

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/6/2021 16:42:39	Kerry	Lynch	Oak	I firmly support our kids returning to school full time. I'm impressed our district is taking steps to try to move forward to fully reopen. Thank you for the hard work.
2/6/2021 18:10:46	Maggie	Jessopp	HMS/Lane	<p>District 181 Board of Education and Dr. Garcia,</p> <p>Thank you for your continued work, leadership, and dedication to our district. I am submitting my comments to express my support of offering a 100% in-person learning model as soon as possible. I understand that modifications will need to be made both before and after implementation and believe that the many benefits to in-person education far outweigh the potential risks and schedule modifications. Among the many stressors tied to the current environment, elementary students have lost their joy of school without daily in-person specials/PE and middle school students are losing valuable core instructional minutes every day.</p> <p>Looking ahead, it is likely that challenges will persist into the next school year. Resuming 100% in-person education in April will allow the district to apply best practices in August. Live-streaming classes is necessary for students to keep up with their school work when quarantined due to exposure based on current IDPH standards, along with other creative and proactive problem solving as it relates to social distancing, lunch, surveillance testing, and more. Please know that community members stand ready to do whatever they can to help and applaud your efforts to prioritize the whole-being welfare of our youngest community members by offering an option of returning to 100% in-person learning this Spring.</p> <p>Thank you for tireless work on behalf of the students and staff in D181.</p>
2/6/2021 20:10:27	Frank	Zhang	HMS	Please only consider remote and hybrid in 2020-2021 school year. In-Person should be evaluated in this summer. Thanks.
2/6/2021 21:02:36	Christian	Pedersen	Clarendon Hills	My son attends 5th grade at Walker School. Due to my son's severe asthma, he is considered a high-risk child with complications if he is infected with COVID-19. I have serious concerns about shifting to full-time instruction with larger class sizes and reduced separation requirements, especially when still receiving emails from D181 about continuous infections, particularly at CHMS. I need the Board of Education's commitment the healthy and safety of the students and the teachers takes priority in this decision to return full-time. I have been seeing a great deal of chatter from parents that are trying to pressure and bully the Board to get their kids back in school full time, regardless of what the area's current situation is. I want to make sure science, facts, and metrics are being used when making this decision. I want my children back in class full-time, like everyone else. I want to make sure the right decision is made when that should happen. Thank you very much.
2/7/2021 8:34:25	Angela	Deppe	Clarendon Hills Middle School	It appears one concern for full time school is eating lunch without a mask. Is it possible to do a 8am-1pm (or thereabouts) schedule like some other schools to avoid lunch? I'm all for full time in person learning but feel our efforts should be focused NOW on preparing the kids to go back full time in the fall. If that means it's best to start full time in person learning now, to ensure we start full time in the fall, let's do it. If we are not prepared now, let's accept the current hybrid model (which has been successful for my kids) and start planning now for the fall. Either model allows for those uncomfortable with in person learning to go remote. Please do not allow those not comfortable with in person learning to take that choice away from those of us who are comfortable with it. We did a poor job last year preparing for starting school in the fall and left the decision making to the end- I hope we have learned from our mistakes. Thank you.

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2/7/2021 10:44:56	Christopher	Paquette	The Lane/ HMS	<p>For families that have chosen remote, the proposed changes of reorganizing classes and live-streaming into in-person classes from the back of the room is detrimental to our children's education. We strongly feel that those families that have chosen remote should have the option to remain with the current construct through the end of this school year.</p> <p>There are three supporting reasons:</p> <p>1) Disruption of the current school year - even if the proposed changes were safe, it's just disruptive and hard for kids to move in the middle of the year. The beginning of the year was hard, but now we've figured it out. Everyone has figured it out and settled into a rhythm (both hybrid and remote). Trying to change it up now will only cause headaches for weeks or months. New schedules, rules, and teachers. It will be a distraction to learning not worth any potential benefits from in-person instruction.</p> <p>2) Quality of education - for those who choose not to switch (and therefore live-stream into the live classroom), the quality of education will be materially diminished. There will be limited engagement, interaction, and stimulation. The quality of education can't help but suffer.</p> <p>3) Potential for social isolation and embarrassment - for those who choose not to switch, the kids will be on 'display'. All will know that for some reason (be it preexisting health conditions, moral, medical knowledge, etc.) they have chosen to not be near their peers at this time. There will undoubtedly be questions on 'what is wrong with this person that they just cannot put on a mask and be with other people'.</p>
2/7/2021 12:11:41	Jonnie	Keiner	CHMS	Thank you.
2/7/2021 12:24:19	Vibha	Sabharwal	CHMS	Since science shows little to no transmission at school I believe there NEEDS to be a full time in school option.If need be extend the lunch period so kids can come home for lunch until the weather warrants eating outside. Also consider live streaming classes, tenting options.and plexiglass where needed.
2/7/2021 12:24:19	Vibha	Sabharwal	CHMS	I have been working as a physician at the hospital throughout the pandemic. The highest risk comes from close contact with infected individuals- the nurses/staff that were in closest contact with infected patients were at highest risk. Most other people who got covid - got their infections at home- likely from eating in close contact with infected individuals. Wearing masks offers the best protection against Covid. I think the children should be allowed to return to full time school with modified lunch schedules to limit contact with others.
2/7/2021 15:45:51	Maureen	Laschober	The Lane	Please address this at the Board of Education meeting during the survey discussions. I am interested in hearing about the input, opinions and recommendations of the medical professionals from the AdHoc Health Committee related to the transition to full day learning without guarantees of social distancing. I appreciated their input in August/September. The BOE Report from 9/14/20 stated that consultation would continue "throughout the year". Thank you for your time.
