CDC, IDPH, and other relevant guidance that those objectives are not served by expanding the number of students in a classroom beyond the recommended and very clearly stated six-foot spacing. Moreover, that six-foot spacing should be applied in a way that prevents students from being designated as having "close contact" with an infected student.</p> <p>It would be irresponsible from a liability perspective to take an aggressive approach to the recommended six-foot distancing guidance (based on average arm length or any other basis). The standard of care is very clear, in terms of that measure, and adopting the "alternative" (to be kind) approaches advocated during that last meeting could put the District, the Administration, and the Board in a vulnerable position in the worst case scenario where there was a need to defend a personal injury or wrongful death claim. I cannot imagine that a plaintiff's lawyer, a judge, or a jury (or an insurance carrier considering coverage issues) would be sympathetic to any argument that being aggressive about the 6-foot spacing "technically" complied with the guidance and the standard of care. The current spacing of "clearly" 6 feet is a very clear effort to comply with the guidance and ensure safety. Proper stewardship over the District's finite resources (particularly in the face of uncertain future insurance coverage) requires following both the letter and the spirit of the guidance and, if anything, erring on the side of caution and safety.</p> <p>I have been impressed by the success of many parochial schools, who have been able to operate fully in-person safely so far. But my friends who have children at those schools report an abundance of caution going above and beyond the CDC and state guidance. That's been the case with masks, spacing, and everything else. The aggressive approach that was advocated at the last meeting would not position the District for a successful transition to in-person learning under the current circumstances and would create entirely inappropriate risks to: (1) the physical health and safety of students and teachers who would participate in in-person learning under such an arrangement; (2) the mental and emotional health of students who would experience increased disruption because of the need to test, quarantine, and isolate -- both due to worries about their health and that of their classmates, but also due to the chaos of they and their friends transitioning in and out of the classroom on an unpredictable basis; and (3) the finite resources of the District.</p> <p>Thank you for your continued consideration of these matters.</p>
Alina Laurie	<p>Thank you again for your service as elected officials representing the parents and children of Arlington Heights SD 25.</p> <p>My input today is around the design of the social distancing solutions at the schools. I urge the Board to request an audit of how all the classrooms and working spaces are set up in the schools. During the prior Board meeting it became clear that in some buildings the kids are being kept further apart than actually necessary.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>To summarize: CDC/ISBE suggests a social distance, where possible, of 6' from the center of a person to the center of another person. When setting up socially distant desks, SD25 accidentally measured from the edge of the chairs. Instead of 6' of separation our kids are at an average 8'9" separation.</p> <p>It's not too late fix this, especially because it's been shown that by fixing this, the average SD25 classroom of 715 sq feet can accommodate 15 students. More students can be accommodated if the classroom is larger than the average. Based on the numbers right now of kids attending in-person (hybrid) and remote-only, almost every single child attending in-person (hybrid) right now could be switched to five days a week of in-person school if the spacing error is fixed.</p> <p>Additionally, I urge the Board to audit the risk mitigation measures that are in place for each classroom. Risk mitigation is important so that kids can work in groups or receive one-on-one coaching, can collaborate around a table while sharing ideas, can work with a lab partner on a science experiment. Right now, those shared learning experiences aren't happening in our in-person classrooms because of mistakes in how risk mitigation measures are being perceived.</p> <p>Keeping every person "socially distant" throughout the entire day would only be necessary if there are no risk mitigation measures in place. Right now, kids aren't learning as collaboratively as they could be because there isn't enough training regarding how it's okay for kids to learn side-by-side, or play violin & cello together, or complete a science experiment, as long as risk mitigation measures are in place.</p> <p>Risk mitigation measures that can be employed as necessary include: wearing masks, adequate air filtration in the buildings (which has already been tested and confirmed for SD25), opening classroom windows, going outside for lessons, keeping group collaboration on an assignment to less than 15 minutes with breaks.</p>
Monica Hinchey	<p>First and foremost, thank you for the work you are doing. I know it is not easy and nothing like what you expected when you were elected to this board.</p> <p>In light of the country's rising positive COVID-19 cases, the Illinois rising numbers, the decreasing number of available hospital beds, the increasing number of children with COVID-19, I beg of you to continue to take a data driven approach when it comes to deciding how our schools prepare for in-person learning. After watching the last board meeting, it became apparent to me that your return to school approach is much more aggressive than what I had originally thought. For the safety of our entire community, based on the current data we have, there is no way that we can conscientiously be talking about a date to return to full in-person. It is bad for the children, the community and for your employees.</p> <p>I would also like to comment on the amount of time that that was spent at the last board meeting discussing exactly what 6 feet distance means and the measurement the administration is following. This line of questioning invoked a lack of confidence in your own administration with regards to following guidelines and showed a lack of respect to the people who obviously had spent considerable time researching guidelines, taking measurements, and even putting a detailed presentation together. Your blatant desire to cram as many kids as possible into each classroom, was obvious. You're looking for loop holes and short cuts, "How do we get more kids in the class and maintain at least 6 feet, one inches distance" – the bare minimum required, is not becoming of someone who is concerned about safety. This proves a desire to not follow the guidelines cautiously, but rather, working to interpret them not with the safety of the students, faculty and staff top of mind, but rather how can we interpret it so that we can get as many people in each room as possible. Why isn't there the same amount of rigor put around a line of questioning regarding safety? I have not heard anyone asking about how to get safer airflow in the classrooms, no questions about how much it would cost to get virus air filters put in the classrooms, outdoor tents, etc. Instead, to what extent can we cram as many in a room as possible. If I had been one of the many teachers in that room, the complete lack of concern for me or my family, would have brought me to tears. It did not sound very supportive of safety.</p> <p>I do not think the aggressive stance that you are taking regarding getting back to in-person is best for District 25. The risk and liability (insurance concerns, we heard at the meeting) you are willing to take on, is too high a price for this district. Thank you for your service and your time.</p> <p>https://covidtracking.com/data/state/illinois</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2020/11/05/illinois-shatters-daily-covid-case-record-with-nearly-10000-new-infections-state-surpasses-10000-total-deaths/ https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/children-and-covid-19-state-level-data-report/
Mary Moussa	<p>I am a parent and a newly hired teacher in District 25. I am extremely disappointed with what I have seen/heard in your past board meetings. It seems like the board is heavily influenced/pressured by a small group of parents that are choosing to ignore science, facts, and the reality of Covid-19. As a parent, I understand the challenges and struggles we all face by having students remote/hybrid. But just as I teach my students and children to face struggles head-on and to not give up, I hope we (the adults/role models) for these kids can do the same! <u>Board meetings should be focused on how to REDUCE/ELIMINATE the spread of Covid-19 NOT how to open fully when numbers are rising at astronomical ratios!</u> The District's motto is "<i>Embracing Today – Inspiring Tomorrow</i>" What does it say about us as a district when we choose to ignore facts/statistics and the safety of others in order to do what is "popular"??</p> <p><u>Here are some FACTS to support keeping schools hybrid:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There has been a 95.9 percent increase in cases in Arlington Heights over last 14 days according to the Cook County Department of Health. (source: Cook County Department of Health, 10/30/20) 2. As of today's date 11/8/20: Cook County reports: 215K cases of Covid-19, and 5,770 deaths 3. Change in Child COVID-19 Cases*(reported by the American Academy of Pediatrics) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61,447 new child COVID-19 cases were reported the past week from 10/22-10/29 (792,188 to 853,635) • In October nearly 200,000 new child COVID-19 cases were reported from 10/1-10/29 (657,572 to 853,635) 4. There are 59,767 adults, (15,084 of whom are seniors) in Arlington Heights. (WorldPopulationReview.com) These are the most vulnerable to contracting the virus in our community. We don't know how many of our students visit/come into contact with a senior, so we must assume all of them can. 5. According to OSHA "Federal law entitles you to a safe workplace. Your employer must keep your workplace free of known health and safety hazards." This applies to teachers, staff, and administration working in our schools. 6. According to OSHA: "In almost all sectors, job duties involving either sustained close contact (within 6 feet) or frequent close contact with coworkers, customers, and/or members of the general public who may be infected with the virus without knowing it. Infected people can spread the virus even if they do not have <u>signs and/or symptoms</u> of COVID-19." 7. According to OSHA: "Social conditions conducive to transmission, <u>including in areas of high population density or where people have frequent and/or prolonged close contact</u>, either in the community or in the workplace. This includes situations in which workers live in shared housing or gather in groups, especially without maintaining social distancing." 8. I am attaching the CDC indicators and thresholds for risk of introduction and transmission of COVID-19 in schools (which I know you already know, but seem to be conveniently ignoring.) <u>If you reduce the 6 ft. required distance between students, our schools will NOT be implementing all 5 mitigation strategies recommended by the CDC.</u> <p>Finally, I hope with clear facts and statistics to support keeping schools hybrid, our board is brave enough to make the decision to keep EVERYONE in our community safe by staying hybrid and continuing to implement mitigation strategies to keep students, teachers, and our community safe.</p>
Jennifer Dunn	<p>I am writing to express my concern about the discussion around returning to full-time, in-person learning for the entire student population. The trend of cases in zip codes 60004 and 60005 do not support moving away from the hybrid model towards full-time, in-person learning, and may support the entire district reverting to full remote learning.</p> <p>As of November 8, 2020, Northwestern University's COVID Dashboard puts the testing positivity rate in zip codes 60004 and 60005 at 9.74%, which exceeds the District's threshold (8%) for hybrid learning, let alone in-person learning. The number of new cases has reached 708 per 100,000 over a 14-day period. This also exceeds the District's threshold of 70-175 per 100,000 for this period. The District at this point, based on these numbers, the thresholds the District has set, and the overall</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>upward trend in cases regionally, should be returning to full remote learning. Presently, community spread is high. In-person school is safe when community spread is low. Until our community achieves low community spread of the virus, the District should be guided by data and the standards that are set on the Return Metrics website in determining which learning mode is safe for the students and staff in D25.</p> <p>I'm sure I join all parents in hoping that community spread declines very soon and we can send our children to school in confidence of their and the staff's safety.</p>
Kevin Michael	<p>With Arlington Heights now being in the "red zone" for our rolling average of COVID Cases (11.3 %) and finding well over 400 cases per 100,000 as of this email on Nov. 9, I hope Dr. Bein and the Board of Education realize that it is past time to resume fully remote instruction across the District. Speaking as a District 25 parent (with students at Thomas and Ivy Hill), an educator, and an Arlington Heights community member, I implore you to please make the responsible choice to keep students, teachers, staff, and community members safe as the pandemic surges.</p>
Lauren Noble	<p>Now that the teachers have adapted to this new schedule and are balancing zoomies/roomies effectively, can we consider having the kids come in every other Monday? Other districts have adopted this increased hybrid schedule. The time in class is so important, and this can obviously be done safely.</p>
Toni Stuller	<p>I am the mother of an 8th grader at Thomas Middle School, and I am also the Program Manager of a global COVID-19 Initiative. As someone who has access to the science, to the studies, to the infectious disease experts on a daily basis, I am all too aware of the real dangers COVID poses. While I personally am keeping my son home to attend remotely, as someone who cares about more than just myself and my own family, I am extremely saddened that SD25 has chosen to allow ANY type of in-person school while the pandemic is completely out of control, and growing exponentially on a daily bases – spreading partially, in fact, due to the fact that schools are open. As the science has clearly shown, even one person infected has a high chance of permanently damaging or killing someone – and I can guarantee the harm done when a child learns their infection, whether overt or asymptomatic, killed their grandma, or their mom, or dad, or their teacher, or if the child dies themselves– that harm is much, much greater than the social activities and in-person instruction kids would miss until this pandemic is under control. Social activities, and yes, even learning, can be made up. You cannot bring someone back from the dead, and you cannot reverse the trauma of losing a loved one – or multiple loved ones, as our family has lost (we have lost 6 family members and friends to COVID so far, and one of those losses was today). With every email parents receive reporting yet more positive COVID cases at Thomas Middle School—cases that expose those in the school building who then bring that exposure home—more death and trauma is invited to occur. The numbers in Cook County are going drastically up every day. The entire nation is absolutely EXPLODING with COVID, setting a new record every day. Hospital ICUs across the US are either at capacity or very close to it. Moreover, with scientific proof that COVID is an aerosolized virus that spreads through the air (which means it spreads from room to room via the HVAC systems), and remembering that masks are off at school for a good amount of time while people in the building are eating and drinking, and knowing any person in attendance could be an asymptomatic carrier, it is incredibly irresponsible to be open for in-person school – and I can tell you that every infectious disease expert with whom I have spoken agrees with this; not one will allow their children to attend school in-person. Added to this horrific situation is the constant disruption and negative impact that each change to the daily educational routine makes on our children, and the negative impact made each time an educator has to do backflips and headstands to re-vamp their lesson plans once again; what we have right now is a hot, fence-straddling mess. There is no way that the constant change from one type of learning to another that is this "hybrid model" is educating our kids better than a consistent remote routine, nor would be the absolute havoc that would be wrought by a constant in-and-out of school quarantining situation – or the loss of classmate(s) or educator(s) to death from COVID – that in-person school during an out-of-control pandemic would bring.</p> <p>I am fully aware of the difficulties that remote learning can cause some families. However, I cannot believe that we are willing to risk the lives of our teachers, our staff, the children and their families for the convenience of some, or because Bobby struggles with online learning. This situation is temporary, and any lessons missed can be made up once the pandemic is under control simply with a</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>single or multi-year curriculum adjustment. Death is permanent. Trauma from death is permanent damage that will never, ever heal.</p> <p>We close schools when the temperature dips too low. We close schools when an ice storm occurs. Why? Because keeping schools open could put someone's life or well-being at risk. WHY are we actively, knowingly, on purpose putting the lives of our loved ones and neighbors at risk? Superintendent Bein, SD25 School Board members, Principals – it is YOUR job to make decisions that keep our teachers, our staff, and our children safe - and the actual experts will tell you what we are doing right now is absolutely NOT SAFE. Please consider providing a consistent and SAFE educational environment for the duration of the pandemic. I know that my husband and I are more than willing to work together with educators to find an extraordinary answer to an extraordinary problem, and I'm certain there are more parents out there who would do so as well. It is vital that we put the REAL science-backed safety measures of remote learning in place now, and create a plan to make up any social and educational deficiencies once it is safe to do so.</p>
Ryan Hrejsa	<p>I am a parent of two Patton students (4th grade and K). I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the move to Step 4. Upon taking the survey, I was dismayed to see that question #1 included the option to return to full in person learning immediately. This option is such a violent departure from previous steps the Dr. Bein and district has taken during the pandemic. This path will do two things:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It will increase the opportunity of infection for my kids, their peers, our teachers, and our families. 2. It will decrease the educational experience for a large group of students. I can only assume (after watching the Oct 29th board meeting) that the strategy here is to get a large number of families to 'opt out' of in person learning in order to facilitate a return to full time in-person learning for a select group of students. My belief is that the mission of our schools is to provide our children an outstanding education in a safe learning environment. This action would be a failure of this mission, as it will both will endanger our community and diminish the educational experience. <p>Perhaps the survey could have asked for additional feedback on the current hybrid model - our family has heard nothing but positive thoughts. It provides a better learning experience while maintaining a safe (as possible) experience for our students and staff.</p> <p>The discussion around the definition of 6 feet separation was also concerning. We are keeping our community safe through multiple mitigation efforts, any compromise to standards invites increased risk. I appreciate the discussion of how the school district would move to full-time and the investigation into potentially fitting more students in a classroom. However, we can not move to this step by not by taking a shortcut. Let's remember that our students (especially younger students) are not static in their chairs - they move. I am a bacteriologist, spending over 7 years working in a Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) facility, and our safety guidelines were built upon multiple redundancies. We went above and beyond to prevent infections - the redundant protective measures worked together to maintain our safety and we would invite increased risk and lower the effectiveness of our safety measures by taking shortcuts.</p> <p>I am shocked that the school district is all of a sudden considering such an impulsive pathway to reopen. Everyone wants to go back to full time as soon and as safely possible - but we must remain vigilant and safe. We must continue to follow the reopening guidelines that the district adopted, while maintaining the ability to adjust as we learn more about the virus.</p> <p>We are all learning how to deal with the pandemic, moving forward we will continue to learn more about the virus, improve (hopefully) antiviral treatments, and vaccines. We cannot fast-forward this process. As we have seen with the hybrid model, and school opening will lead to some infections. The current set up balances providing the safest learning environment for our students possible (as of now) during the pandemic, with providing the best learning experience. Any move by the district to bypass the current guidelines invites unacceptable risk and fails our children, our teachers, and our community. Before moving forward with any full-time learning I respectfully ask the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How many infections are acceptable? -Is a student's death acceptable? -Is a teacher's? -A parent?

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	-What cost/risk is acceptable to you?
Leigh Strauss	<p>Your consideration of changing teachers and classmates for remote learners is a direct punishment of the families who have chosen to place their children in the remote setting. I implore you to carefully consider the negative impacts that this decision would have on the mental health and well being of the students that you are charged to protect.</p> <p>In the ISBE Fall 2020 Learning Recommendations (7/23/2020), teachers are tasked with helping students maintain personal connections that support the whole child, including their mental health. The school district is to help students stay connected to their teachers and make any transitions as seamless as possible. Teachers are to establish customs and norms for their classrooms, foster peer-to-peer communications to ensure students are connected to other students, and demonstrate that the teacher is a trusted adult supporter at a time when students need all of the support they can get. Teachers have worked very hard to connect with their students through Zoom. It has taken months to establish a stable working relationship and learn each others' patterns and styles of learning and communication, longer than it would have taken in a typical school year. The teachers are providing remote learners a platform of stability and have put extra effort to ensure that young learners are connected with each other and support one another in a productive learning environment. By forcing a change of teachers, you destabilize the learning environment of remote learners, placing undue stress and uncertainty on these young minds.</p> <p>The discussion of destabilizing the classroom goes directly against the recommendations set by the Illinois State Board of Education and places an undue stress punishment on the families who have selected remote learning. I implore you to stop considering this punishment of the remote learning families. These children are applying their best efforts to learn and teachers are putting extensive efforts to connect through a computer screen. This added stress will negatively impact everyone's efforts to maintain productive learning this school year.</p>
Amanda Bhansali	<p>Community Spread is increasing at a high rate. At the time I am writing this, Suburban Cook County is experiencing Mitigation from the State Government for our high rate of cases. Suburban Cook County is currently experiencing a 12% positivity rate. The positive case incidence in AH zip codes for the past 7-day window has been 450 cases per 100,000 people.</p> <p>According to metrics cited from the Harvard Medical Study used to open schools, this far exceeds the threshold for safely learning in person in elementary schools.</p> <p>I am writing to you to encourage SD 25 to start what the state has called an "Adaptive Pause" and move back into remote learning in order to give our community time to get this rapidly spreading disease more under control once again.</p> <p>I do not make this recommendation lightly. As a teacher and a parent, I understand the value that comes from in-person instruction. However, we must all do our part to halt community spread. More and more community members, teachers, and students are being exposed to possible COVID and must quarantine. All of these stakeholders are experiencing irregularities in their education - there is no continuity when students, staff, their families, etc are constantly changing from hybrid in person to remote. Students need structure to be successful during this very uncertain time.</p>
Amanda Moller	<p>Thank you for all that the board and district has been doing in this difficult time. The communication has been outstanding given the circumstances. Based on how wonderful the district and schools have been over the years I felt very comfortable with the board making decisions to get our children, teachers, and staff back to school safely and when appropriate.</p> <p>I'm only writing now because there seems to be much more vocalization for those that need/want to get the kids back to school full-time. I've felt this has been the Board's goal and I don't want to see it rushed then more community cases happen. Children are more likely to be asymptomatic spreaders of this virus but since we aren't actively testing asymptomatic kids many folks seem to think children should just get back to school. Perhaps if we have the current measures in place with the addition of opening windows for 'X' amount of time each hour as has been done in other countries it would help, particularly during lunch time when masks aren't being worn and more droplets are being released. Also, it is appreciated that the Board is working to stick to the given community metrics and guidance on the level of risk for various activities. In other counties nearby I've seen messaging around wearing masks and distancing so that we can keep places open and I would think that includes getting kids back to school.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p><u>Largest COVID-19 Tracing Study to Date Finds Children Are Key Spreaders</u> <u>Massachusetts General Hospital researchers show children are silent spreaders of virus that causes COVID-19</u> <u>How German Students Have Been Back At School Since Spring, While Missourians Are Just Returning</u></p>
Larry Perkins	<p>As a grandparent of a child attending Olive s School I have been elected to take on the task of the remote teacher since I was an elementary school physical education teacher in the past. My grandsons love of his teacher when at the school is a joy to watch. However, he is extremely stressed about the in home remote classes. I am truly afraid that we will be losing these youngest of students for years to come and may never be able to repair their joy of education. (Or establish their joy for that matter.)</p> <p>If complete remote learning is to be considered I would hope that the primary aged students, (k-2nd grades) will be allowed to go to the school building full-time to establish the ever so important first educational foundations. We now know the metrics for the youngest of the children during this pandemic shows very little risk of a severe case of the disease. The older students have already had an educational base established which they can draw on for the remote learning and their parents/guardians do not have to monitor/supervise as closely.</p> <p>Surely the Board can Develop protocols for district families to follow to encourage the families of these primary aged students to take extra precautions in protecting their loved ones such as grandparents and family members with co-morbidity issues. Thank you for your consideration during this difficult time.</p>
Lisa Parciak	<p>Before the last School Board meeting, I expressed my opinion in an email that District 25 should remain hybrid and not change to full-time in person learning. My opinion has not changed since the last School Board meeting. In fact, it has only been strengthened by the recent surge in Covid-19 cases in Illinois. I was not persuaded by the argument that we can get more students into the classroom and still maintain a six foot distance provided we change the way that we have been measuring 6 feet. The assertion that we can shove more students into a space by changing how we measure 6 feet assumes that children will remain completely still at their desks. If you don't provide a little leeway in your 6 foot measurement, students won't be able to stretch, lean, or wiggle in their seats. They also won't be able to take movement /dance breaks, which many kids need and enjoy. Has the Board considered how it would deal with those students that have IEPs that say they are allowed to move about their desks and take movement breaks as needed? Also, how would the board measure 6 feet for a student who sits in a Hoki chair, as per their IEP? Under the current measurement of 6 feet, our students have at least a little extra room to move about in their already tiny areas. I really hope that when making its decision whether to change how 6 feet is measured that the Board will ask general education teachers, as well as, special education teachers the following questions: "Is it practical to confine each student to an even smaller area? and "Is it in their students' best interests to be confined to an even smaller area?" If the teachers say no, then that really should settle the matter as our teachers are our experts when it comes to education.</p> <p>However, in the event that the Board decides to change to full-time in-person learning, please think about how this decision will impact students who receive services from the Special Education Department. It is my understanding that if the District changes to full-time in-person learning that there is a possibility that all students will receive new teachers. I implore the Board to consider what this means for special education students. Some special education students receive some, if not all, of their math and reading instruction from a special education teacher. Many of these students have spent years learning with the same special education teacher. Over the years, our students have learned to trust and count on these teachers and have developed close and special relationships. Our special education teachers know their students inside and out; they know their strengths, weaknesses, interests, goals, motivators, triggers, anxieties, etc. Because of their knowledge and experience with these children, these teachers are able to create the very best learning experiences for these children. Moreover, some students have been paired with their special education teacher because their special education teacher is the only person who has been trained to teach a specific curriculum, which the student requires. If special education students were to receive new special education teachers, all of this would be lost; these children would be starting from scratch and their learning</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	would, no doubt, suffer. The relationships that students have with their current special education teachers are special and should be protected. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Maurice Finnegan	<p>I am writing to share my daughter's experience in the current Early Childhood Program at Greenbrier. She is currently in Mrs. Walsh's full remote classroom.</p> <p>Overall it has been a wonderful experience. Mrs. Walsh is an extremely engaging teacher (she really is the BEST preschool teacher our kids have had) that goes above and beyond to support her class. My daughter participates in 3 scheduled (20 minute) Zoom class calls each Monday - Thursday. Mrs. Walsh does circle time every day, center time 2x a week, storytime and a mindful movement program every week. In addition, the class has library time, speech therapy and a social/emotional lesson each week. Mrs. Walsh and the rest of the staff are extremely engaging. I sit in on the classes occasionally (my wife is the main parent helping with the remote learning), and I am consistently amazed at how engaged the children are, how responsive they are being, and how much fun they are having. Mrs. Walsh really makes sure each child feels special. She and the other teachers utilize resources including helpful videos, online games, online book readings and suggested activities to do at home that enhance the week's lesson and topic.</p> <p>I know how hard Mrs. Walsh and all the teachers are working so I wanted to share with you my and my child's experience. Ideally, we want our daughter to be in-person. Everyone does. Still, our experience has been a great alternative given the current climate. We cannot imagine sending our children to a full-time program given the current nature of everything. There are too many risks, and the infrastructure just does not exist in District 25 to support such a move. We are very happy with our experience and want to express our gratitude to everyone involved for working so hard and educating our children given the current state of events. We know what a toll this has taken on the teachers, administration, staff and BOE so thank you for everything everyone is doing to continue to keep our children and our teachers safe. If cases do increase and we do have to make the tough decision to go full remote, I am very confident D25 staff will do a great job at engaging and motivating our children.</p>
Carleen Swanberg	<p>As we move towards the holiday season, Thanksgiving at the forefront of my mind, how do we ensure teachers, staff and children are not going to come back to school with the infection? Are teachers/staff instructed to not travel or see extended family? Some probably have college kids returning from school, or are traveling for the holiday to see family. Does the district encourage them to self quarantine?</p> <p>It's concerning to me that this holiday season is going to open up our community to the virus. Is it possible to revert to remote learning post Thanksgiving to proactively address this issue? Or can a parent keep their child home for 2 weeks after the holiday break if they choose to isolate themselves? Thank you for your time, I appreciate all you are doing for the kids.</p>
Carly and Brian Lisinski	We want to ask and encourage the board as well as Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. We ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning.
Eileen Ryan	I implore the Dr Bein and the board to come up with a plan and date when full in person learning can begin. Parents must be given the choice to send their child to school full time.
Lisa Nason	I want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. I ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning.
Catherine Gripper	I want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. I ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning.
Lindsay Nugent	<p>My Dryden family has been attending hybrid learning for almost five full weeks now. We are forever grateful to our school for working together, so very hard, to make this safe, successful and normal feeling. Every morning at drop off and pick up, I see Dryden staff, helping and directing students to where they need to be, while remaining cheerful and positive. This has been such a great experience for our family. Being in person to learn has a magic feeling! It's slowly giving my girls the opportunities to reach their full potential as learners. They are making strides to where 3rd graders and 1st graders should be academically! Imagine what this will look like when we get them back full time! I can't reiterate enough how important this is. We need to get our students (those who choose this option) back to in person, full time learning.</p> <p>However, the sense of and rumor of moving totally remote has left us with the feeling of anxiety and doom. Our remote days are becoming less and less interesting to my kids, at no fault of their teachers. They just aren't getting enough out of it by staring at a screen all day. In person learning</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>CANNOT be replaced! I'm afraid we are forgetting that the students this district serves, K-8th, should be given the option of in person learning, all day, 5 days a week. While I realize there is a significant possibility to move remote around the holidays, as numbers increase and families travel, I ask Dr. Bein and The Board to continue to look at transmission within the schools before making their decision. Other schools in our state and other states with higher testing positivity rates are able to keep their students in person. There is no reason we cannot be part of this group of leaders. As we move into the winter months and the remainder of the school year, I hope District 25 and The Board fully realize the positive impact in person learning has had on their students. While making these hard decisions, I hope they don't forget that they know how to get our kids in school and keep them there, in person, safely and successfully. We've done it for five weeks! We can and should keep it up! Set goals, keep the community informed and STAY POSITIVE!</p>
Anne McCarte	<p>I have been dismayed to read about suburban Chicago school districts reverting to full remote learning approaches despite any empirical evidence that in-person attendance at schools contributes to community spread of COVID-19. Surely communities understand by now that pediatricians unequivocally agree the negative impacts of school closures outweigh the risks of hosting children in-person at school when appropriate safety measures are followed (and assuming the child is not in a high-risk group). The lack of empirical evidence that COVID-19 is being transmitted among students and staff while they are in school with safety measures in place suggests the safety measures work. Closing the schools will not only fail to reduce the rate of community spread in Arlington Heights, but it will also hinder the education and development of thousands of students, including my six year old. I ask that the school board and the superintendent prioritize data in decision making and in communication with the public. Please pursue rapid and regular testing of students and staff. Please allocate resources to perform thorough contact tracing to explicitly identify the source of outbreaks. Finally, it is imperative that cases of on-property transmission are reported publicly, so our community is clear where the risks really lie. Data should be a tool to unite our currently deeply divided community.</p> <p>I support keeping district 25 schools open for in-person hybrid instruction and actively planning for a return to a full in-person model, as long as the data does not indicate a rise in school-transmitted cases within our district. Furthermore, if the district struggles to identify a full in-person model that sufficiently adheres to safety measures among the older students, please do not let that prohibit the implementation of additional in-person learning opportunities for younger students. We must not let our children be the losers of this pandemic.</p>
Dr. Germano Franzoni	<p>In our family we have always been supporters of in-person learning; and we often found ourselves on the opposite spectrum with respect to the district and board decisions. However, we would like to recognize the tremendous work done by the district and by Westgate School to provide the highest quality education to our children. Thank you, thank you, thank you.</p> <p>Having said so, I still think we should acknowledge that the education of our children should be considered a primary service and should be implemented in person as much as possible. Every day that my daughter goes to school in the hybrid program she is happy, fresh and motivated. Her eyes shine of a different light. The hybrid program should not be reverted to remote.</p> <p>Secondly, we should look at Europe: Covid is hitting Europe very hard again, hospitals are at capacity, countries are going in full lock down. BUT EVERY COUNTRY IS MAINTAINING FULL IN PERSON LEARNING!!!!!! Germany, France, Italy and UK are choosing this way because they recognize that elementary education is a primary service that cannot be shut down.</p> <p>The schools are controlled environment, in which the infection rates are extremely low and can be kept under control. The real risk is when people attend uncontrolled events (like a playdate, or a birthday party). We cannot keep our kids locked in the house, they look for their friends all the time and I prefer my kids to meet their friends at school where proper restrictions and limitations are in place.</p> <p>AHSD25 should still plan a path to full in person learning (for whomever opt for it) planned after the Christmas vacation.</p>
Liz Jones	<p>I would like to ask the board and Dr. Bein to develop & implement a plan to get our students back into school full-time. Parents deserve a choice for full in-person learning.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
Eric Pet	<p>I/we want ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bien to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time.</p> <p>I/we ask that you give parents the choice for full in person learning.</p>
Shannon and Carmen Scalzo	<p>We would like to encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan and timeline to get our children back into school full time. Our children are struggling with remote learning and we only ask that you give parents a choice for full time, in person instruction.</p>
Michael Andrews	<p>With Covid cases in our area rising to dangerous levels, a return to full in-person learning at this time is simply a bad idea. We should be making decisions based on the facts gathered from infectious disease experts, not on our gut feelings or our unwillingness to be inconvenienced. The fact that we are debating what it means to maintain 6 feet of distance between individuals is absurd. The CDC and IDPH are crystal clear on this matter. A return to full in-person learning would force us to abandon these guidelines. If you are thinking, "Well guidelines are only suggestions," please remember that this is a matter of life and death (1.3 million deaths worldwide to be specific). I understand that a remote academy is being considered, but that does not make the scenario less dangerous for our community if most choose to attend. The remote academy option would take my child away from his current teachers and turn his entire experience upside down--not to mention it would be a nightmare for teachers and administrators to enact. I simply do not see how it is worth it to move to a full in-person model, especially when we are seeing more and more districts go back to full remote. I understand that there are some very loud voices advocating for things to go back to normal regardless of case numbers. Science and reason should be the deciding factors here, not the volume of these voices.</p>
Kerri Hood	<p>I'd like to forward what Kenosha school district is stating for their community. I hope we follow this rational thinking in our own district! They really do have the students' BEST interests at heart! It should also be noted that many other countries are closing businesses again, however, they are keeping schools OPEN because they KNOW schools are essential!! It is sad that this district does not feel the same way for our own schools. By your actions and delay tactics to keep pushing out the full return to school plan, that speaks very loudly that you do NOT feel our schools are essential.</p> <hr/> <p>Good evening,</p> <p>We are reaching out regarding the recommendation from the Kenosha County Division of Health, which states, "Kenosha County Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit is strongly recommending that all schools within the county — K-12, colleges and universities — switch to virtual instruction only between Nov. 23 and Jan. 4."</p> <p>It goes on to share, "It is not a binding order, but Freiheit urges schools, colleges and universities to give it serious consideration. This recommendation also includes sports and other extracurricular activities." Read the full release here.</p> <p>While we understand the premise of the recommendation, we plan to uphold the district's Return 2020 plan. This allows us to continue handling each building's impact on a case-by-case basis as it relates to our outlined thresholds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >3% positive cases in a school within the last 14 days (based on the cumulative total of in-person staff and student COVID-positive cases divided by the total in-person staff and student population). • A significant community outbreak is occurring or has recently occurred (large community event or local employer) and is impacting multiple staff, students, and families served by the community such that the KCDH <i>directs</i> KUSD to close buildings. • Staff absences, due to individuals personally testing positive or being required to self-quarantine as a close contact, reach a level that has the potential to compromise the safety or fidelity of the learning environment. <p>Since Sept. 14, KUSD has had a total of 188 positive cases reported for in-person staff and students, which equates to ~1.5% of the entire in-person population. Furthermore, a majority of the reported positives are staff members who have contracted the virus <i>outside</i> of our schools, which indicates that our comprehensive mitigation efforts are working to prevent spread within our buildings. These mitigation efforts include:</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classwide quarantines surrounding a positive • Additional close contact quarantines (e.g. lunch, sports, etc.) • Transitions to all virtual when impact is too great • Districtwide mask mandate <p>Since the start of school, we have addressed areas of high need while having little to no impact on other schools that have not been greatly impacted by COVID-positive cases. Even the few switches to all virtual learning we have implemented have greatly affected our families as they search for alternate care during these brief closures.</p> <p>Given the length of the recommendation, we know our families will need to rely upon child care centers while we are in a virtual setting, which does not lend itself to the goal of the recommendation, it simply shifts the burden elsewhere in our community. Instead, we will continue with the Return 2020 plan so our students may continue learning virtually or in person in an environment we have worked to make safe with procedures in place that allow us to adjust learning models when necessary on a case-by-case basis. While not perfect, we believe it has a far less negative impact on our students and their families than forcing all to become virtual learners for six weeks with the hope that our community will follow expectations, such as “celebrating virtually and/or just with those within your own household.”</p> <p>Please know that the Return 2020 plan and current COVID impact within KUSD will now be a regular board meeting standing agenda item starting this month, and will remain throughout the duration of the pandemic so Board members may discuss the topic as needed.</p> <p>We appreciate everyone’s continued support of our students and families, both in-person and virtually. We know many procedures and enhancements have been implemented through the hard work of all to provide the various learning models our students need and deserve, especially during this global pandemic.</p> <p>This has truly been a challenging year and you have risen to the occasion and provided your very best in the face of adversity. For that, we are forever grateful.</p> <p>Sincerely, Tom Duncan Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis Board President Superintendent</p>
Melissa Van Buren	<p>In the last week I was pleased to see that the survey talked about at the last meeting did in fact go out to parents. However, if you are a parent choosing remote only, you should not have been able to answer any other questions. The other questions only pertained to those choosing in person. Next, the questions, the way they were worded were misleading and deceptive. Wanting our children in person does not mean we don’t care about mitigating the risks or following science backed facts. On the contrary, I want to make sure my children are safe at school, I also want for the guidelines to be followed and not stretched so far from what is said that we can no longer accommodate the children and teachers in the classrooms.</p> <p>I appreciate all effort being put into keeping my children safe and following guidelines. I am pleased to see the metrics where they are. To me this means a green light to continue to put 5 days a week in place. We have amazing teachers and staff in our schools that are able to critically think and find new ways in which we can configure classrooms and make this happen. Or we don’t have to reinvent the wheel at all and simply ask one of the other districts that are already doing this.</p> <p>I can understand the hesitation from staff to have our children back full time. Change is hard. The virus is scary! Trust me, I am a critical care nurse working through this since the beginning, getting stretched thin, but still showing up to do my job. Did I sign up to work through a pandemic? No! Not any one of us did, but here we are. No one asks me if I’m comfortable caring for loved ones with the disease.</p> <p>Do we need to be careful? Yes! Do we need to follow the CDC guidelines outside of our schools? Yes! But even our own metrics for district 25 is showing that schools are not super spreaders and we can do this.</p> <p>Lastly, I am sure you are aware of other in person schools going fully remote for the two weeks</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	following high travel breaks. I would like to see district 25 do this as well so that we don't need to worry about families or staff following the guidelines and quarantining after travel.