2/7/2021 17:18:11	Lindsey	Patel	Walker & CHMS	<p>Based on the survey results, one could interpret that the majority would like to return so that should be our directive. However this is not a trivial community survey on whether our school color should be red or blue, we are in the middle of a global pandemic with over 460,000 souls lost in our country alone, more than we lost in WW2. If 38% indicated that they would like to stay hybrid, that means that 1,032 students do not feel safe enough to return to school full time based on the terms presented with the survey. Not only that, but 374 of our 451 staff members that filled out the survey do not feel protected enough to return to school during the pandemic with your current plans. To proceed to return to full in person school marginalizes the pandemic preferences of 1,406 members (both staff and students) of our D181 family.</p> <p>Of course we all wish to return to full time in school however it would be negligent to simply dismiss the guidance of the ISBE, DDH and IDPH just because we want to be back in school full time. If the standard is 6 feet indoors we must find a way to do that in both the classroom and in the lunchroom. If the standard is 6 feet, it is not equitable if some classrooms are at 3 feet and others receive 6 feet of distance simply because of their school attendance area.</p> <p>As reported in previous meetings, to accommodate 6 feet of distancing, we will need to hire more staff and get more creative with our space. I urge you to prepare and plan for a full in person return in the fall starting now instead of making these hires, classroom teacher adjustments and space changes for an April 5 switch for only the remaining 9 weeks of the school year.</p>

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2/7/2021 17:40:45	Sarah	Hoffman	CHMS	<p>Dear Board of Education,</p> <p>Two weeks ago, my principal was observing one of my co-taught, on-level math classes. A brief conversation I had with him at the end of the class period, later prompted me to reflect on how this class will look different if we transition to a full in-person learning model. I teach a grade level co-taught hybrid class and a grade level co-taught remote class of the same grade and math level. If we transition to full in-person, my remote class could potentially be "live-streaming" into my current hybrid class.</p> <p>I began to envision what this would look like and how to manage this sort of environment while providing feedback to students in the classroom, as well as those on Zoom. Many of the same needs of our in-person class mirrors those of our remote class. As my principal observed and commented, me and my co-teacher were actively interacting simultaneously with more than one student in some way. Whether viewing student Pear Deck slides on our computer screens, assisting particular students in a nearer proximity, or answering questions from a student nearby, this was all happening simultaneously with 2 teachers.</p> <p>Now imagine our remote class, with students of similar needs and abilities, on Zoom, live-streaming into class participating in the same activity. Without a third teacher to support and provide feedback to the students live-streaming into class, I cannot see how this type of environment would be beneficial for both the students in-person and remotely. In an in-person class, I can work in close proximity to a student who may have a specific question or needs additional help. In the current remote setting, my co-teacher and/or I can work with an individual or small groups of students in breakout rooms to focus on their unique needs. If all of these students were in the same class, a breakout room would not be beneficial because the rest of the students in-person and on Zoom would be able to hear the conversations. There is not another classroom or space that myself or co-teacher can go to and work with these students. I also worry that my current remote students will not be inclined to participate or ask questions that they may have. If they send a message via the chat, this very likely would be missed as a result of myself and/or my co-teacher focusing on the students in front of us while perhaps at the same time attempting to facilitate a breakout room with other students.</p> <p>I do not feel it matters what "tool" is being used or how great the technology is, both teachers and students will have even greater challenges. The methods in which I plan, prepare, create lessons and activities and deliver instruction to students in a full remote setting differs from how I deliver the same content to students I see in person. It gives me much angst to think about how my co-teacher and I would be able to adequately provide the same level of support and feedback to all students that we do in our current learning model. Why would the district knowingly want to put our students in this type of environment? Change is hard for many of us, but I ask you to consider this; is the change to full in-person learning with current remote students live-streaming into classrooms best for ALL students?</p> <p>There are likely numerous other examples, but I feel these potential situations must be carefully and thoughtfully considered before determining if full in-person learning, with remote students live-streaming into classes is best for ALL students. While I know this may differ for various contents, perhaps even the level of each student (i.e. level of math, ELA, etc.), it is extremely concerning to me and I know it is to many others too.</p> <p>While there are benefits to returning in-person full time for students, I feel there are just as many justifiable reasons why our current model is best for ALL students and that we should stay the course.</p> <p>I appreciate your commitment to our district, our students and our staff. I kindly ask that you thoughtfully consider all aspects before deciding to change learning models for the remainder of the school year.</p> <p>Respectfully, Sarah Hoffman CHMS math teacher</p>

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				<p>Hello,</p> <p>I felt there was not an opportunity to express my reasoning and concerns about information missing from the survey to both teachers and parents that I felt were important to share prior to the 2/8/2021 Board Meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The priorities of the board in August was 6 feet of distance between students. Even though there is now a vaccine available, masks and distance are still widely recommended to maintain low COVID numbers, especially now that there are new strains of the COVID virus. Additionally, the quarantining procedures with students in closer range will drastically change without six feet, and the challenges of mask free lunches need to be considered carefully. There should be no action item until these issues are solved and procedures are shared.</li> <li>2. Our students are getting a high quality education in both hybrid and remote models. Our hybrid students have gotten used to routines for synchronous and asynchronous learning, and our remote students have had the full attention of their remote teachers. Switching to a fully in person model will require remote students to attempt to participate in an in person class, which will require a great deal of adjustment for both students and teachers of how the classroom is run and how students and teachers interact. This would also require technology training for educators that we do not have the time, nor mental or emotional capacity, for at this point in the school year.</li> </ol> <p>Additionally, this model change will cause a disruption to the curriculums. The beginning of the school year requires a solid two weeks to establish classroom routines, expectations, relationships, not to mention redoing fire, lockdown, and severe weather drills. This will be required again in April and disrupt the flow and routines we have currently established for students. This is on top of an anticipated seven days of testing for IAR and MAP in the month of April.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. What I think is most important, more than anything else, is the impact of a brand new schedule for middle school students that would impact every single student in the school. The district noted in their slideshow that, "Some hybrid middle school students will receive new teachers." I disagree. Having lived this middle school schedule since September, every middle school student will get AT LEAST one new teacher, and a brand new schedule. I know the community has been very concerned about the social/emotional well being of the students through this hybrid model, so I ask the board and community to consider what it would do socially and emotionally for students to have to get to know brand new teachers and new peers and classmates for their final nine weeks of school.</li> </ol> <p>I am truly devastated at the idea of losing my current students before the end of the school year. I have worked hard to understand them as people and learners, including the personalities of each of my class sections, and having to potentially start from scratch as though it were a brand new year is daunting and emotionally taxing on everyone. I encourage community members to ask their children which they would prefer - coming back full time with all new teachers and classmates, or to stay with current schedules in the current hybrid model.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Timing and staffing for a new model is concerning. Many middle school staff members were able to help complete scheduling in August as the hybrid schedule was built. Personally, I logged 14 hours of extra time outside my normal work day to help finalize rosters and get class schedules to students. I was one of many teachers helping. It will take hundreds of hours to change the model and get every student an appropriate schedule. Staff are in the thick of teaching this school year; we will not be able to loan our time to administrators to help build what is needed. Another concern is where the full time course needs will land; is it possible a staff member may have a different course teaching assignment due to need and full class sizes? Again, there should not be an action item voting on the model of learning until this question is answered.</li> </ol> <p>I know that full time education is better than a hybrid model with split asynchronous and synchronous learning time. I know we all want life to be back to normal.</p> <p>I also know that the teachers of this district are exhausted this school year with the hybrid and remote model; we are ready for normalcy as much as anyone else.</p> <p>Yet we have had success with the hybrid model this year with maintaining both safety and education standards, and I am concerned about trying to fix something that is not broken for the sake of optics and comparing us to other districts in the area.</p> <p>Regards,</p> <p>Lisa Brough HMS Language Arts</p> <p>With Support From HMS Staff Members: Heather Scott, Language Arts</p>

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				<p data-bbox="1005 198 1146 217">February 1, 2021</p> <p data-bbox="1005 240 1142 259">Dear Dr. Garcia:</p> <p data-bbox="1005 282 1957 347">We, the undersigned, are medical professionals residing in D181. Many of us have been on the clinical front lines of the COVID19 pandemic from the Spring of 2020. This letter is in response to the Learning Model Interest Survey sent via email to district families on January 29, 2021.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 370 1957 496">We would first like to thank Dr. Garcia, D181 Board of Education, D181 teachers and staff in their extraordinary efforts in resuming 5 day in-person class in the Fall of 2020 while providing a 100% remote option. The mitigation measures taken in D181 schools including limited class sizes, physical distancing, mandatory masking, and student cohorting have proven effective in preventing school COVID19 outbreaks despite moderate to high community transmission rates. The maintenance of six feet physical distancing during in-person school has limited disruptive student and staff quarantines.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 519 1957 669">We believe "safe/not safe" absolutism is not helpful as decisions that increase or decrease social mixing with a novel respiratory pathogen need to be evaluated in terms of tradeoffs between benefits and risks. We agree with the CDC and AAP position statements regarding the importance of in-person school and that the posture for most communities, including D181, should be to provide in-person education. However, we would gently point out that the debate of in-person school versus 100% remote is NOT the current situation in D181. The CDC and AAP do not endorse full time in person school over a hybrid schedule or vice versa. The latest CDC statement on schools specifically cites a hybrid schedule as a possible mitigation measure.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 691 1957 863">We believe that a return to full time in person school should be the goal for our community. The availability of highly effective COVID19 vaccines has changed the calculus substantially. Vaccinated adults with the current mRNA vaccines are highly immune to COVID19 although it is not firmly established that asymptomatic transmission is eliminated with vaccinated individuals. The emergence of the B.1.1.7, B.1.135, B.1.426, and P.1 variant strains with likely enhanced transmissibility, possible attenuated vaccine efficacy, combined with overall poor US genomic surveillance will play a role in the risk calculus. We believe there are three risks that need to be considered carefully when deciding to withdraw school mitigation measures, such as six feet physical distancing, to accommodate full time in person school.</p> <ol data-bbox="1005 886 1570 951" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.The risk of contracting or having severe COVID disease in children</li> <li>2.The risk of in-school transmission to children and adult school staff</li> <li>3.The risk of school outbreaks contributing to community spread.</li> </ol> <p data-bbox="1005 974 1940 1013">In terms of the first risk, the epidemiological and clinical data are robust. The risk of contracting COVID19 and the risk of severe COVID19 in children, especially below the age of 10, are low.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 1036 1957 1123">In terms of the second risk, the data suggests that children, especially below the age of 10, do not present a high risk of in school secondary transmission. Of note, the Duke study included North Carolina schools in a hybrid plan with students going to school 2 days a week in 2 cohorts. The data from Wisconsin is from rural school districts with small cohort (&lt;20) class sizes, mandatory indoor masks, and six foot distancing when possible.