Jim and Cristina Small	<p>We support the ongoing efforts of the Administration and Board to continue to develop a plan for a return to full in-person learning. We hope that the recent survey executed by Dr. Bein will provide the Board with meaningful data to develop such a plan, and to return our children back to school safely and only when appropriate. However, now is not the appropriate time to be determining an arbitrary date to return to full in-person learning. In fact, the Board should be questioning whether or not the current hybrid model should be kept in place given that various COVID infection statistics currently far exceed the thresholds developed by the Board.</p> <p>While the Board continues to develop a plan for the future safe return, it should also be considering how to maximize the current hybrid and remote learning models for everyone's benefit. Regardless of how parents are currently advocating either for remote, hybrid or full in-person learning, it is a fact that some of our children are not able to operate effectively in hybrid or remote models. The Board should consider alternatives and additional resources for those who are struggling under the current model to ensure the quality of education is not hindered and a level playing field is provided for all. We support the current hybrid model and believe it should remain in place for at least through February 2021 and can be improved to provide additional resources and focus on those who need it. This timing takes into consideration the rising infection statistics as well as the upcoming holidays and the likelihood of travel and gatherings outside of the household, which brings more exposure to the classroom. We sincerely thank our teachers who have worked endless hours tirelessly for the benefit of our kids. Thank you!</p>
Erin and Steve Zurek	I want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. I ask that you give parents a choice for full 5 days a week, in person learning. Thank you.
Allison Seagram	<p>I would first like to thank the District 25 teachers for working so hard. When I heard there was a hybrid option, I never imagined they would be juggling both remote and in-person learning at the same time. They are faced with an almost impossible situation but they have not given up. I want them, the Board, and District 25 Administration to know how much the return to in-person learning has helped my children.</p> <p>The first day of in-person learning they came home with their faces bright and smiling. They were more talkative and excited than they had been for 7 months and you could tell that just one day had awakened their minds. Now these weeks later, they still have not complained once about wearing masks, the desk dividers, recess squares, eating lunch separate, smaller classes, or their 50-pound backpacks. They are just thrilled to be there! It means so much to them.</p> <p>Thank you for letting our children have the option to be in-person. If the metrics require another shut down, please use that time to plan a safe return to full time school or a better plan than the current hybrid. At the very least, I beg you to start making plans for next year. We all have high hopes for effective vaccines to be approved, but their approval will not instantly evaporate the COVID-19 Pandemic and it will not solve all the challenges the district currently faces. Please start working now on a plan for in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year that is aggregable to Teachers, Staff, the Board, and Administration. Please all work together for our children. Thank you</p>
Steven Andrews	<p>At the October 29th meeting, the Board said that we need a creative solution. We already have one. The Hybrid Learning Model is the creative solution. It's the solution that offers all students fair, equal, and safe access to some in-person instruction and it's the creative solution that your administrators and teachers have been working tirelessly to develop and improve. The Hybrid Learning Model is not perfect; we all know it's not perfect. But we shouldn't expect it to be. We have to work within the constraints of a global pandemic and, under these circumstances, the teachers have done an amazing job continuing to engage students and Remote/Hybrid instruction improves every day.</p> <p>At the October 29th meeting, the Board also debated the meaning of social distancing. The definition is clear - Stay at least six feet away from people. Physical distancing is one of the core strategies we have right now for mitigating the spread of COVID-19. We can't just redefine the meaning of social distancing or disregard physical distancing guidance in order to meet a desired outcome. Abandoning physical distancing is not a creative solution; it's an irresponsible solution that puts our schools and</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>community at higher risk. It would contribute to more community spread of COVID-19 and it would regularly disrupt the much-needed routines of our students due to increased instances of exposure that necessitate quarantine. I am also concerned that more students would opt out of a higher-risk, Full-Return Model resulting in less students accessing in-person learning opportunities, which they at least get to experience in some capacity with the Hybrid-Model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District should continue the creative solution we already have in place with the Hybrid Model. • Additionally, if case rates continue to climb, the District should not hesitate to return to a Full-Remote Model to support mitigation efforts. • With more family gatherings inevitably occurring during the holiday season, and infection counts expected to get worse in the weeks following the holidays, the District should consider reverting to a Full-Remote Model from November 30th until January 19th. <p>We have a collective responsibility to our community to do what we need to do to reduce the spread of COVID-19. If we don't have the facility space or budget to accommodate physical distancing in a Full-Return Model, then the Hybrid Model should remain the District's primary model of instruction until we reach Phase 5 of Restore Illinois and "either a vaccine is developed to prevent additional spread of COVID-19, a treatment option is readily available that ensures health care capacity is no longer a concern, or there are no new cases over a sustained period (Restore Illinois).</p>
Steve and Kara Bolf	<p>Thank you for your service to our community during these trying times. We know that you have worked tireless hours in the past eight months during this terrible pandemic.</p> <p>At the same time, we find your recent actions to be very disconcerting.</p> <p>First of all, the District 25 board is not the Center For Disease Control, and your rejection of their guidelines is both reckless, and dangerous. The parents in this community who are pushing so very hard for a return to full classrooms, and schools, are not board-certified physicians, nor are they epidemiologists.</p> <p>The idea of returning to full in-person learning in the wake of the recent surge in Covid-19 cases in suburban Cook County is downright negligent. To send children back to school in this environment is irresponsible.</p> <p>The first question of the recent survey does not even include a hybrid option. There is no way that the school can remain safe for teachers, staff, and students in a full return option. This goes against all health guidelines and recommendations. There would be too many people in too small of a space. Governor Pritzker is begging businesses and families to shrink the size of gatherings in order to reduce the spread of the virus. It doesn't make any sense to even consider a full return to in-person learning.</p> <p>We are also appalled at question number two of the survey that somehow gives a choice to not follow the recommended 6 feet distancing rules set forth by health officials. This is not about what we believe to be true, it is about a health crisis and listening to the guidelines of medical professionals.</p> <p>We are adamantly opposed to students having to change teachers at this point in the year. Parents and community members have been screaming that the purpose of back to school learning is because of the social and emotional health of students. This separation of students from the teachers they have grown to love during a very strenuous time would be devastating. It would completely undermine the social well-being of students and the connections they have formed with their teachers and their current classmates.</p> <p>While we fully understand that families have the option to remain in a remote learning environment, there are other things to consider and it is not as easy as just keeping your child home. We would want to understand the district's position on making sure students learning remotely are offered the same education as students in the classroom. There must be equitable educational practices among both settings. Families choosing to keep their children safe during a global pandemic should not be penalized. In addition, you are not just putting students at risk, these conditions are not safe for the teachers and staff in the buildings and are putting our greater community at risk. Thank you for your consideration,</p>
Adam and Janelle Thoma	<p>We'd like to ask the board and Dr. Bein to please work together to find a way to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. While we understand that some families feel safer doing</p>

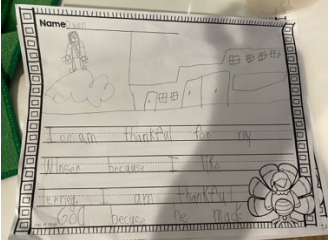
Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	remote learning, we believe that our son thrives in the classroom. Please allow parents a choice of either full in-person learning or e-learning.
Alex Cochrane	<p>First, I was disappointed with the survey distributed to parents last week. I expected a survey that would gauge each family's risk tolerance for moving to each learning model. If we were to ask the question in a way to let each family voice where they are comfortable, we might be able to parse out a middle ground for our community. As written, the survey is setting unrealistic expectations to those that want in-person no matter the state of the pandemic. The survey did not offer an option that by my reading meets the CCDPH guidance (from <u>10/16 adaptive pause document</u>) for fully in-person instruction. Namely, the only option in the survey that actually referenced criteria points to a hybrid learning model because we are unable to achieve all core mitigation strategies (specifically, 6ft of distancing) with everyone in the classroom. I'm afraid we have missed another opportunity to communicate and align the community on a simple, rules-based approach for moving between learning models.</p> <p>Second, I believe that rules-based approach should be modeled on guidance given by public health officials. Specifically, the <u>CCDPH adaptive pause guidance document</u> provides a decision tree based on the level of community transmission that I find concise and intuitive. Essentially, when transmission is high, we should be remote. When it is moderate, we should be hybrid. When it is low, we should be fully in-person. That is at least an attempt to recognize that risk depends on the level of transmission in our community. It is a better way to manage risk for our students, staff and our community at large.</p> <p>Third, the assumption that this decision is a tradeoff between safety and learning is simply wrong. We should be demanding a high quality education for our kids while also protecting them, the staff and the rest of our community. As I said in my last note to the Board, I am incredibly proud of the way my son has handled remote and hybrid learning. I recognize however, that some children are having a more difficult time in a remote setting. We need to find opportunities to provide additional help for those that need it. We need to identify common themes and get creative for ways to address them. I don't know what will have the biggest impact here, but I trust our teachers and administrators can continue to try new things, learn and make recommendations for additional resources needed. I believe it is the Board's responsibility to marshal resources toward identifying these issues and developing plans to address them.</p> <p>I advocate the Board vote as follows on the motions to consider, as posted online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vote No - According to the guidance from the <u>Cook County Department of Public Health</u>, the proposed criteria would point to a hybrid model. At levels of medium transmission, schools should maintain all core mitigation strategies - including 6ft of distance. As presented in the last Board meeting, the district absolutely cannot maintain 6ft of social distance in full classrooms - even if we play ridiculous, ill-advised games with the definition of 6ft. 2. Vote No - it is unthinkable to set an arbitrary date to move full in-person irrespective of the risk in our community. Learning model should be driven by the risk to our students, staff and community - not a date picked out of a hat. 3. My understanding of the additional staff is that they would be required <i>if</i> we went full in-person - without social distancing - as proposed in Motion #2. If Motion #2 fails, Motion #3 also deserves a "No" vote. If instead this motion is to address a need for additional contact tracing now, in a hybrid model, the board should consider either adding additional staff or moving to fully remote learning (because of our inability to implement the core mitigation strategy of contract tracing). 4. Vote Yes - As discussed above, this can be the third way that helps address some legitimate concerns some parents have with remote/hybrid learning. It can also keep our students, staff and community safe. The focus here should be maintaining the core mitigation strategies while focusing additional resources on kids that need them - as identified by their teachers. <p>Example Survey Question that I would have expected to receive following the last Board meeting:</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please choose between Fully Remote, Hybrid (e.g. maintain all core mitigation strategies), and Full In-Person (e.g. do not maintain core mitigation strategies) for each of the following levels of community transmission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If our area is experiencing <i>Minimal</i> Community Transmission ○ If our area is experiencing <i>Moderate</i> Community Transmission ○ If our area is experiencing <i>Substantial</i> Community Transmission ○ If our area is experiencing <i>double</i> the thresholds for <i>Substantial</i> Community Transmission <p>"Community Transmission" as defined by Cook County Department of Public Health in 10/16 publication</p>
Dr. Meena George	<p>As a parent and a physician, I am deeply concerned about the proposal from the last board meeting to consider transitioning to full in-person learning. COVID-19 numbers are at an all time high. Recent data from the American Academy of Pediatrics showed that "There were 61,447 new cases in children in the one-week period ending Oct. 29, the largest increase in any week since the pandemic began. In the month of October, there were about 200,000 new cases." And while many parents in the district and others seem to think that children have minimal symptoms, the most recent AAP-CHA data also showed "children represented 1%-3.5% of all reported hospitalizations." In addition, 0.5%-6.7% of all child COVID-cases resulted in hospitalizations. (Source: https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/11/02/coviddata110220. Furthermore, the argument from various comments at the last session that, "because we pay tax dollars our children should be inside the school 5 days per week" is completely selfish and irresponsible! All residents and homeowners pay taxes that support the district, including our elderly neighbors who do not have any enrolled students - and they are the most vulnerable. We have a responsibility to protect our teachers, our school staff, our children and our neighbors! The debate about how 6 feet of distancing should be measured is honestly quite ignorant. 6 feet is the bare minimum recommended guideline. Studies have shown that the virus can travel past 6 feet - possibly up to 8 feet or more. Having a few extra inches or feet between students because the desks are included in the measurement allows for an extra margin of safety, which should be embraced and not discarded. Spread of the virus is very real. Hospitals are starting to fill up more everyday. And while the mortality rate has remained low because we can treat COVID-19 better, even if the rate were as low as 1% - if the number of infected individuals is high, then the number of deaths will be high. We can prevent that together. Let us stay strong and let us be grateful that the hybrid model has worked reasonably well for our district and allowed our children a couple of days of school per week, which is helpful for their mental health. I strongly encourage you to stick to this model.</p>
Michelle Pet	<p>I want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. I ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning. Our kids deserve to have the opportunity to participate in full time in person learning. You have been holding our kids hostage by not allowing them access to the school and the teachers full time. Many schools have successfully provided the proper education in person and full time. There is no reason that this district cannot do the same. I hope that you consider the full impact that not allowing our kids in school full time is causing. The kids are suffering and they deserve more from this school district. Not providing the families of this district the choice is wrong. You need to create a full time option for those that are interested. It is not acceptable that you are not providing a choice to those that want it.</p>
Amy Darby	<p>I would like to strongly voice my support to keeping D25 in the hybrid model at this time and delay moving forward with a full re-open. The district must consider the safety of teachers and the inability to monitor how closely students and their families will be following recommendations for social distancing over the holiday season. Similarly, my employer, and numerous peers and colleagues throughout the global finance community continue to recommend employees work from home through the end of the year to limit the number of people in all buildings. Schools should be no exception, particularly considering the surge in cases in the past weeks.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	As the daughter of two former public school teachers, who have thankfully now retired, the district should refrain from moving forward with a full reopening at this time. We must consider the health and safety of teachers, staff, and elderly family of students.
Katy Murray	<p>My family is 100% in favor of offering the CHOICE of full-time, in person learning or remote for those who prefer it. It is time to get these kids back into the classroom 5 days per week and for the district to survey parents in an effective and clear manner that solidifies the number of students that would return and that would remain remote. Have the parents make a definitive choice which will provide the data needed to allow students to return safely.</p> <p>The district has consistently FAILED our children, and every day spent in hybrid or remote leaves them further behind. I urge you to take the steps needed to implement full time in person learning after the Thanksgiving holiday.</p>
Lisa Zimny	<p>My name is Lisa and i have four children at Windsor Elementary. I fully support and hope that my children go back to school full time. They love going to school two days a week. Every morning they ask if its the day they get to go in person and on the days it's not the days are long and often a struggle in my home. I have twins in kindergarten and their remote learning is awful for them. I have to bribe them to go to their computers and listen and that rarely even works anymore. The amount they are learning is very minimal at home, if they are learning at all. This is no fault or a reflection to the teacher, its simply 5 year olds who have no patience or tolerance to learning from a computer. On the days they are home they often cry, plea and beg for me to take them to school. It breaks my heart that my kids can not go to school and be with other kids and learn in person like they should be. They have been home long enough and their mental health is suffering. They have never complained of wearing masks or being 6 feet away from other kids. When I pick them up from school all four of them can not contain their excitement and tell me everything they did that day, yet when they are home and when the school days are over they run around the house so happy to be off their computers. All I am asking for is to give families the option of children going to school every day in person. I understand that others do not feel the same way and they can and should be able to have their kids remote but there is also a very large group that does and we should be able to give our kids something that we all just took for granted. I worry about my childrens education, when will this end!? I fully support my children going back to school full time, they are our future!</p> 
Megan Nuccio	<p>First, thank you for your time and efforts. I realize the amount of opinions you all have to sort through must be exhausting. I'm writing this letter to you as a staff member and as a parent at Westgate elementary.</p> <p>Unfortunately, because others have been so vocal about schools remaining open regardless of the global pandemic we are fighting our way through, I need to formally voice my displeasure at the recent letter we got. It reads to me that we are going to continue in person instruction until even more of us either contract the virus, or are quarantined due to contact. If routine testing was happening and we actually knew how many people were carrying this virus throughout our schools, I would feel differently. If hospitals weren't filling up, I would feel differently. In a perfect world kids would wear their masks as required, parents would self certify honestly and everyone would take this virus seriously. But we all know it's not a perfect world. As it stands the employees of D25 are subject to exposure to this virus, without any help from the district in getting tested. How so many in our community can dismiss the health and well being of the staff in the district is astonishing to me. As a lunch /play supervisor my job is to keep the kids safe and THEN make sure they are happy. In that order. I would love nothing more than to be able to see all the students back at school, but not at the expense of my fellow employees health and overall well-being.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>As parent of a fifth grader at Westgate, I would love nothing more for him to be able to attend full-time school again. But not until it is safe to do so. As a parent I put my trust in the board and our administration to determine when it is safe. I am disheartened and concerned a demanding group of parents is going to force the school district to do some thing they're not prepared to do, and that has the potential to hurt so many in our community. My concern right now is for the safety of his teacher and other staff members he comes across in the building. It is our responsibility as parents to make sure our kids are socialized and cared for. It is a teachers job to do the best they can to educate them. If their safety is put at risk, or their mental health (as so many parents have cited for their kids) deteriorates, that will have a greater effect on the education being received.</p> <p>Hospitalization rates speak for themselves. Testing is not yet widely available, or easily accessible. Until these things change I vehemently disagree with anyone who says we need to have the option of in person full-time.</p>
Todd Witherow	<p>Blue text indicates quotes from October 29th board meeting public comments from Kelly Drevline & Christina Kerry</p> <p>Data, science and experts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Disheartening to know I am working in a community where our school board is willing to ignore data and science.” · “The only barrier standing in our way is COVID 19. We are happy to welcome our students back when the data and science indicates it is safe to do so.” · “We must follow what the experts are advising at this time. Adhere to the safety mitigations that have been put forth by the CDC and the IDPH. We must do our part.” · “Bringing back all students at once is irresponsible and ignores the advice of medical experts. It will contribute to the spread of the illness and goes against what the Illinois Department of Public Health has proposed for our county at this time.” <p>From November 11, 2020 IDPH release: "We ask employers to make accommodation for this," a release from the Illinois Department of Public Health states. "Our goal is to reduce transmission as we head into the holidays so businesses and schools can remain open."</p> <p>From IDPH website: As noted by the CDC, schools are an essential part of the infrastructure of communities [...]. In order to safely operate schools, CDC has issued mitigation strategies that K-12 school administrators along with state and local public health officials can use to help protect students, teachers, and staff and slow the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>Health Department Safety Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “We are not currently equipped to truly provide for the proper safety measures within the facility at this time.” · “We feel strongly that the model we have currently have in place where we have safety mitigations in place where the possible spread is slowed ensures that we can stay in school and that teachers will be able to deliver instruction the most effective way.” · “When others came back it was thankfully with social distancing and safe measures in mind.” · “Bringing students back in person full-time without safety mitigations in place poses a danger for all of us.” · “We are not opposed to in-person learning, we are opposed to unsafe learning.” <p>From IDPH and CDC website, the experts referenced last meeting: The following precautions are recommended by public health officials to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of students, teachers, staff, their families, and communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ü Wearing a cloth face covering <u>especially when</u> other <u>social distancing</u> measures are difficult to maintain. ü Maintaining a <u>distance</u> of at least 6 feet from other adults, and from students <u>when feasible</u>. ü <u>Washing hands</u> often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. ü Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside of elbow, throwing the tissue away, and then washing hands. ü Avoiding touching one's eyes, nose, mouth, and cloth face covering. ü Cleaning and disinfecting <u>frequently touched surfaces</u>, including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. ü Staying home when sick, or after being in <u>close contact</u> with a person with COVID-19.

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>ü Limiting use of shared objects <u>when possible</u>, and cleaning and disinfecting these objects frequently.</p> <p>ü Additionally, stay aware of local coronavirus conditions and follow your local health department's recommendations. <u>Communities should make every effort to support the reopening of and maintaining open schools safely.</u></p> <p>And from the American Academy of Pediatrics, OVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry: In the absence of specific guidance, desks should be placed at least 3 feet apart, and ideally 6 feet apart.</p> <p>And from the Illinois State Board of Education Starting the 2020-2021 School Year FAQ, Q: Are all individuals in school buildings required to maintain social distancing (maintain 6 feet apart) at all times? A: Social distancing must be observed at all times. Desks do NOT need to be spaced 6 feet apart.</p> <p>Reality of COVID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Finally, some teachers may be forced to take a leave or resign when all students return to school based on their own health and safety.” <p>I agree this is a likely and unfortunate reality. The loss of jobs is something many families in the district and around the world have experienced. As a member of the community, I am proud of how the district – the board and the superintendent – have provided far greater support to all teachers than any FFRCA law or union agreement requires.</p> <p>Unity and Common Ground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Want nothing more than to be with our students in person” · “Agree with parents and the board that this is important and necessary and is what we strive for” · “We would love to be in person when it is safe to do so.” <p>I personally agree with these statements and it is encouraging to hear this. And remember for those parents who want to choose full remote, that choice is required to be offered by the State of Illinois. I, like others, do not advocate or seek for that choice to be removed.</p> <p>First time district 25 provided “what it takes” to get teachers back:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Most of us would not invite 25 people into our homes especially if you did not know where those 25 people have been.” · “Who they have been hanging out with. Where they have been going with their families. If they have travelled. If they have played on sports.” · “No background information on how safe they have been” · “All of us united against the virus.” <p>While lacking specifics this is the first time the community has heard from the teachers on what it will take for them to be more comfortable over and above the district adhering to the CDD, IDPH, CCHD and ISBE. If in addition to our COVID checklist we provide information about where we have travelled and confirm we are complying with State and County quarantine recommendations would they make you comfortable? Will the teachers be willing to do the same weekly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Sadly, some of our community feels that teachers are these barriers, we are not. COVID-19 is the barrier.” <p>COVID-19 is not the barrier. Despite the rampant spread of COVID-19, our medical experts consistently tell us the data and science are still promoting in-person learning and prioritizing schools and our children over businesses. I personally, appreciate and agree with this approach. The CDC, IDPH, ISBE and AAP all agree 6-feet “face to face” is desired, when possible and at least 3 feet should be maintained. COVID-19, social distancing, classroom size, presumed outcomes or revolving doors cannot be used as barriers for our children. For me, the first time I got on a plane during COVID the only barrier was myself and my personal comfort. Admittedly, I was nervous.</p> <p>As a parent: I don't know what the teachers want to achieve personal comfort. I see a handful of courageous teachers providing public and private perspective on the positive experiences and a desire for more in person learning. Let's apply data. The community has provided consistent input to two surveys and actual hybrid elections about their comfort and desires. Has the union or district surveyed all teachers to get the same input? Do the majority of teachers view it as non-negotiable that 6 feet or greater must be maintained? We don't know. Allow your teachers to complete a survey</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>about not only their preference but also their requirements and desirements for full in-person. A time like this calls for transparency, not restricting our access. Transparency will help us unite.</p> <p>As a parent: We will continue to be flexible, but we want a choice. To be allowed that choice perhaps that means switching teachers, maybe new classmates, potentially driving my kid to an alternative school in the district to balance numbers, or providing schools with travel information. Just like remote families have a choice required by the state, and hybrid families have a choice, please give full-time in-person families a similar choice. Seek the input from all individual teachers to understand personal comfort and define any conditions of offering an in-person choice and I promise you the parents are very capable a making the choice the is right for their family.</p>
Tricia Fuglestad	<p>50 people died in Cook county yesterday including a person in their 20s, a person in their 30s, two people in their 40s, and eight people in their 50s.</p> <p>Those could have been our teachers, staff, or parents.</p> <p>Suburban Cook county has far exceeded every metric stated by the Illinois department of public health for a safe return to school with its positivity rate over 13% and 9 consecutive days of increasing hospitalizations as of the latest data.</p> <p>Illinois just broke their pandemic records for the most daily positive Covid cases with 12,657 (on Wednesday) and the highest current number of hospitalizations at 5,042, exceeding the number reached during Illinois' first wave of Covid cases in the spring.</p> <p>According to Brown Medical School's Covid Risk calculator that factors in zip code, setting, activity level, room size, number of people, mask wearing, and ventilation hybrid teaching in Arlington Heights for 6 hours in a classroom with 12 students all wearing masks puts everyone at a VERY HIGH RISK for catching Covid.</p> <p>This calculator determines risk based on the Arlington Heights' 12.58% positivity rate where just on Tuesday the average daily positive cases are at 58 people in our community. These numbers far exceed the 5% rate considered safe.</p> <p>As of November 7th 11,308 children (younger than 20 years old) have tested positive for Covid in suburban cook county. The case rate (per 100,000) in this age group was at 11.19 on Oct. 9th (the beginning of hybrid). It has grown to 39.81 after one month of in-person school.</p> <p>Our governor has placed restrictions on our region to mitigate the spread of Covid including room capacity limits as followed here at the school board meeting. However, 50 students still eat together with their masks off in lunchrooms across the district.</p> <p>To add to these restrictions Illinois citizens are being told to stay home for three weeks, work from home, and only leave for essential errands. Yet, teachers are being asked by you to work in a very high risk environment when they could do this work from home.</p> <p>Contract tracing from the IDPH has shown that schools are the leading venue for Covid exposure throughout suburban cook county. This is reflected in our own district Covid dashboard indicating 11 staff members and 20 students who have tested positive for covid. Additionally, 183 staff and 521 students required exclusions due to exposures or probable cases.</p> <p>All of these factors and many others have lead to a recommendation from the IDPH to take an adaptive pause.</p> <p>I ask you on behalf of the students, teachers, families, and community at large, to do as other schools districts like Barrington, Skokie, Roselle, Northfield, and McHenry have done and take an adaptive pause for the safety of us all.</p>
Joanna Sopel	<p>Thank you for trying to do what's best for our children. I do believe that that's always the goal of the board members however I don't think they realize what this e-learning and hybrid situation doing to our children! I have a 3rd grader at Greenbrier Elementary who used to love school and now doesn't want to get out of bed! His eyes light up when it's an in person day but that makes E learning days so much tougher!</p> <p>Please consider providing 5 day instruction in school ! Our children need it for their mental health</p>
Lauren Gonke	<p>My name is Lauren Gonke, my son Nolan Gonke is a 1st grade student at Windsor. Recently my son's classroom teacher was tested for covid after her husband got the call that he had been exposed and began having symptoms. It appears that her test was positive (we got an official notice from Principal Anastacio) and she was exhibiting symptoms over zoom yesterday while my son was in attendance at school with a substitute. My son is not sick, the 8 other students who attended school last Friday with</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>her did not have to quarantine, there doesn't appear to be any spread. The hybrid model is working, the social distance and mask wearing work. Going back to fully in person, with numbers in our area on the rise, would guarantee that there will be outbreaks in the schools.</p> <p>The hybrid model should continue through the end of the school year, unless a vaccine becomes widely available or the positivity rate and number of new cases slows to a near halt. People may be able to restrain themselves from traveling and gathering for Thanksgiving but Christmas is a much bigger deal for many families. A 2 week post Christmas fully remote "quarantine period" is the wise thing to do for the health and safety of student and staff.</p> <p>Just to review our reopening metrics: Our 14 day average in 60004/60005 is 811.6 Our positivity rate in cook country in 10.5% Thanks for your time and attention.</p>
Eric and Alicen Manus	We want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time. We ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning.
Elizabeth Green and Family	We want to ask and encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to get our students back into school full time THIS SCHOOL YEAR. We ask that you give parents a choice for full in person learning. I understand this may not be feasible before the winter break, but planning should be in motion NOW to prepare for full in person learning starting in January with a full remote option.