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 1146 1957 1227">In terms of the third risk, the data is reasonable that schools are not drivers of community spread but reflect the level of community spread with the important EXCEPTION of during high community transmission periods. During periods of high community spread and healthcare system stress, school closures are a legitimate tool in the public health toolbox to reduce transmission.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 1250 1940 1338">The decision of opening D181 schools to full time, in person school versus the current model requires balancing risks and benefits. Some risks are clear: possible increased community transmission, larger numbers of student and staff quarantine. Other risks may be more opaque but just as real: continued societal costs of reduced school hours, reduced socialization, reduced educational achievement, and mental health effects.</p> <p data-bbox="1005 1360 1923 1399">The input of community is valued as we advance to opening schools full time for in person learning. However, a survey to solicit this community input before addressing the following considerations may be premature.</p> <ol data-bbox="1005 1422 1923 1617" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Ensure all teachers and staff are given a chance for vaccination and the time to establish immunity (1 week (Pfizer vaccine) or 2 weeks (Moderna vaccine) following the 2nd dose).</li> <li>2.Adequate PPE (including K95 or N95 masks) for teachers and staff who are not vaccinated.</li> <li>3.Identification or procurement of additional space (including outdoor space) needed now and in the future for physical distancing measures.</li> <li>4.A concrete plan for maintaining physical distancing for students and staff during lunch where students will be unmasked.</li> <li>5.Gating metrics for community spread before returning to full time, in person school with reduced mitigation measures and for a potential rollback of full time, in-person school.</li> </ol>

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2/7/2021 18:55:10	Laura	Duffy	Teacher- Prospect	<p>I would like to ask you to seek out the answers to these questions and also take an additional comments into consideration before you make a decision.</p> <p>First, does the latest round of test scores reflect a positive growth (with smaller classes and focused curriculum time) or are the scores still reflecting that we have not gotten back to pre-covid expectations?</p> <p>Second, what is the attendance rate of the teachers from September to February this school year compared to the same time period 2019/2020?</p> <p>Third, how many tests are scheduled from April 5th until the end of the school year and how much in person learning time will be lost?</p> <p>I would also like the board to know that Art, Music and PE staff spent this years budget to supply each household with needed materials for hybrid and remote learning. In school supplies and equipment may be limited or not available as resources were not replaced for this year.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
2/7/2021 21:45:57	Noah	Levy	Madison	<p>I am both a board certified pediatrician and a pediatric hospitalist specializing in the care of sick children. I am very concerned over the lack of consultation of your ad hoc health committee and resultant lack of a thorough, evidence based plan to protect our teachers, staff, and our children. While I am sure there is a lot happening behind the scenes, and this is an incredibly difficult task, there is the appearance of having spent more time consulting lawyers and not consulting your ad-hoc medical committee for ways to mitigate risk with the resumption of school. This is not only potentially negligent, but dangerous.</p> <p>I have been immunized. I still wear masks at the hospital, and don't eat meals in a public space, yet the lunch program shows no signs of being modified for the obvious risks associated for the pandemic, nor does there appear to be an appropriate surveillance system in place. I worry for the health of both our teachers, and the medically vulnerable children in our school. I have seen firsthand the fear of parents with hospitalized children, both with covid and without, and listened to the "code blues" every night, multiple times a night on the adult floors during the peak of the crisis.</p> <p>We as a community need to do better, and try harder to protect our families and communities in the event of a return to full time school, and have a more cogent plan than is currently being offered.</p> <p>This can include cohorts for lunch, staggered meal times, extended lunch time to make it more feasible for families to take children home, and even alternating in room class lunches on alternate days to decrease risk. Kids are impulsive. Parents do their best, but nobody is perfect, no matter how vigilant they may be.</p> <p>I fully support Dr. Lin's petition and encourage you all to reach out to those aforementioned experts to reduce the risk associated with reopening as much as possible.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>

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2/7/2021 23:07:47	Cathleen	O'Hare	Elm, HMS	<p>February 7, 2021 Dear Dr. Garcia,</p> <p>Thank you for your recent interest survey intended to gauge interest in family's preference for learning models. I am respectful of your diligence in following through on your promise to the community to return to a full in-person model, and await the plan pending discussion this evening. I empathize with the additional hours you must be spending feeling the need to read and prepare response to community members offering to re-write your plans even before you have laid them out into the public domain. As a parent of 3 children in D181 learning hybrid-style, and going on our 11th year in the district, I am proud of our excellent COVID track record. I was most intrigued by learning via listening to the January BOE meeting when you informed us of the research that hybrid models put students more at risk than full-day models, as various parents had posited as far back as July.</p> <p>And so, I tip my hat to you as Superintendent and task you fully with the charge of re-opening our schools. I say this with confidence knowing that your Board of Education has since this summer asked you to return to them with answers to the questions that need to be addressed for safety and insuring that protocols and parameter have consistently been followed. I entrust your ongoing collaboration within the Board, your intentional timeline rollout, and sincerely hope that there are not delays in your efforts due to parents who want to tell you that they know better than your pre-planning and certainly vetted approach.</p> <p>To that end, I do also hope that after the configuring of lunches, the ensuing "debate" of measuring of 5 vs. 6 feet, and the defining of quarantines are all satisfied, that the anxiety of parents can be quelled with a resolute and definitive plan. There will undoubtedly be plenty of medical professionals to provide accurate testimony to the low risk of serious illness for the students, and the fact that the schools are not spreading the virus. I hope that you can stay focused on your plan, which has been clearly articulated since this summer-- to return the students to school-- and not get lost in the quest for data in the details. For as Dr. Sheetal Rao so aptly spoke in the return to school plan at the start of the year: there are many ways to spin the same data.