Mairin Gradek	Please work to get our children in school full time. With proper safety protocols the staff and children are safer in school than out in the community. At a minimum the board needs to utilize Mondays as a rotating schedule for in person learning so that groups can experience 10 days a month versus 8. Just writing those numbers makes me sick. Our children need in person learning every day.
Leah Ross	<p>I've been so hopeful in my previous speaking minutes, approaching the board with admiration and respect. I've spoken twice with understanding, optimism and sincerity in my heart. I have always had and still do have the utmost respect for ALL teachers and families in our community navigating this difficult time while we are all searching for answers in a sea of confusion with NO ONE RIGHT TRUTH.</p> <p>But the divide in our district amongst our dedicated educators and families of all kinds with differing needs and choices is now at this moment completely disheartening and devastating to me. I believe that without concrete leadership and direction from our superintendent from day one of this pandemic and mainly the 2020-21 school year, our community is absolutely breaking DOWN under the tremendous weight of the stressful educational and life decisions we all need to make during this time. We needed someone to help in making these decisions for us; to clearly define our options and choices as black and white; to inspire teachers to return safely or give options for staying home; to defend the families of this district's right for a full and complete education that we all hold so dear as members of this community and one families and children NEED; and to take the potential criticism and fallout from providing that concrete plan with the confidence a true leader should have.</p> <p>This is not an easy time and these are not easy decisions.</p> <p>The following is all true: If parents believe in safe, everyday school rights for their families and aren't afraid to say their families and children NEED that and that there is evidence that is is WORKING, they should NOT be shamed or disrespected. If a teacher is not able to work during this time and needs to take a year leave, or remain remote while teaching, they should NOT be shamed or disrespected. If a family chooses to remain remote for this entire school year for their children and family that has that need, they should NOT be shamed or disrespected.</p> <p>Why have these groups now turned on one another? Why are we full of anger and judgement in our hearts? Why? Why are we scared to take the next leap toward what this school year can and should be? WHY?</p> <p>Because we don't have anyone giving us ANY direction. We don't have anyone to rely on who we all feel has our best interest in mind!</p> <p>We are ALL afraid! That's what actually unites us. We are ALL scared. You might be scared to send your child into the school building; you might be scared to teach; you might be scared your child will never again see a SMILE in school or never again go to school for five days a week without relying</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>upon zooms and chromebooks to see teachers faces and those of their classmates. You might be afraid of the virus itself. You might be more afraid of depression, mental illness and loneliness of your children and teens. You might be afraid of the days you go to work and your child is home alone navigating his or her education from his or her bedroom.</p> <p>We ALL HAVE FEARS AND THEY ARE ALL VALID. The problem is this: we don't have anyone standing UP and advocating for children by communicating clearly to teachers and steadfastly providing a directive to everyone about how ALL of these needs will be met.</p> <p>AND THEY ALL CAN BE MET.</p> <p>This is not about who is more right. This is NOT about what choices are more virtuous or more correct or more moral or more intelligent during this impossible and unprecedented time. There is no way to 100 percent please everyone, but the problem is clear: our leadership has NOT united us during this crisis. The lack of leadership has allowed us to turn against one another when this is a time that we need each other the MOST. Weak leadership has allowed the fear and confusion to GRIP us and fester like a wound instead of stomping it out with guidance, authority and control that is purely under a superintendent's power and OBLIGATION to provide.</p> <p>Our needs have NOT been met. We are literally all children floundering at home with parents who have abandoned us. So we are more scared than ever; we are in survival mode and it's getting ugly. I'm no longer hopeful. I'm no longer optimistic. And all I can do is plead for our community to try to understand one another again and leave the judgment behind. There is no one truth in this. Let's bring the empathy back and unite to help each other through this dark tunnel. I want to be proud of our district again. I'm sure that's something we can all agree on.</p>
Melisa Andrews	<p>Here I am again writing you as again a concerned parent. I was able to watch Palatine D15 board meeting last night. To my surprise they are utilizing the 6 feet distance while having in person. To tell me that we can't do 6 feet and have to go to 4 feet to accommodate is absurd and dangerous. Come to find out if needed they have a wait list for in person children. So if we can only do hybrid to accommodate that is the best of both worlds. I would recommend going remote for the time being with the fact that we are currently under a recommendation from the state to stay at home. Also, the fact that D15 voted on being closed the week after Thanksgiving because of community spread tells me something. That something is they are looking at what the community is doing and the numbers are rising. Why isn't an adaptive pause important? We have 342 per 100,000 and a positivity rate of 13.2 for our region. I am not understanding that in order for us to go hybrid we had to have metrics. But because we are above those metrics now we can't go back for the safety of students and teachers. We are on the verge of Tier 2 for our region for mitigation. I simply don't understand why this is safe.</p> <p>On top of that the board meeting next week which is an important one for teachers and parents is scheduled during parent teacher conferences. Why can't this be changed to a different day of the week? I am concerned with the boards mishandling of this and forcing Dr. Bein to not make the best decisions for our students and staff without consulting the board on every little thing. Thank you for your time.</p>
Lindsay Jurjovec	<p>I am writing to request that the district keep their forward progress and develop plans for students/families to have a choice for full 5 day instruction. As a parent of a kindergartner, I moved from a private school because of the great reputation of District 25 schools. It has been heartbreaking to watch my son's excitement and love of learning start to decline over frustrations with remote learning and confusion over what his school day will look like (hybrid or remote). Developmentally, we are failing our youngest learners. They do not have the academic or SEL skills to withstand this abrupt and prolonged disruption to full time school. These are the students that will be in our district for the longest time and will suffer the greatest impact and long term effects.</p> <p>I have a master degree in psychology and have been a school counselor for the past thirteen years. I am witnessing firsthand the academic struggles and increase in mental health issues that many of my students are experiencing. I am also a data person. I urge the district to look at data through a lens of how to get students back into school and not the other way around. Yes the COVID numbers are increasing across the country and even in our state; however, giving more weight in our decision making process to our school wide data and trends. Also, when looking at the COVID dashboard I would hope that positive cases would impact the decision more than the harder to understand/define</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>Exclusion data. Consider the long term impacts of remote learning and how that will impact different district wide data down the road (for instance, higher percentage of students needing SPED, higher incidence of SEL/behavioral issues, lower standardized test scores, etc).</p> <p>The 6 foot social distancing guidance may not be going away for a long time. How is the district thinking creatively to ensure we can all find a safe compromise to overcome this barrier? Can we have a comprehensive review of each classroom in the district to see the size and number of students in each class to assess how many classrooms might be able to function safely within the 6 foot guidance? Many districts (including mine) are considering surveillance testing as one of the mitigation strategies. I think the community is desperate to hear some creative problem solving and solutions to getting our kids back into school.</p> <p>COVID might be the current pandemic we are dealing with. Once COVID starts to quiet down, I worry we will have a different type of pandemic on our hands. An academic and social emotional learning pandemic in our youngest generation that we will ALL be addressing for years to come.</p>
Aoy Martschenko	<p>Thank you for taking comments from SD25 parents.</p> <p>Based on the current COVID situation in our state and many COVID cases in our school district, this might not be the time to consider of transitioning students to full in-person classroom. Nothing is really more important than people's health and lives.</p> <p>IDPH recommends people to work from home. How about teachers and staff, including yourself and everyone in your building? We are grateful that our children get to go to school couple days a week. They learn better and get their homework assignments completed a lot faster. However, I am very concerned and worried about their health and the whole family's health.</p> <p>Please do not make us go back to school with full in-person.</p>
Briana Hafner	<p>The work our teachers are doing during this pandemic is not just impressive - it is herculean in effort and on a daily basis, they are redefining what it means to be a teacher. I am grateful for them, I applaud them, and I hold them in the highest regard. They are readjusting to new teaching models and have supported so many students via the new models of both remote and hybrid learning. Unfortunately, to no fault of our teachers, these models do not work for all students. A significant portion of our student community is being left behind with the absence of a 5-day, full-day in-person model which would best serve their unique educational needs.</p> <p>Failure to provide the choice of 5-day, full-day, in-person instruction is a failure to best provide an inclusive culture of learning - one that recognizes that not all students thrive under the same conditions. This is especially important for our youngest learners just entering school for the first time, and for neurodiverse students who require various supports unique to in-person instruction that remove barriers to their learning.</p> <p>I am writing to share my support in the District's efforts to best serve its ENTIRE community by providing parents with the choice as to which model of learning works best for their situation and student(s), whether it be fully-remote, hybrid, or the 5-day, full-day, in-person instruction option which it currently does not offer.</p>
Laura Culley	<p>With only 1% of students or staff having covid last week and no outbreaks as defined by ISBE (5 or more), it is time to celebrate our success so far for limited in person teaching and plan to move forward with our plans for full 5 day in person instruction at some point in the near future. Instead, the superintendent has no plan for full 5 day in person instruction and sent a survey which was confusing, divisive, pushes an agenda and suggests that any parent or board member is considering not having any social distancing at all. Not one parent or board member has asked for that. The ask is simply to utilize the ISBE rules of 6 foot nose to nose instead of the current district interpretation of the ISBE rule of 6 foot desk to desk. If we do that for most classrooms we can have full in person learning without compromising the safety we have already established. Really, I am only asking for the rules that we use at Jewel and Walmart to shop to be applied in the classroom.</p> <p>Next, I ask that you have a plan to go back to full. Even if you need to delay a plan date due to district numbers, have a plan, set a date. Don't wait until the perfect conditions arise to begin the process of planning.</p> <p>Please throw out your survey and replace it with a neutral, fact finding survey that can help the superintendent and board gain valuable metrics from the parents that does not push an obvious agenda to not have to come up with a plan for full in person learning. And please do not send a</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>survey that threatens to take their teachers away. Doing that makes us feel like it's an emotional blackmail of the parents in order to not have to plan for full in person.</p> <p>I would ask every board member and the superintendent to publicly state that in person learning is the best for kids and that you believe in doing what is right for our kids first. Publicly state that you will be a problem solver, not a problem creator.</p> <p>I would ask that you communicate to the parents and teachers the in depth data, decision making process, and collaborative input that is driving your decisions at board meetings and in written communication. I would ask that you let hybrid parents know even if we go back to 5 full days they can still opt for hybrid and that remote will continue to be an option so you stop dividing the hybrid parents from parents who want full in person 5 days. Those of us who want 5 days in person are just asking for the choice to go full so our kids do not fall further behind and get the social emotional support that they need. Please show some leadership and empathy in this matter and make a plan to go back in full 5 days.</p>
Bliss Hansen	<p>I am following up to the email I sent on October 28, 2020. I would like to thank Dr. Bein, Mr. Olejniczak and Mrs. Patel for acknowledging and responding to my previous email. I am writing again to express my concerns for starting full in-person school before 2021.</p> <p>I understand how frustrated we all are that district 25 was not prepared to start hybrid school on September 1st. Why that did not happen, I still do not fully comprehend, and it completely frustrates me to no end. I also understand and appreciate that there is a very vocal group of parents that are pushing for full in-person school. I too want my children back at school full-time. However, I do NOT believe right now, in the middle of November, is the right time particular with increasing COVID #'s (as of 11/10 the 14-day average in 60004 was 9.55%, 60005 11.69% which is defined as SUBSTANTIAL by the state of IL). It will only contribute to overwhelming our healthcare system.</p> <p>I know there are many parents pushing for full in-person school immediately but please understand your job is not to listen to the loudest group. Your job (as elected officials) is to make the TOUGH decisions, the RIGHT decisions. The decisions that are BEST for our community (that includes, our children, teachers, parents, grandparents, people with pre-existing conditions). I understand that making these decisions is not easy and you do not do it lightly. I also understand that many people will NOT like your decision, but I encourage you to make the RIGHT decision...the safe decision for our children, community, teachers, healthcare workers and the healthcare system. Our hospitals are starting to get overwhelmed and if we try to push full in-person now we are just CONTRIBUTING to overwhelming the healthcare system. That is not the right decision for our community.</p> <p>If we try to force full in-person right now (when we have a community infection rate of 9.55% and 11.69% depending on the zip code) we are putting EVERYONE in our COMMUNITY at risk. I think that most people would agree that NO ONE wants to go backward right now (back to full remote). If we push for full in-person you are almost guaranteeing an outbreak (defined as 5 cases or more*) at one of our schools and the Cook County Department of Public Health will force us back to full remote. In order to be safe and to do what is best for the community then continuing in the HYBRID model is the BEST <u>compromise</u>. I understand that not everyone will be happy with this decision, but I believe that EVERYONE would prefer to keep their kids in-person part-time over going full remote. The yo-yo effect of full in-person to full remote WILL NOT BE GOOD for our children, consistency right now is best for our kids. The hybrid model is the best model (right now) for keeping our children in-person for the short term. If we continue to honor a 6ft distance between our children, wear masks, check temperatures, wash hands and continue all the other mitigation strategies that D25 has put in place it is the best bet for SUCCESSFULLY keeping our children in-person AS LONG AS POSSIBLE through the cold and flu season.</p> <p>The CDC and lots of other research tells us that aerosols travel beyond 6ft. It is estimated that they travel between 10ft-16ft. If we try to reduce the 6ft between desks you are practically guaranteeing that we will be forced to go full remote. It is happening to schools all around us. I am sure you are aware of the fact that St. James just had to go full remote for 2 weeks (until 11/19) and I know from many families that their children's desks are NOT 6 feet apart.</p> <p>Please make the RIGHT decision, not the easy decision...Let's keep our children in hybrid until COVID cases start to level off and decrease. Hybrid is the best bet for providing our children with some in-person school for now. Then once COVID cases are on the decline, we can plan on in-</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>person. I know that I would be more comfortable with a full in-person plan, even if 6ft could not be honored, when COVID cases are on a steady decline and I know our healthcare system is not overwhelmed.</p>
Julie Manis	<p>I live in the Patton community and have a fourth and second grader. My children have attended Patton since kindergarten up until this school year. We attempted remote learning for 8 days before we decided the best option for our family was to homeschool. There were several factors why we chose this option:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- I am a former first grade teacher who is now a stay at home mom. 2- I'm a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner and can use this program for both my boys, one of whom has dyslexia, dysgraphia and auditory processing disorder. 3- My oldest has an IEP for adhd. I could no longer allow him to learn through a computer. He does not have the attention span nor the capacity to do this. We tried, and it did not work for him. Again, our choice. <p>We decided to go this route knowing our 4th grader would not receive his IEP minutes (which totaled 7 hours weekly of services- reading, writing, speech, OT and social work from the very best special education team). Again, our choice.</p> <p>Many families, teachers, and administrators in our district have had to make difficult choices. Many students are struggling. Allowing families a choice about their child's education should be given.</p>
Erin Felten	<p>My name is Erin Felten and I have two children, with one currently in 2nd grade at Dryden. My son's IEP went into effect Spring of 2020, just three weeks prior to school being shut down. My son receives 720 minutes a month and additionally has a Behavior Intervention Plan through his IEP. My son has ADHD and is behind in reading and writing for his grade level. I tell you all this information to understand the scope of NEED for my son to be IN SCHOOL, FULL TIME. I can guarantee that his entire IEP team will agree with me on that.</p> <p>My son has been loving being back in school, but is surely still struggling. We are on a Wed/Fri rotation, and Thursdays have turned into days full of refusal and minimal engagement from my son. This hybrid schedule is a HUGE disservice to my son and meeting his IEP goals. I am concerned that this hybrid model is causing my son to fall further behind than he already is.</p> <p>One of the stated purposes of I.D.E.A. is "to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living"-this hybrid model is NOT preparing my son for further education.</p> <p>With all that being said, I am in favor of CHOICE. My choice based on my child's NEED is FULL-TIME, 5 day a week, in person education. I know it can be done as my youngest son has been back in FULL TIME daycare since June 1st with ZERO cases of covid. If daycares, toddlers and preschool teachers can do this-so can we!</p> <p>Lastly, as I watched the last LIVE meeting, I was in tears. applauded at the conduct of the union reps. I understand that we all have different viewpoints, but the "rah rah" show shown in that last meeting was upsetting. I am an advocate for my child, and I, along with all of the families who are here today, and watching LIVE- I am allowed to speak up without judgement on behalf of what is right FOR MY CHILD. The Union rep is not the mouthpiece for all of the teachers-there are COUNTLESS teachers who want to be back in school, full time, caring and teaching our very deserving children. The problem is that these teachers can't speak up as they are worried about the retaliation from the union. This is SO SAD. My son's teachers and IEP team is arguably the best group of teachers in the district and are deserving of a safe space to vocalize their wants.</p> <p>Please, give us the option to return,in-person FULL TIME, with the option to remain remote for those families who have that NEED. Thank you for your time.</p>
Kate Fontana	<p>I wanted to first thank Dr. Bein and the School Board Members of District 25 for all that you are doing for our community. I also want to express gratitude to every single teacher, you have all been amazing trying to navigate this new environment.</p> <p>I am a healthcare professional. I can say with complete confidence, THIS IS NOT GOING AWAY ANYTIME SOON. I don't just mean COVID 19, but all of these new processes, procedures, and increased use of technology with teaching. Many things in our society will be changed forever due to this pandemic. Everyone wants to get "back to normal," but we will never be back to our "old normal"</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>again. This may sound negative or pessimistic, but there are many things that have been positive that I will be happy to see incorporated into our "new normal." With that being said, this year is setting the precedent for many years to come. We need to adapt to this new environment and learn to live around COVID 19.</p> <p>I attended a townhall meeting 2 weeks ago for physicians and providers. A local Chicago public health expert gave an update on vaccine development. That expert also discussed a preliminary study which puts individuals in risk categories that would serve as a phased guide to deploy a vaccine once approved. It was an interesting update and it provided hope that a vaccine is coming soon. I know many people think a vaccine will be the end of COVID 19, but again we are going to be on this journey for a very long time. I could share facts about vaccine efficacy, the possible need for booster vaccines, timelines of vaccine deployment predictions, estimated percentages of people who would "take it" or not, and on and on but it doesn't change the fact that our world needs time to get to a "new normal." Time our children don't have to waste.</p> <p>After the school board meeting in July, I was completely disheartened. Dr. Bein presented a plan on how to get children back into the classroom but her goal was hybrid. Hybrid should not be our goal, but instead our stepping stone.</p> <p>I already have emailed the School Board and Dr. Bein with the only solution that I saw fit to best suit the needs of students and teachers to get to full 5 day/week in person and full remote instruction, but I am not an administrator and I leave those decisions to them. What I am asking for is to see as this pandemic continues to drag on and evolve, to change courses for full time 5 day/week in person instruction with full time remote learning.</p> <p>I have a concern with the survey that was sent out about a parent's comfort level if their student is not 6 feet apart. A parent, who is not a local health expert, should not be making this decision. A parent cannot say if their child will be "safe" or "unsafe." The only decision a parent should be making is if an in person or remote learning option is best for their child and their family. The decision about physical distancing has already been made by public health experts. It is quoted in ISBE guidelines, we need to keep students and staff "apart 6 feet where possible," and currently the district has accomplished this. And if you determine that 20 students cannot fit into a classroom, then there will be no full time in person instruction for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Please note the metrics that are going to be voted on tonight during the first motion. It seems case count numbers are the only metrics that we are focused on. Please note that the positive COVID 19 case count number in the state of IL as determined by IDPH has been changed not once...but twice since the beginning of this school year alone. First on 10/14/20 (counting antigen testing in addition to molecular tests) and for a second time on 11/6/20 (combining probable and confirmed cases). You are no longer "comparing apples to apples," as this data is no longer statistically the same as "constants" keep changing. I strongly urge you to focus on in-school metric data and mitigation procedures in determining continuation of in-person instruction and moving to 5 day/week full person instruction.</p> <p>As you know, restrictions are being increased over the state of Illinois. But I would like to note that as some regions are being put under tier 2 restrictions and with limitations of group sizes changing, schools are currently being excluded from those "gathering" numbers. This is valuing in person instruction as essential, which is a huge step for our children.</p> <p>Please set a date for 5 day/week in person learning to resume. Our children don't have time to waste.</p>
Jenni Von Tobel	<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. As we 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> <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</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>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>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>
Mark Culley	<p>On Monday we received a notification from the superintendent warning of the conditions and process for an adaptive pause. I assume this is due to the rising positivity rates in our area (11.1%) and the increase in the number per 10k in Arlington Heights. I took a look at our dashboard and the news in our schools reflects that of other countries and states that the overall risks to children and staff remains low. The covid dashboard lists the total numbers confirmed covid and exclusions rates for students and teachers. Particularly on the exclusion side it seems like a high number. But if I ask the question what is your risk of contracting covid last week and cumulatively and look at the percentage of students and staff that got covid as a percentage of those that are excluded, your risk for getting covid last week was 4.7%* and cumulatively 4.4%**. This is much less than the 11.1% positivity rating of our surrounding area (which includes antigen tests + PCR while the district only uses PCR which is more accurate). If you look at the percent of students with covid overall last week for all 4060 in person students, the percentage of students with covid last week was .19%*** and cumulatively .49%****. If you look at the teachers (with an assumed staff of 840 per the district website), last week the percentage of teachers with covid was .35%***** and cumulatively 1.3%*****. These metrics or similar risk metric percentages and not just raw numbers should be added to the covid dashboard for transparency to the parents. Also, please add a note that ISBE has changed their metrics to define an outbreak from 2 students to 5 students. I didn't see that note in the last communication from the superintendent.</p> <p>This is good news for our district. The mitigation measures are working for hybrid, we have no outbreaks, and I do not see a need at this time to go remote either for risk of catching covid reasons. If there is an issue with staff exclusions please let us know what the metrics are that you are tracking and when the threshold would be that you would need to place a school or district in remote due to staffing issues. Also, please indicate how you are retaining and ensuring new substitutes are available when exclusions arise so that we can keep in person learning.</p> <p>These numbers are also good news for planning a full return to 5 days in person learning by default. The survey that was sent out seemed very misleading, confusing, and leading towards all of the reasons why we can't go 5 days in person. The metrics listed as possible metrics are not explained as to why they are valid metrics. It looks as though you are using July's metrics when the superintendent announces a return just to hybrid so I don't know why those are being used now.</p> <p>The question about the 6 foot distancing so we can fit 15-20 students in a full classroom does not include the board member's definition of 6 foot nose to nose. Instead the survey question asks whether parents want the current 6 foot desk to desk or if they want no social distancing at all. I know of no parent who wants no social distancing at all. Parents expect that we can do social distancing and can meet state requirements with 6 foot nose to nose per the images on the website that show 6 foot nose to nose just like we do at Jewel or Walmart. The question is leading, manipulative, and seems written to assure that the superintendent's definition of 6 foot is used. If exclusions are the issue, then make it 6 foot ½" nose to nose or other measurement that will meet the ISBE requirement and allow full 5 days in person learning without exclusion after exposure. Please try to be a problem solver, not a problem creator.</p> <p>The question on changing teachers is a largely moot point because my kids barely know their teacher because they were remote at first and the teacher didn't know their name. If we were full in person every day our kids would be able to build a relationship with their teacher. This seems to be a question asked in order to provide yet another barrier to full in person 5 days as default.</p> <p>The parents in this community that I talk to assume that the board and superintendent have a plan to go back to 5 days in person and what metrics would be used for any adaptive pause. So far we have seen no plans and are greatly saddened by the seemingly manipulative, adversarial, divisive environment that has been created. The only reason that I am having to continue to send emails to the board week after week is because I don't see plans that make sense because it appears that the</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>superintendent is not leading with detailed explanations of the data, communications, and expectations. Instead we continue to get surveys that we don't trust are being used in the best interest of our kids, we have to figure out the data and risk for ourselves, and we have to wonder if any plans are being made for in-person 5 days. So I would like a response from each member of the board and the superintendent: do you believe that in person learning is the best for our kids, and will you do what is in the best interest of the kids? Will you work on a plan for 5 days even if our numbers rise now (at some point they will go back down)?</p> <p>Please stop letting down the kids, making parents give up on the district and go private or homeschool, and stop causing the enormous amount of stress parents feel when they learn there is no real plan or real metrics for decisions affecting their kids and family.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>*8 staff+students w/covid/170 staff+students excluded=risk that exposure to covid caused a verified covid case **31 staff+students w/covid/704 staff+students excluded=risk that exposure to covid caused a verified covid case ***8 students w/covid/4060 total students in person last week=percentage of students with covid last week ****20 students w/covid/4060 total students in person cumulatively=percentage of students with covid cumulatively *****3 staff w/covid/840 total staff last week=percentage of staff with covid last week *****11 staff w/covid/840 total staff cumulative=percentage of staff with covid cumulatively</p> <div><div><div>COVID-19 DASHBOARD</div><div>Updated every Friday afternoon <small>*4060 students in-person as of October 21, 2020*</small></div></div><div><div>DISTRICT WEEK AT-A-GLANCE <small>10.30.20 - 11.5.20</small></div><div><div><div>Staff</div><div>3</div><div>positive</div></div><div><div>Student</div><div>5</div></div></div><div><div><div>Staff</div><div>30</div></div><div><div>Student</div><div>140</div><div>exclusion</div></div></div><div><div>New numbers reported for in-person students or staff from the past week (Friday-Thursday).</div></div></div><div><div>DISTRICT CUMULATIVE <small>SINCE 9.1.20</small></div><div><div><div>Staff</div><div>11</div><div>positive</div></div><div><div>Student</div><div>20</div></div></div><div><div><div>Staff</div><div>183</div></div><div><div>Student</div><div>521</div><div>exclusion</div></div></div></div><div>Totals</div><div><div>In-person students per school</div><div><div><div>Dryden</div><div>408</div></div><div><div>Greenbrier</div><div>272</div></div><div><div>Ivy Hill</div><div>305</div></div><div><div>Olive</div><div>553</div></div><div><div>Patton</div><div>335</div></div><div><div>South</div><div>647</div></div><div><div>Thomas</div><div>733</div></div><div><div>Westgate</div><div>419</div></div><div><div>Windsor</div><div>388</div></div></div></div><div><div>District 25 serves the central portion of Arlington Heights, with seven elementary (K-5) schools and two middle schools (grades 6-8). We open our doors to just over 5,550 students and just under 850 staff members, every day. Students and teachers are encouraged to be the student/teacher they came here to be.</div></div></div>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>ISBE outbreak definition change from ISBE website (https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-School-FAQs.pdf)</p> <p>15. What is the definition of an outbreak in schools? (Updated 11/4/2020)</p> <p>Five COVID-19 infections (laboratory-positive by PCR or antigen testing) occurring within 14 calendar days of each other in individuals in the same classroom would meet the case definition for an outbreak in a Pre-K-12 school. This is because the cases would be epidemiologically linked² (by known exposure) with respect to place (same classroom) and time (within 14 calendar days). This</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 4 of 15</p> <hr style="border: 2px solid black; margin: 20px 0;"/> <p>would prompt an investigation by the LHD that may result in recommendations for testing and quarantining all students/staff in the affected classroom.</p>
Tricia Onkracek	<p>My name is Tricia Ondracek. I am the preschool director at Southminster Presbyterian. My school borders Dryden elementary. We serve many families from District 25. (Schools including Dryden, Patton, Windsor, Olive and Westgate)</p> <p>I am writing today to let you know that we have been open for in person learning since October 1st. We have had a super successful year so far. We are following COVID 19 protocols and staff / students are all wearing masks except for when we are eating.</p> <p>We are pleased how well our families are doing with regards to health and possible exposures. The benefits of being open have far outweighed to consequences so far.</p> <p>Our children are thriving in learning and social interaction. Our families are happy knowing their children are resuming a normal schedule.</p> <p>My staff is pleased with how well everyone has responded. It has been a win win situation. We are prepared for any future issues and we can adapt to meet the needs.</p> <p>Several families have asked me to write to you in hopes that their older children can resume more in person instructions.</p> <p>Contact me with any questions.</p>
Heather and Sean Molina	<p>We are writing this email to be added to public comment for the board meeting on November 12, 2020. I've spoken at numerous board meetings as well as sent many emails to the board members and superintendent over the last six months. I'd like to reiterate our desire to return to a full-time in person learning option for the students of district 25. I understand that making this statement seems odd given the recent uptick in cases, and therefore an immediate return is unlikely, however the board can be proactive and set a date following our holiday break and bring our kids back to school. We missed/have wasted valuable time this fall debating and sitting back waiting to see how things would progress. Hybrid & e-learning is not ideal and is causing harm to our children. .</p> <p>After watching/listening to the last Board meeting, we were disheartened to hear our teacher's union stance on returning to full in person learning while we see our children struggle on a daily basis. Listening to the car horns and seeing the standing ovations for those comments urging the board not to move forward with a return to school was sad. However, after to speaking with some members of the unions we came to realize that their stance was in response to a rumor that the board was going to mandate a return to school in mid-November and the union felt that the there was little preparation and thought put into this decision. Ultimately, the information that had reached the union was not true and thus caused this reaction. This continual flow of misinformation continues to plague this process.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>Why is this happening ---- because this board, the superintendent and the TAC committee have not yet put forth a clear and definitive plan/date detailing how D25 intends on returning to full in person learning. This continued lack of transparency into our districts plan forward has driven a divide in the community. This board and superintendent must set forth a plan with dates and metrics on how we can return to full in person learning. Outlining a plan will allow for parents as well as teachers to make educated decisions on what is best for their families. It also provides our leadership at each of our schools to make the necessary preparations to their respective facilities, which will allow for the safest environment possible and allow our children the ability to go back to being able to learn and develop in a manner similar to prior to this pandemic.</p> <p>Our own 2 boys struggle on a daily basis with e-learning and the lack of 1-1 in-person, targeted interaction and feedback from their teachers. Their teachers are doing their best given the circumstance and we commend them for thier efforts, but we can all agree that a zoom call is not on the same level as a being there in person. This hybrid model is not working. We urge this body to make a decision, set a date to return to full in person learning and lets all work together as a community of parents and educators to make that date and get our students back.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
Christy Witherow	<p>As parents we have had a hard time making informed decisions because we don't have a lot of information.</p> <p>So a few members of the community have come together to illustrate a 15 student classroom layout instead of the current 12.</p> <p>You can view the document here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/18cnrC1oFrOM3Ne5aPsdTuUfQT4iD5D/view?usp=sharing </p>
Daniel Strauss	<p>As the cold weather progresses, Illinois and Cook County are seeing huge increases of transmission of COVID-19 in our community, literally eclipsing levels seen at any time previously during this pandemic. It is inappropriate to set a timeline for full in person learning now. Without drastic control of the disease in our local community, the current direction of spread is likely to close the schools to remote learning only. Meanwhile, it will become unsafe for our frontline of teachers, staff, and administrators to gather with students. We must protect our frontline. It is unconscionable to wait until someone becomes gravely ill before we act.</p> <p>Please consider focusing your efforts on a plan to seamlessly return to full remote learning, to minimize the stress and anxiety that our children are already feeling every day, and set metrics to proactively ensure safety of the backbone of our school district, the teachers, staff, and administrators.</p> <p>This is a very difficult time for our teachers and children. Support from Dr. Bein and the SD25 Board of Education is imperative. We must foster trust, create a safe environment, and support the physical and emotional well being of everyone in our schools.</p>