</p> <p>As a clinical psychologist with over 20 years of experience in teaching anxiety management, I do observe that many families are operating with a fear-based response to change right now, a seeming "fight" mode to which could instead be turned into adrenaline and excitement. I see it quite predictably in that generally, people do not like change [to this learning model], and it seems scary [so they fight back with reasons not to change]. In addition, the climate for change right now is exceedingly difficult. According to last week's (2/2/2021) Stress in AmericaTM: January 2021 Stress Snapshot, conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of the American Psychological Association, adults in the United States are at their highest stress levels post-inauguration, regardless of political party affiliation. Adult stress is the highest recorded since April of 2020. Dr. Garcia, considering this, among the non-discrete variables I would like for you to consider is the impact that such parental stress, coupled with job loss, financial hardship, and strains on family systems has had on our local D181 community.</p> <p>While some community members may send you tombs of graphics deciphering "safety" terms via regression analyses, or conjure yet-to-be published, pending-funding-multicenter outcome studies, with reliance on intimate metrics, I would ask that you look closer to home. Please pause to listen to the anecdotal stories of parents under stress, those represented by the Harris Poll, under this duress living daily with one or more kids constantly under their COVID roof, multigenerational families making ends meet within these hybrid models. I believe that has been lost in the trees for the forest here. Many families I know have had a parent forced to quit his or her day job, hire tutors, nannies, arrange rideshare/discontinue rideshare, or cancel tutors or scramble for sitters, and turn their lives upside down to make hybrid models work. The hybrid model is not sustainable in the long haul, perhaps not necessary, feasible, nor equitable, economical nor without significant strain on the average family system. Two parents working daytime hour-households are taxed, be it white collar professional or blue collar, shift work has changed to revolve around pickups and drop offs.</p> <p>As an advocate for students with some level of special education need in our region for two decades, and with my background in anxiety management, I feel the need to implore you to please be sensitive to what might be the less overt "statistical" facts. These are the real, individual stories of struggling families who could benefit from weeks, if not months of relief from making ends meet in this strain of hybrid, by instituting a return to fully in-person education, thereby lessening family stress and impact of anxiety on the whole child experience. If parents are stressed, so are the children. Thank you for continuing to pursue the return to in-person education into our classrooms for the mental health of it.</p> <p>Sincerely, Cathleen P. O'Hare, Ph.D. Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Behavior Consultant, Neuropsychologist</p>

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2/7/2021 23:42:32	Uma	Levy	Madison	<p>Dear Dr. Garcia and Members of the d181 BOE,</p> <p>I am a board-certified Pediatrician and have 2 elementary-aged children who attend 3rd and 5th grade at Madison. As both a physician and a parent, I am very concerned about the latest turn of events in our district. To me and many of my colleagues, it appears that the district has succumbed to pressure from some parents and other outside factors regarding prematurely returning to full-time in-person learning this spring. This decision does not appear to be evidence-based or in the best interest of either our children or their teachers. As a pediatrician, I am familiar with the AAP and CDC recommendations that in-person learning resume as soon as safely possible. However, this is not a blanket recommendation, and has to be tailored to the needs of each individual community (and a hybrid schedule is considered by both organizations to be an acceptable in-person solution). At Madison, our outstanding teachers have been doing an amazing job with both remote and hybrid learning during these unprecedented circumstances. My children have been thriving in the hybrid learning environment, and my husband and I have felt reassured that they have only been spending a short time in school with limited mask-free time, no eating among peers, and adequate social distancing. Despite the fact that they have only been spending 2.5 hrs a day in school, they have been happy and have been able to feel connected with their teachers and classmates. This schedule took some getting used to, but has been working for us (and for friends with similarly-aged children in the area). I think that the district should be proud that we have been able to remain open since September, when so many nearby schools in other districts have had to repeatedly shut down due to rising COVID-19 cases.</p> <p>I am puzzled that given that we are doing so well, the district is wanting to change things now, when this pandemic is nowhere near over (or even improving). COVID-19 cases are steadily rising, and the death toll now approaches 500,000. Our positivity rate in Hinsdale has remained moderate, but not consistently low enough that we can become cavalier about making a switch to full in-person learning. There are also the issues of teachers not yet being vaccinated, and new COVID-19 variants with increased transmissibility circulating which should give us pause.</p> <p>It is frustrating that the overly-simplified survey (and the overly-simplified information comparing the different learning models that accompanied it) given to parents to complete by the district last week resulted in a majority of parents choosing to return to full time in-person learning, while the majority of teachers chose to stay with the current model. Of course most of us would like our children to go back to a "normal" school experience, but the survey did not allow for any additional comments and the plan provided left out too many details. There was no mention of how to try to maintain adequate social distancing during arrival, dismissal, within the classroom, and during lunch and recess. There was mention of increased testing, but no details on whether or not this testing would be mandatory (and a question re whether or not families would be willing to comply with weekly testing would have been helpful on the survey). There was no mention of the fact that it would be very likely that our children would be missing more days of school to quarantine, due to the increased likelihood of exposure.</p> <p>We are very fortunate to live in a community with very educated and involved parents, many of whom are healthcare providers on the front lines of this pandemic. It would have behooved the Board to take into account the wisdom and opinions of these parents prior to sending out their latest survey. It also would have been a good idea to more seriously consider the health and safety of our superb teachers, who should not have to put their lives on the line in order to educate our children.</p> <p>I would suggest that the Board take a more evidence-based approach (fully considering all of the risks and benefits involved) and listen to the advice of health experts prior to making a decision that affects the health and safety of all of our children and teachers. The Board should reconvene the ad hoc Health Committee (and perhaps open that committee up for other health care experts to join). They should lay out a better plan for testing, cleaning and ventilation, social distancing and swiftly dealing with positive cases/ potential exposures. In order to do this, they should glean ideas from other school districts who have already done this, the IDPH, the AAP, and again, the health care expert/ parents who reside in our community. They should do whatever they can to mitigate the risk involved with going through with this plan.</p> <p>I am strongly in support of Dr. Albert Lin's petitions which he has submitted to Dr. Garcia and the BOE. He has some excellent ideas regarding all of the issues mentioned above, and I would encourage all of you to listen.</p> <p>Thank you all for your time. Sincerely, Uma S. Levy, MD, FAAP Pediatrics, Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group Glen Ellyn, IL</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 10:43:11	Albert	Lin	HMS	<p>February 6, 2021</p> <p>Dear Dr. Garcia and esteemed members of the BOE:</p> <p>We, the undersigned, are medical professionals residing in D181. We have previously sent a letter with concerns over, what we feel to be, a rudimentary survey to D181 families on a return to full time in person schools. We submitted a list of ten significant considerations that should be carefully addressed.</p> <p>We completely disagree with the notion that more information would have overwhelmed D181 families thereby hampering an informed decision. We disagree with the use of different survey questions submitted to D181 families and D181 teachers and staff.</p> <p>This has resulted in a completely predictable outcome with 62% of surveyed D181 families preferring a full time in person school/remote model and 84% of teachers/staff preferring the current hybrid/remote model. In fact, only 4% of teachers/staff, thus far, prefer full time in person/remote model. Approximately 13% of teachers/staff, thus far, chose an option where they recognized merits in either learning model. This is a survey option that should have been offered to D181 families to offer more granularity to the survey results.</p> <p>Regardless, if the D181 administration and BOE decide to forge ahead with full time in person school, despite the growing schism between the D181 community and D181 teachers/staff, it will be profoundly important to fully address the concerns we have outlined and any additional concerns of teachers and staff.</p> <p>It will be CRITICAL to engage the experts on the ad hoc Health Committee to assist in planning full time in person school mitigation measures in order to maximize student and community safety. Given the poor state of US genomic surveillance, ongoing and routine consultation with the D181 Health Committee, DuPage Board of Health, and the Illinois Department of Public Health is especially important as the variants (B.1.1.7, B.1.351, and other variants with the E484K mutation) circulate more in our community with the potential need to reevaluate school mitigation measures.</p> <p>We encourage the administration and the BOE to be as creative as possible to gain the confidence of the 38% of families and 84% of teachers/staff that prefer 5-day, cohort-ed hybrid/remote. These measures outlined in our original letter may include some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Outdoor tents for lunch and classrooms</li> <li>•Mobile classrooms</li> <li>•Buddy systems to limit close contact quarantines</li> <li>•Staggered starts/lunch/dismissals</li> <li>•Assigned lunch seating to limit close contact quarantines</li> <li>•Home lunch option for all students including a longer lunch period</li> <li>•A phased rollout of full-time school starting with younger students</li> <li>•Improved indoor ventilation</li> <li>•Gating metrics for the start of full-time in person school and the possible need for further mitigation measures</li> <li>•Routine surveillance antigen testing</li> </ul> <p>We feel it is shortsighted to only pursue routine antigen testing (BinaxNOW) of students and staff if D181 progresses to full time, in person school. In addition, we would emphasize that routine antigen testing is not a substitute for withdrawing other mitigation measures such as physical distancing and should be viewed as another layer of protection especially if performed more than once a week.</p> <p>Any major decision with public school policy is difficult, but even more fraught during a once a century pandemic. Therefore, we feel that a detailed plan incorporating the best mitigation recommendations from experts, clear announcements of the schedule changes with full time in person school, and a transparent discussion of the potential risks of proceeding to full time in person model will all be critical in gaining some consensus and a coalition of all parties ready for a return to full time in person school.</p> <p>We stand ready to assist the D181 administration, the D181 BOE, and the ad hoc Health Committee in any future plans.</p> <p>[1]</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 7:16:03	Jeannine	Kearney	Monroe	Dear Board & Dr. Garcia - We believe our administration, teachers, and school staff should be proud of the execution and consistency of Hybrid through 2020. However, this note is in full support of full time learning in classroom. We have two sons in first and fifth grade at Monroe. While both their teachers and support staff have done a great job in the classrooms with hybrid, we need to return to school full time. While you are considering metrics that include MAP scores, in class performance, case counts, 6' vs. 4.5' etc - please consider these metrics: We have been juggling multiple tutors for both boys since July (which has contributed to our MAP scores). We have wiped countless tears over the question "When will I have to stop learning via pre-recorded video on an IPAD". We have hired caregivers to fill the gaps as we both work full time. We have consoled them both when they have asked why they can't have outdoor recess or gym while wearing masks. Their education and social well being is our priority as parents but it is also your priority as the BOE. We all know more than we did last June. There are creative solutions to make this happen. The majority of D181 families voted for full time in the survey (again). Please work with our incredible teachers and staff to find solutions to any concerns and open full time. Hybrid is not acceptable as the "new normal".
2/8/2021 7:53:24	Leslie	Lee	Monroe	Despite the teachers and administrations' admirable efforts, the children are suffering with the hybrid model. Please open the schools full time. The majority of parents have voted AGAIN for this option. We are parents of a fourth and first grader. We are grateful for the nurturing and strong focus their teachers provide. But we work full time, and have had to hire care takers and educational support. This is not a sustainable solution. The children are falling behind. Our first grader is struggling to read and her MAP scores have declined. The childrens' frustration with their work builds. The tears follow as the pressure builds up. They want to perform better, and they want to learn in as normal of a school environment as possible. The CDC is recommend children attend in person school. The past months have shown that school is safe, as there have been no outbreaks. Please stand with the community and get the kids back in school full time.