Kelly Frederiksen	<p>While I am not sure what direction the board meeting will go tonight, and I see on the agenda that there is absolutely nothing listed regarding Covid schooling, I am going to go ahead and continue to write to you with my thoughts and displeasure in the Board for not doing the hard, and right things that are truly needed right now.</p> <p>Based on the very little information that is provided to the families, my assumption is that you are going to continue to push for a move toward a full in person learning option. Is this a bad thing? Of course not. Having a plan to move forward needs to happen so we are ready when the time is right. Is it the right time? Heck No!! Right now this is not the pressing issue that needs to be addressed. While it is smart to have a plan moving forward, it is also very wise to have a plan to remain in Hybrid and to move back to remote. It is the nature of the virus, and we need to be prepared to be able to move with it as needed.</p> <p>Currently, the 60005 positivity rate is DOUBLE what the (prematurely dismantled) TAC determined safe to move into Hybrid. Less than 8% positivity rate for 60004/60005 and within 75 - 175 7 day case rate, this is what the TAC deemed safe to return to Hybrid.</p> <p>60005 is currently double the positivity rate and well above the 7 day case rate.</p> <p>So tell me, how is it that you are determining that moving forward with planning for a full 5 day in person model is the right thing to do right now? What is your motivation behind this? Where are your heads at as you are making decisions that effect the entire community? Clearly science is not your</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>driving force. To be honest, from watching all the board meetings, it seems your only driving force is one group of parents demanding a full in person option. Perhaps the recent poll will provide a better insight into all of this.</p> <p>In an e-mail from Dr. Bein regarding tonight's Board meeting, she mentioned the "metrics" of moving back to a full remote model, she obviously mentioned this because it is a clear concern to the community and I imagine with the fast rising cases in our community, she has received quite a few e-mails. The only problem with these "metrics" is they seem to only involve the metrics of the school, and there appear to be no set metrics to actually follow. We are flying by the seat of our pants because, again, it seems the Board only has one goal in mind, going back to full 5 day option. Quite frankly, the only numbers that should be looked at while determining our metrics are the community numbers, not the numbers within the schools. Schools are, after all, a part of the community.</p> <p>Logic tells us that we are NOT ready to move forward, right now is not the time. We need a clear plan and set metrics that will allow our schools to move backwards or forwards with the virus. This is what needs to be done for the community as a whole. These are the decisions you should have been making weeks ago, and unfortunately, I have zero faith in the Board taking action on doing this now. I'd like to add that the teachers of our district, who are doing an excellent job with all of the crap thrown at them through all of this, deserve to be heard by The Board. They are the ones in the classroom with our kids. Not The Board, but the teachers. Find a way to give these teachers what they need and clearly deserve to allow them to do their jobs safely and effectively, including working remote. The banter I've heard regarding our tax dollars going to their salaries while they complain about their safety is truly disgusting and is shameful to our community.</p> <p>I am a live event production manager, I have been for my entire 25 year career. I am obviously not working right now because, well, live events are not happening right now. In my career, I am in charge of making plans for ANY situation we may encounter. Running live events, you can run into many hurdles, last minute changes and unexpected problems that will ultimately ruin your event. This is why we ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN!! It makes things much smoother when things happen unexpectedly.</p> <p>This is why we need a plan, so we can fluidly move when necessary. I am hopeful to see a solution a a move forward to making a plan and setting metrics into place.</p>
Mike Notaro	<p>My name is Mike Notaro and I am father to our two sons - a 5th grader at Patton, and an 8th grader at Thomas. First, thank you to the Board and Superintendent for your time and effort. I'd like to just request, if I may, that everyone take a breath and please truly listen with an open mind. Objectively. Clean slate.</p> <p>Can we back up for a second to re-consider the HOW instead of the WHAT. HOW are we approaching this dilemma of maintaining our children's education during a pandemic? We are a country, a community of like-minded people when it comes to overcoming obstacles and problem-solving. Our district is specifically known for this. This is also in our collective DNA - a quality and culture that was engrained in us growing up. We fight for things that are important, that matter - even in the face of fear. We try to engrain this in our children. Are we acting like it now? May I ask how not only private, but other public schools have implemented full-time in-person learning - resulting in lower transmission rates?¹. On this note, I'd like to particularly thank Board member Rich Olejniczak for his diligence and pro-active attitude - in trying to work through the logistics of how to distance and fit desks safely within classrooms at each school, for example.</p> <p>HOW are we treating the obstacle of this pandemic with regard to not just the education of our children, but as much and, increasingly apparent, the emotional health and social development of them.</p> <p>I am not here to point fingers or judge. The request is simple, though the execution complex. Especially amidst a third wave of this virus. I am asking for us all to really, and I mean REALLY weigh, in our minds, the TWO risks we are facing: not just the risk of Covid . . . but also the risk of passively observing, IN REAL TIME, our children's education flounder, their emotional well-being decline, and their social-development regress via isolation.²</p> <p>I am not for a second discounting the fact that this IS one of those times when it is a "life or death" situation. Not losing site of the fact that teachers would be in the trenches and line of fire and that</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>there is REAL risk of the highest order.</p> <p>But I implore you all to give equal weight to the other side of the problem, the other side of the conversation. It cannot, CAN NOT be only about Covid caused sickness and the highly unlikelyhood of death.</p> <p>On the surface and even hearing it out loud, that might sound crazy. But if we're really being honest, we are forcing our children to stay in their rooms, stare at their chrome books and not socialize with friends for 7 hours. In the case of full remote, that happens every week day. Does that sound crazy? Common sense tells me, and I'd guess many would agree, that this dilemma, this debate really boils down to two things: Fear and Control. And it seems we have two schools of thought: Pro-remote and Pro in-person.</p> <p>Pro-remote parents have a real and legitimate fear of this virus. Fear of sickness and, as the data shows to be highly unlikely, death. For many, it is a hypothetical - it hasn't happened; but, the threat it is real. And it is, at least, in some way quelled by the fact that they DO have and have had control: an option to remain at home.</p> <p>I can attest that Pro In-Person parents fear the long term fallout of the effects of remote learning . . . and it is NOT hypothetical. We are watching it happen right under our noses . . . everyday, each week - we're seeing it. The emotional distress, high anxiety, the crying, the demoralization and hopelessness. And I think I can safely say we feel the frustration and outrage of NOT having control. We currently do NOT have an option.</p> <p>So I'll conclude with a couple of questions: because we clearly have two differing views and no matter which data set you believe in . . . why is it not possible to fairly quell the fears and grant at least some control to both. Why are we not fighting both fronts, both sides of this dilemma? We're fighting like lives depend on it. If we believe our children's lives depend on it as well, then what about the other side? The fallout that remote learning is causing HAS to be weighted equally in this conversation. We are KIDDING ourselves, truly kidding ourselves, if we refuse to heed and act on what is happening before our eyes. And we will ultimately be the ones to have to look ourselves in the mirror and answer down the road, when our CHILDREN suffer the consequences of OUR lack of will to fight and find a way to deal with this pandemic like the caring, intelligent, pro-active community we are.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>¹ https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/chicagos-private-schools-have-seen-good-success-in-terms-of-covid-19-health-officials/2355150/</p> <p>² https://nj1015.com/parents-spot-mental-health-effects-connected-to-remote-learning/</p>
Kate Carney	<p>In advance of today's board meeting, I wanted to share that I encourage the board and Dr. Bein to develop a plan to transition our students into the classroom full time. Other schools have been successful with full time in person learning since the beginning of the school year. Our students are not thriving in the remote environment and would greatly benefit from a full time in person education. Allow families to choose what works best for them, do not continue to make this decision for us and our children. We are depending on you to listen to and act on behalf of our students and families.</p>
The following comments were received after the submission deadline and were not included in the November 12, 2020 Board meeting.	
Jacalyn Derengowski	<p>I don't want to talk about metrics, testing positive or mortality rates, I would like to talk about our Veterans. Yesterday, November 11th we celebrated Veterans Day. Red Poppies are worn on the right lapel positioned at the 11 o'clock as WWI ended on the 11th month on the 11th day of the 11th hour. A symbol to remind all generations of the red representing the blood of all those who gave their lives, the black represents the mourning of those who didn't have their loved ones return home, and the green leaf represents the grass and crops growing and future prosperity after the war destroyed so much. We must remember them and all veterans of all wars who made the ultimate sacrifice.</p> <p>I wanted to talk about something that Dan Crenshaw spoke of in his "Five Lessons for America on Veterans Day" that he talked about regarding the principals veterans fight for and what they stand for. Number one: Perspective: The SD25 school Board has dealt with the difficult issue of school closures related to Covid. But if each of the board members stops and thinks about our Veterans, they have had to deal with something much harder. Perspective will lead to gratitude for their</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>sacrifice, the hope to try and do better and the perseverance to meet the needs of this community and students.</p> <p>Number two: Do Something Hard: The real world is not what we wish it to be. Safe spaces sought to protect students from harm are not a realistic goal and do more harm than good. Overcome not falling to be a victim.</p> <p>Third: No Plan B. Do not give your self a choice, live according to the mission opening and keeping schools open and offering a fully remote option and hybrid. There is not back up plan. Give 110%. A plan B is doing just enough to get by which is where we currently find ourselves. Please don't be tempted to live a lesser version of what our students deserve.</p> <p>Fourth. Shame. Don't be that guy. Don't be the weakest link. Institutions should be molding students to be tough, not coddle them.</p> <p>Fifth: Duty. This should be self-evident. Do the rigght thing. otherwise is to betray your teammates, your community.</p> <p>The school board needs to demonstrate and to the community why schools should remain closed, not for the community to demonstrate and justify why they should be open.</p> <p>Our veterans paid the ultimate sacrifice. We ask you to do your duty and open our schools and keep them open with options for all. Thank you.</p>
Alexis and Doug Hammond	<p>I implore you to follow the science. As case numbers rise in the community, keep the teachers, administration, staff, and children safe. Return to full remote learning for the entire district. The hybrid model with 6 feet of distance, masks, and hand hygiene is not enough in the midst of the community positivity rate that well exceeds 8%. The time to move to remote is now. Don't wait until our schools are super spreaders and the positive cases are at all time highs. The best way to fight this pandemic is to limit community spread until a vaccine is available.</p> <p>Our entire community's health and well being hinges on the positivity rate and access to medical care. We must protect our first responders, the immunocompromised, the elderly, and our families. Please, follow the science.</p>
Tina Fries	<p>I implore the school board and Dr. Bein to, instead of discussing reopening for full in school learning, spend this evening reviewing our plans for full remote. IDPH has already asked everyone, except essential workers, to limit ALL exposure. These are our health professionals trying to save our community!</p> <p>The team should be assessing NOW how to establish proper supports under remote conditions for those most needy in our school community. For example can those with full IEPs and disabilities still be managed through perhaps a reduced day safely. Or can those who lack childcare as they are essential workers be better accommodated via a cost reduction from the park district support services, etc. And those with horrible internet receive some IT support NOW to improve their connections which will improve their learning experience.</p> <p>Our school teachers, resource teachers, aides, administrative and other support staff deserve better than this. Families deserve better than to be pulled and notified at the 11th hour. Put together a cohesive plan now for what we all know is inevitable. And whether the board shows leadership to safeguard our community or we wait for the governor and state to provide you cover so you don't have to make the hard decisions is on you. I hope you know we are watching but NOT waiting.</p>
Lara Rebsamen	<p>I'm saddened to see that there is a petition circulating for the resignation of Lori Bein. As parents, community members, board members, and educators we are not walking in her shoes. We may have some of the facts, we see our own point of view, as what we feel is the best thing to do. However, we don't have all the up to date most current information about the whole picture.</p> <p>Dr. Bein is the third superintendent in my time as a district employee and the most in-turn with the real world and being open to listening to others. I am in full support of Dr. Bein during these trying times.</p>
Julie Silva	<p>I am writing to you as a full-time staff member of District 25 for the last 15 years, as well as a devoted mom of two girls, Isabella who is 8-years-old and Chloe who is 3 years old. As an educator and mom, I have significant concerns about the Board's decision to eliminate the Childcare Accommodations Act in addition to considering full in-person learning for District 25.</p> <p><u>First, I would like to address the Childcare Accommodations Act:</u></p> <p>1. I began this school year with full intent to complete my social work responsibilities in the building and did not ask for any special accommodations at that time. However, once my 8-year-old</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>daughter began her own Hybrid learning in the district where we live, my situation and childcare issues changed and I needed this accommodation to help my family.</p> <p>2. Since working from home, I have completed my social work job/responsibilities the same as I would if I was in the building. I see more of my students on zoom than I do in-person (based on student needs, student's schedules, etc.), even on the days the students are in the building. As a result, my working from home has not negatively impacted my job.</p> <p>3. My childcare/remote learning issues have not changed for my family and are not going to change based on where I live and the district's current plan. Therefore, I still need to be home for my daughter 3 mornings a week to help her do her remote learning and make sure she stays on track with her own school expectations.</p> <p>What I am struggling to understand is why this accommodation request is being taken away if it has helped so many, and continues to do so. If I used the FFCRA, I would not only get an income reduction, but more importantly, the students would receive less services than they are now (based on whether or not the district can get a social work sub or not, which they would also have to pay for). With my current accommodation, I am able to do my full-time job, all of my students are seen by me (the social worker they know/trust), and I am able to be home to help my daughter. I truly do not understand how taking this away is better for anyone.</p> <p><u>Secondly, I would like to address the desire for full in-person learning:</u></p> <p>According to a recent article published on November 11, 2020, from channel 5 Chicago, it states that the "Illinois' health department issued new guidance Wednesday urging residents to stay home and only leave for "essential activities." Additionally, "The guidance also urges employers to have employees work from home as much as possible during that time period. We ask employers to make accommodation for this. Our goal is to reduce transmission as we head into the holidays so businesses and schools can remain open."</p> <p>With all of the supporting data that the Pandemic is worsening in Illinois, how is pushing for full in-person learning doing our students justice by ignoring the increasing COVID cases and safety concerns? Many surrounding districts are already in Remote Learning (e.g. Deerfield) or moving to Remote (e.g. Northbrook), so how can we ignore that when deciding what is best for our students, teachers, and families?</p> <p>I am the first person to stand up when it comes to social/emotional health for students and I do understand people's desire to have their children back in school; however, that desire should not supersede the safety and health for the community as a whole. The other week, one of the classrooms at Greenbrier was set up to demonstrate how it would look for 20+ kids to be "six feet apart." It was overwhelming, to say the least. There was no room for the children to safely walk around, or for the teacher to move from his/her desk and teach effectively. How is this better for our kids?</p> <p>In order to provide students with the essential social/emotional and academic support they need, as well as maintain the safety of the students and staff, it would only make sense to continue with the safest learning model (based on IL numbers and recommendations- Hybrid or Remote learning), and allow staff members to work from home (in line with most of Corporate America) if they need to also be there to help facilitate and nurture their own children's education. We are educators who should be looking out for one another, so why aren't we?</p> <p>Please reconsider keeping the Childcare Accommodations Act and maintain safe Hybrid or Remote learning, based on the Illinois Department of Health recommendations.</p>
Michael Murray	<p>16 years ago, we moved to the Arlington Heights community primarily based on the great reputation of the public schools.</p> <p>Now, my feelings have changed greatly as I see the hybrid model is not working for all 3 of my daughters in District 25.</p> <p>Local private schools, as well as other school districts in the area, have somehow managed to enact protocols and find solutions to make a 5 day a week work, but sadly, District 25 seems to be in an endless loop of meetings, surveys and indecision. We are highly considering moving to private schools, as I observe the detriment that hybrid learning is having on my children every day.</p> <p>I highly encourage District 25 to give parents an option for 5 days in-class learning, as the current offering is failing the children.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
Renee and Matt Burns	<p>I do hope common sense prevails and that you continue hybrid instruction. A full in-person transition would be utter nonsense at this point, especially with holiday travel.</p> <p>Please listen to experts and those who know best regarding safe in-person parameters. Parents have an incomplete picture of the level of detail such a safe transition entails. Thank You</p>
Heidi and Kevin Bradley	<p>To the Board,</p> <p>First, my gratitude and appreciation for your dedication and hard work to educate our children during this difficult time. I appreciate that District 25 is utilizing some of the Harvard T.H. Chan best practice guidelines.</p> <p>I would like to ask the following questions to be addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On arrival and dismissal, it seems multiple grade levels are using the same entrance. Has there been discussion on staggered arrival and dismissal times, for each class (cohort), at a different entrance, with physical distancing? 2. How are you keeping classes (cohorts) separated during lunch if up to 36 students are eating in the commons, as well as during gym and recess? 3. Has there been discussion on increasing the time the elementary children are taught through synchronous learning to remain engaged and foster a more enriching learning experience?