2/8/2021 9:34:43	Jordan	Thornquist	Walker	<p>Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit a public comment virtually. I want nothing more than for students to be back in school full-time and to return to "normal." However, given the safety issues that are still present with COVID-19, along with the high-quality education we've been able to provide in the hybrid model, I am strongly against moving to the full in-person model at this time.</p> <p>I understand one of the reasons that this shift is being considered is because vaccines are now available for school personnel. While this is an amazing step in the right direction and I am very grateful for the chance to get the vaccine, this does not mean that we can go back to normal. On the FAQ page of the CDC website (<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html</a>), one of the questions listed is "Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have gotten 2 doses of the vaccine?" The answer: "Yes. Not enough information is currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people wear masks and avoid close contact with others... We also don't yet know whether getting a COVID-19 vaccine will prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to other people, even if you don't get sick yourself." The weekly update sent out to staff on January 29 echoed this information. Promoting social distancing yet still considering the full in-person model where 6+ feet of distancing will not be possible, are two very contradictory messages. Safety needs to be the number one priority of the district, and if we return to a full in-person model we are potentially putting our students, staff, and community at an even greater risk.</p> <p>Furthermore, our hybrid model is working and we have continued to provide high-quality education. Students are growing and thriving with smaller class sizes, focused instruction on priority standards, and safety precautions that have become second nature. In my specific role as a reading specialist, one of the top benefits of the hybrid model is the ability to provide more individualized instruction. About 50% of our reading intervention time is dedicated to one-on-one instruction and 36% of the time is for two-on-one instruction. This would not be feasible with the full in-person model. The amount of individualized attention that is possible within this schedule is incredible, and has contributed to high growth for some of our most vulnerable students.</p> <p>I implore you to reject the full in-person model at this time, and wait to reconsider until more information is available regarding vaccines and the spread of COVID-19. Let's continue in the hybrid model, and end the year on a high note by celebrating all the success we've had teaching and learning during a pandemic.</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 10:04:00	Ronne	Malham	D181, Walker and CHMS	<p>Hello- writing, again, to encourage the soonest possible opening date of full time in-person school for D181 students. Thank you for the excellent plan put forward and great communication the last several months building up to this.</p> <p>I would like to specifically propose that any D181 Board Members and/or D181 Administrators or staff that object to fully in person learning starting this spring after all teachers and staff have had the opportunity to receive the vaccine, to explain their reasoning for the objection.</p> <p>All D181 families should be able to hear reasoning for returning to in-person learning (which has been repeatedly communicated by the Board and Dr. Garcia), as well as the reasoning for any objection to it. Go on the record for us.</p> <p>As another D181 parent said last week: "If not now, when?" And I would add: "Why not?"</p> <p>Please vote to return our kids ASAP to the best possible learning experience for them: fully in-person learning. Thank you.</p>
2/8/2021 10:05:27	Jorie	Parwani	Monroe	Please open our schools full time.
2/8/2021 10:05:28	Laurel	Duff	HMS	<p>Dear District 181 School Board,</p> <p>This has been a challenging twelve months for everyone. Although I support your desire to return to full in person learning I do not believe it is in the best interest of our Middle School students.</p> <p>First, at HMS our classrooms have five tables, not individual student desks. Currently, we seat one student per table. In full in person learning we will seat two students per table. There will be at most about 1 foot of distance between students. The CDC is still recommending that the 6 feet of distance be maintained until we reach herd immunity which is predicted by late summer.</p> <p>Second, classes and schedules would be completely changed. At least half of my own classes can not be simply combined. In two instances I would have classes of 37 and 48. These would have to change. In 2 class periods I teach different subjects. Again, these would have to change. I am not unique in this situation. It is not unreasonable to anticipate that every student will have a schedule change. This would be very disruptive to the learning environment. We have spent months developing relationships with the students, learning individual strengths and weaknesses. With massive schedule changes we would have to start over like it was the beginning of a new school year. Is it worth it for a few weeks of learning? Our children need our support. They need consistency in their lives. Yes, we need to get back to a normal schedule but this should wait until the new school year.</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 10:37:24	John	Haarlow	Monroe	<p>My wife Courtney and I have a first grader in the hybrid learning model at Monroe. We both believe that changing to a full in-person/full remote learning plan would be a mistake.</p> <p>While we understand the desire to get things "back to normal," moving too fast in that direction has the significant possibility of drastically increasing transmission of COVID-19. All health authorities agree that staying 6 feet apart and wearing masks are key factors in reducing the spread of the infection. And, both the IDPH and DCHD recommend those restrictions for all schools. A full in-person model removes these critical safeguards by placing students closer together, and includes a lunch period with no masks. Not only is this unsafe for our children, we are sending them the wrong message when ignoring the best practices guidance of our health authorities.</p> <p>While cases in District 181 have remained low, they still exist. In the last two weeks, there have been 14 new infections among students, teachers, and staff. We risk much higher numbers by removing restrictions now. With a proposed model change occurring no earlier than mid-March, the normalcy provided by a full in-person model for such a short time is simply not worth it. In fact, it may end up being more disruptive for parents when infections cause everyone to go fully remote for weeks at a time. This would leave families like ours with two working parents scrambling for additional childcare that has been very difficult to obtain. Instead, we should redouble our efforts and ride out the rest of the year with a model that has been very successful so far.</p> <p>What is more, it forces parents like us into a very difficult choice. We can choose to put our daughter at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 to be around her peers and teacher at all, or remove her entirely from peer socialization and teacher interaction for her safety. Neither we nor she should be forced to make that choice. The hybrid model gives her the best of both worlds -- provides her the interactions she craves while following best health practices. Removing the hybrid option entirely would take that away.</p> <p>The Board documents show that there is essentially no staff support for a full in-person model -- only 3.5% of teachers affirmatively support that model over the current one. If teachers do not support a full in-person option, neither should the district or Board. Our teachers and staff not only do the critical work of educating our children, they are putting their own health at risk every day to do it. If they do not want to increase that risk with a full in-person model, parents, administrators, and the Board should honor that. After millions more vaccinations in the fall, teachers and staff will be better equipped to mitigate their health risk going into the new school year.