Lelah Beasley Hedrick	<p>Dear District 25 School Board,</p> <p>I wanted to write out of an abundance of concern over the return to full in-person learning survey we received. Over the course of our children's lives in District 25, we have been thankful for and proud of this community and this school district. Our children have been able to thrive in this community and we have always felt we could trust in your leadership. At present, you are failing us.</p> <p>By forcing the district to distribute a return to full in-person instruction survey in the midst of a local and national surge during this global pandemic as rates are predicted to rise to 200,000+ cases/day/nationally predicted within roughly 3 weeks seems not only ill-advised and completely tone-deaf, it invites a furthering of this invitation to consider our reaction to this pandemic as optional and void of community consequence. I am shocked and horrified that the lives of the teachers and the students and the greater community would be of so little consequence to you that you would actually entertain this possibility.</p> <p>Further, the fact that the language of the state guidance is being manipulated to propose the removal of the 6ft perimeter is unconscionable and reflects a real lack of basic scientific understanding and respect for both CDC and IL guidance. That guidance variance allows for schools in areas of real need and space restrictions and without technology to do the best they can. It is not to be perverted just so that you can push kids back into schools when their lives and the lives of their teachers will be at risk. It is not only wrong-headed; it is morally bankrupt.</p> <p>As a public school, the charge is to foster learning and community, it is not to harm. With this virus, there are far-reaching consequences that spread far outside of the doors of each school building and the four corners of each school playground. These consequences will stretch far beyond this year or next.</p> <p>With another teacher dying just today, how many teachers must die nationally, within the state, or within the district before it is determined that teachers are worth fully protecting and keeping out of harm's way and that the hard work of creatively attacking virtual learning is far easier to deal with than dying students and teachers.</p> <p>Iowa teacher, 38, dies days after testing positive for COVID-19: 'There's a lot of sadness'As students return, the deaths of at least six teachers from covid-19 renew pandemic fears Opinion I Won't Return to the Classroom, and You Shouldn't Ask Me To</p> <p>Given that only about 40% of people with Covid-19 demonstrate symptoms, how is it advisable to move students closer together when know that many students that might be carrying the disease will demonstrate no symptoms whatsoever and thus will be sharing the air with their peers all day long?https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/health/coronavirus-asymptomatic-transmission.html</p> <p>Given that we know that the virus is aerosolized and can remain in the air indoors for minutes to hours, even when students do their best to wear their properly fitted, high-quality, multi-layered masks, over their noses and mouths, the regular behaviors of coughing, sneezing, vomiting, blowing ones nose, eating, yawning, yelling, belly-laughing, crying... make maintaining protocols difficult if not</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>impossible. How will students and staff not be exposed when there is not the protection of space afforded by the social distancing guidelines? https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/coronavirus-information/about-the-virus/is-the-coronavirus-airborne</p> <p>As you consider the emotional and physical health of your students and since we now know that “(children) between the ages of 10 and 19 can spread the virus at least as well as adults do”, and since we know that even the youngest are at much greater risk than originally thought “85 babies under the age of 1 have tested positive for coronavirus in 1 Texas county since mid-march”, why are children being put in such precarious situations that they may now catch the disease from within the district and then be responsible for spreading the disease to their family members potentially resulting in catastrophic emotional and financial strain on the families of our community. This is moral issue. The school is responsible for the whole child and cannot put the child, the child's family, and the community in harm's way. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/18/health/coronavirus-children-schools.html https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/18/health/texas-infants-coronavirus-trnd/index.html</p> <p>Teachers are now considered to have a more dangerous job than firefighters. Not only does a firefighter choose to be in his/her dangerous job from the start; if he/she dies, it stops there. Not only could a teacher die or have life-long medical battles, they could literally be responsible for killing their own spouses and children. Teachers give up a lot to teach, how is it acceptable to ask a teacher to risk his/her life to teach?</p> <p>We are all sacrificing right now. Our children our sacrificing. Our teachers are sacrificing. Parents are sacrificing. The thing is, we are given a lot. We have great resources in this community, and our students all have technology and thoughtful, creative support teams. No one wants this global pandemic, but that doesn't mean we get to pretend it is not here. That means we make smart choices and we protect our children and we sacrifice together so we have a future together. Sacrifice is far easier than dying or living with a life-long illness gifted to you by your child who picked it up in school.</p>
Marianne Corcoran	<p>On September 8, the TAC came to the agreement that the then current conditions supported, at a minimum, returning to a hybrid model. The minutes state that “4 members voted to skip hybrid and go to full-in person, with relieving the 6-foot distance [recommendation].” The minutes of the October 20th meeting state that 52% - 12 out of 23 members - supported a return to full in-person learning in the current environment without 6-foot distancing. Despite the fact that overall cases have trended upwards, more people reached this conclusion.</p> <p>What members are beginning to realize is that, thanks to the many mitigating controls in place, the difference in risk between the two models is minimal, while the difference in benefits is substantial. In both situations, we are able to abide by the spacing recommendation of the ISBE to maintain 6 feet distancing to the greatest extent possible, regardless of how you interpret the measurements. It's that “to the greatest extent possible” part that often gets ignored in board meetings, leading us to succumb to the union's blatant stall tactics, needlessly debating how to precisely measure the distance between two people and ignoring all of the other safety measures in place.</p> <p>Although the district will easily exceed any spacing obligation for its employees no matter your interpretation of the measurement between students, the distancing between students will be marginally decreased in a full-time learning approach. It is the other mitigating factors that make it safer to do so. OSHA (The Occupational Safety and Health Act) advises employers to protect workers in close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) a sick person ... by using additional engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and PPE¹.</p> <p>According to the hierarchy of controls, published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and promoted by the CDC, engineering controls would be things like commercial ventilation systems and the use of hospital grade disinfectant, while administrative controls are an emphasis on changing the way we act – things like modifying drop off and pick up procedures².</p> <p>Other controls in place include, but are not limited to: masks; hand hygiene; temperature checks; symptom screening; contact tracing; discouraging high fives, hugs, and handshakes; barriers while eating; assigned seating; keeping classes separate and confining recess to a box. While none of these factors are perfect on their own, when combined they form a systematic approach to safety that</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>is highly effective. It's why we not only wear seat belts when driving, but we also have airbags, stop at stop signs and abide by traffic laws.</p> <p>You may ask if I am comfortable inviting 25 people into my home right now. The answer is an emphatic no. Not without these controls. But if I were lucky enough to have a 600 square foot room in my home with a commercial HVAC system ... if I had modular seating where I can give everyone their own dedicated space ... a simple desk and a chair would suffice ... if you sanitized your hands when entering, wore a mask, and I did the same? Sure, come on over. You provide the wine. The only barrier left will be the one we place between us while we drink it. And I will feel even more comfortable having you back tomorrow, because I will have known where you were today.</p> <p>Our district also has adequate COVID-19 symptom screening protocols and a response plan in place to address exposures and potential exposures to positive cases, as recommended by various outfits. Self- screening attempts to eliminate the presence of a threat before it even enters the school. Mitigating controls are in place to protect against a threat present in the school before it has been identified. The response plan is in place to remove a threat from the school once it has been identified. All work together to provide a safe environment for our students and staff, even when case counts outside the school might appear to be spiking^{3,4}, and even if a COVID+ case enters a classroom.</p> <p>Typically, the district will not assume that a symptomatic person is a probable case unless they have been epidemiologically linked to (i.e., have been in close contact with) another probable or positive case⁵. However, when our region is identified as “high incident” by the IDPH, as it currently is, the district is required to assume all symptomatic persons are probable cases unless proven otherwise. In doing so, the system of controls is intentionally designed to automatically adjust when regional case numbers are elevated, just as they are now, all while schools remain open.</p> <p>But we do also have an obligation to the community, and I recognize that. This is where metrics come into play. The current metric that we are heavily relying on is a per capita case count. This metric was set in early September based on a Harvard University study⁶. The information in the study is not perfect and its authors never meant for it to be a single datapoint threshold, but it did make it obvious that moving to hybrid at the very least was certainly appropriate at that time.</p> <p>Dr. Bein noted in her July 30th presentation that the positivity rate would be a required metric. The reason that an 8% positivity rate was chosen was not because it made sense, but simply because it was assumed the state would force school closures if rates if Region 10 reached that level and the decision would be taken out of the district's hands. The state's reliance on this metric has since been criticized by many researchers including University of Chicago Associate Professor Sarah Cobey⁷, the data scientist and epidemiologist who led the team advising Governor Pritzker's administration on how to track the spread of the coronavirus.</p> <p>Like Professor Cobey, we must acknowledge that our understanding of the virus has and will continue to evolve, and we would be fools not to allow the metrics and the approach to a return to school to evolve with it. We are currently acting like fools.</p> <p>COVID predominately spreads in clusters - groups of cases connected by time, geographic location, or by common exposures. A single super spreader event can and has caused per capita case numbers to spike. We need not focus heavily on outside case numbers. Instead we need to continue to focus on successfully limiting the spread within the schools. Studies have shown that with the appropriate screening, mitigating controls and response plan all in place, schools remain unlikely to become super spreader events⁸.</p> <p>There are certain things that would warrant school closures due to outside cases. Limited supply of hospital beds, ventilators, or PPE for healthcare workers would be an example. Clusters turned widespread outbreaks that specifically threaten our schools may be another. I don't know what metrics would best highlight that. A black and white metric without context is completely inappropriate. The TAC should not be making this recommendation. Local hospitals and medical professionals should. As of the time of this comment, they are not recommending shuttering schools.</p>

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting

Name	Question/Comment
	<p>Let me be clear. I personally am not recommending we either open or close schools. I am recommending that we have rational confidence in the controls that have been implemented and that we follow the advice of local hospitals and medical professionals, not the demands of the union. I have four asks for the Board to consider including in the agenda of the November 12 Board Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first is to commit to continue engagement with Arlington Heights hospitals, doctors, and medical professionals, particularly those that are closest to the cases and how they are impacting our community, in determining if conditions warrant temporary school closures at any time. • The second is to require the district's administration to better educate our community on the processes and procedures in place, particularly the ISBE's exclusion tree and how it should be consulted by staff and families during the self-screening process. • The third is to motion to recognize that the symptom screening protocols, mitigating controls, and response plan currently in place are believed to adequately mitigate the risk of spread within the schools, and their effectiveness supports schools reopening for full time learning. • The fourth is to motion to commit to a date to return to full time learning, should conditions remain supportive at that time. <p>Thank you.</p> <p>¹ https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf#page=12 ² https://www.assp.org/news-and-articles/2020/03/31/how-to-apply-the-hierarchy-of-controls-in-a-pandemic ³ https://www.chicagobusiness.com/government/illinois-covid-count-just-took-big-leap-heres-why: "Illinois, already in the midst of a fall surge of COVID-19, appeared to have a dramatic hike in the statewide case count today. But that surge is due to a batch of probable cases the state has tracked, but had not previously disclosed in Illinois' daily tally. Officials reported those en masse with its regular daily case report, along with new insights from contact tracing around the state." ⁴ https://privatebank.ipmorg.com/content/dam/ipm-wm-aem/global/pb/en/insights/eve-on-the-market/S2-COVID-tracker-embedded.pdf#page=2: The US testing rate is rising more slowly than infections (left), suggesting that a rise in testing explains many new infections; the opposite is true in most of Europe, where testing only explains a small part of the spike. JP Morgan's research estimates that 60% of the spike since Labor Day can be ascribed to more testing, not because of an actual organic outbreak. For comparison sake, that is close to 20% in most European countries. Additionally, the new infections are much worse than the new hospitalizations, which are in turn much worse than the mortality rates (right), suggesting cases are milder and standards of care are much better. Compare this to the first wave back in March, when new daily hospitalizations were greater than new cases by an alarming margin. This is no longer the case because we are testing more, are catching infections, and have more knowledge around how to treat it. ⁵ https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree.pdf: When a region is designated as "high incident," all symptomatic individuals must be assumed as probable cases (Column A) until proven otherwise. At all other times, the only symptomatic individuals that are required to be treated as probable cases (other than confirmed COVID+ cases) that those that have been epidemiologically linked (i.e., have been confirmed to have been in close contact) to a COVID+ case. ⁶ https://go.boarddocs.com/il/sd25/Board.nsf/files/BURJDN4CB236/\$file/Harvard%20Info%20201029.pdf ⁷ https://www.bnd.com/news/rebuild/article245407350.html ⁸ https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/schools-arent-superspreaders/616669/: COVID-19 School Response Dashboard; In a Brown University study of about 227,000 kids in all 50 states, the infection rate was just 0.14% among students and 0.25% percent among staff. Even in high-risk areas of the U.S., the student rates were under 0.5%.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="305 1312 820 1633"> <p>United States virus tracking</p> <p>Source: COVID Tracking Project, JPMAM. 11/4/2020. 7 day avgs.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="917 1285 1356 1633"> <p>US daily infections vs mortality</p> <p>Source: JHU, COVID Tracking, JPMAM. 11/04/2020. 7 day avg.</p> </div> </div>
Rod and Laura Magnuson	<p>We are greatly concerned about the push for full in-person learning and the removal of 6-foot distancing. The metrics as they were originally defined do not even support hybrid at this point. While parents have the option to do remote learning, teachers and support staff do not. We support the teachers' concerns as expressed during the 10/29 board meeting and urge the board to exercise caution and good judgment and not move forward with full in-person learning at this time. Thank you</p>
Courtney Dirksen	<p>Please feel free to share with Board members. I've written before to express our satisfaction with the hybrid model as it's currently implemented. We believe it is the best available option to allow students</p>

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	<p>an in-person learning experience in as safe an environment as possible AND allows students with greater needs more access. I thought I'd also follow-up on the Motion 2 below after reviewing tonight's Board agenda. Passing Motion 2 will effectively eliminate the only option for in-person learning that adheres to the public health standards put forth by our state, county, the CDC, and the AAP. It's important that we do whatever we can safely do to get as many kids back to in-person learning as possible, for as much time as possible, but we can't do so at the expense of student or staff safety. There are many families, ours among them, who would not consider in-person learning if it didn't include appropriate social distancing.</p> <p>Also, I'm confident that you'll take into account the more significant mitigation measures implemented today by the CCDPH. As of this morning, there was a list of states that I referenced for work-related purposes, and when I revisited the site just a few moments ago to refresh my memory, it had changed to what I've pasted below. There really seems to be no data to suggest in-person learning without social distancing in groups of 20 or so people for several hours a day is a good idea. I understand, perhaps better than most, the mental health challenges that have accompanied these closures for many children and parents. An approach that balances physical and mental health needs for our community is essential, and we believe that hybrid is the best available option to achieve that goal. Motion 1 makes sense; Motion2 does not.</p> <h3 style="color: #0056b3;">Travel Guidance</h3> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p><small>CCDPH recommends avoiding all non-essential travel. All persons entering into suburban Cook County from outside of suburban Cook County should quarantine for 14 days.</small></p> <h4 style="color: #c00000;">Limit Travel and Gatherings</h4> <p><small>Gatherings and travel in and out of communities present a high risk of spreading COVID-19 infection. In our current situation, with a rising prevalence of the virus, attending even small gatherings that mix households, or traveling to areas that are experiencing high rates of positivity, is not advised and is potentially dangerous. Please, travel only if necessary.</small></p> <h4 style="color: #c00000;">Work from Home if Possible</h4> <p><small>For the next three weeks, work with your employer to plan to work from home unless it is necessary for you to be in the workplace. We ask employers to make accommodation for this. Our goal is to reduce transmission as we head into the holidays so businesses and schools can remain open.</small></p> <h4 style="color: #c00000;">Participate in Essential Activities Only</h4> <p><small>For the next three weeks, stay home as much as possible, leaving only for necessary and essential activities, such as work that must be performed outside the home, COVID-19 testing, visiting the pharmacy, and buying groceries.</small></p> <p>2. That the Board of Education direct the administration to allow all interested families the option for full in-person learning as of _____ date with the understanding that the current 6 foot social distancing between students will only be maintained where possible because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full In-person learning cannot occur in District 25 with the current measurement for 6-foot distancing between all students and staff, and • The Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education advises that students be seated "6 feet apart to the greatest extent possible", and • The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that physical distance between desks should follow current public health guidance, but that in the absence of specific guidance, desks should be placed at least 3 feet apart, and ideally 6 feet apart, and • At least 68 additional staff members would need to be hired to maintain 6 foot distancing as currently measured and there are not sufficient teaching candidates nor substitutes available to staff at that level, and • If the District should be able employ the extra staff and the District either had to go back to a remote/earlier hybrid model OR close completely upon State direction, the additional staff could not be laid-off once hired; and • The additional space required to accommodate the 6-foot distance in the hybrid is not available in the District and/or cannot be found

Community Input – November 12, 2020 Board Meeting