</p> <p>In closing, I want to emphasize what a great job our D181 teachers, staff, administrators, and school board have done in minimizing the spread of COVID-19 within our schools. They are all to be commended. Now is not the time to jeopardize that impressive record by undoing the protections put in place to get there. As the old saying goes, "if it's not broken, don't fix it!"</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>John and Courtney Haarlow</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 11:53:45	Kim	Pavich	Madison	<p>February 8, 2021 Dear District 181 BOE</p> <p>I am writing this letter in regards to our return to full day plan. I absolutely want to return to full day attendance. With that being said, there are so many things I would like our world to return to, but the truth is we are still in a global pandemic. I have personally experienced family/friend losses due to COVID. I understand parents are concerned about their child/children and their social emotional well -being. I also hear there is concern about students academically falling behind. Life is not a race, we need to be smart with getting our lives back.</p> <p>This virus is unpredictable. As with so many families, it can come into any of our lives and change our lives forever. I encourage our district to follow CDC/IDPH guidelines.</p> <p>This is a health/safety issue that should not be decided by a parent survey. What we have been doing is working. Our students and staff are in school. Our district has spent so much time and money to build such a robust hybrid plan. A plan that is safely working. Why change to one more unpredictable for 47 days? Let's ride out this year and come back strong in August.</p> <p>Thank you for keeping our students and staff safe.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Kim Pavich RN, BSN Elm Building Nurse D181 Resident D181 former parent</p>
2/8/2021 12:58:26	Trista	Negele, MD	Elm School/HMS	<p>I oppose the proposed options of full in person or full remote school as stated in the survey and on the slides. I strongly support the current options of hybrid or fully remote. I wholeheartedly want my children back in school full time.</p> <p>First and foremost, as stated there will NOT be social distancing of 6 feet. This is extremely concerning, especially when eating. Eating should be relatively safe IF done, quickly (less than 10 minutes), socially distant (at least 6 feet), and without talking. I think that we all know how loud lunch periods can be. Speaking loudly increases respiratory droplets, just like singing.</p> <p>Second, it was stated that there will likely be an increased number of close contacts requiring quarantining. Is the district going to redefine close contacts to minimize this if both the contact and the COVID positive person are masked? How can it be justified to use a metric for close contact such as 6 feet if that is not doable in the classrooms?</p> <p>Third, if full in person fails, the district will be fully remote. Given the new variants, this is too much of a risk without social distancing. The vaccine is just now being given to group 1b. We must remember that the vaccine protects the person vaccinated. That person can still be infected and can still spread COVID. My middle schooler has expressed concern about social distancing if full in person, especially for lunch. Has anyone talked to the hybrid middle school students to gauge their feelings? What about 5th graders? The proposed full in person/full remote option states remote middle school students would be participating in the regular class rooms via live stream. Will there be a moderator or will the teacher be responsible for monitoring the live stream as well as the class? Will children be able to easily switch between in-person and remote if they are uncomfortable with less social distancing? If the number of students quarantined in this model are increased and have no live instruction, I fear they will be adversely affected, emotionally and academically.</p> <p>Although it isn't perfect, the current hybrid program is working. Unless appropriate social distancing is able to be maintained, especially during lunch, consistent with the close contact definition used for quarantining, it is the most sustainable option to have along with remote at this time.</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 13:03:45	Andrew	Dzija	Clarendon Hills Middle School (Teacher)	<p>Good Afternoon,</p> <p>The 7th Grade Team at Clarendon Hills Middle School implores you, the esteemed Board Members of the Community Consolidated School District 181 School Board, to vote to remain in a Hybrid / Full Remote instructional delivery model for the remainder of the 2020 - 2021 School Year.</p> <p>The primary reason the 7th Grade Team makes this recommendation is we believe that transitioning to a full in person / full remote model will diminish the educational growth of District 181's students. The beginning of a school year is a transitional period for teachers and students. Students must be explicitly taught routines and procedures to be successful in each of their classes. Teachers must form relationships with their students, students need to form relationships with their teachers, and students need to form relationships with one another. Students and teachers alike must learn their daily schedules and develop the best strategies for navigating their schedules, staying organized, and maximizing the opportunities for great teaching and learning to take place. The transition just described has been successfully navigated by teachers and students for the 2020 - 2021 school year. The stress and anxiety of this transition is behind both teachers and students. Students can focus on learning, growing, and having fun. Teachers can focus on teaching, growing, and having fun.</p> <p>If a full in person / full remote model were implemented April 5, the associated changes of schedules and instructional delivery would necessitate that students and teachers go through this transition for a second time. At a time in the school in which content difficulty has reached its pinnacle, students and teachers would be forced to focus on this transition instead of focusing on learning and teaching the most difficult material of the school year. If this second transition were to take place earlier in the school year and students and teachers were to have the time to navigate the transition and experience the undeniable benefits of a full in person / full remote model for a significant portion of the school year, then a transition to a full in person / full remote model may be worth experiencing the initial angst of the transition. However, to make this transition to a full in person / full remote model to only be able to experience the benefits of such a model for whatever time remains in the fourth quarter seems to put students, teachers, and the rest of the D181 Community through a very stressful transition for a very briefly experienced reward. In short, the timing of the transition would produce an educational payoff smaller than the educational cost.</p> <p>While the 7th grade teachers at Clarendon Hills Middle School certainly have major concerns regarding the health and safety risks for teachers, students, and the D181 Community that a transition to a full in person / full remote model would create, we certainly believe that the most important reason to vote to remain in a Hybrid / Full Remote instructional delivery model for the remainder of the 2020 - 2021 School Year is to provide the best possible education for the students of District 181.</p> <p>Sincerely and Respectfully, The 7th Grade Teachers of Clarendon Hills Middle School</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 13:06:00	Lisa	Powers	Hinsdale Middle School	<p>I would ask that the school board carefully consider all that is involved in a full return to school in April. While live, full attendance is the ultimate destination, the road to get to this final destination must be thoroughly examined and considerations given to issues that will plague the journey.</p> <p>For example, from my perspective, the systems we use to navigate the changes to 100% in-person learning are EXTREMELY challenging in the middle school. While the elementary system may be easy to navigate, the return on investment for creating new student schedules is not nimble and an example of a poor return on investment.</p> <p>From my perspective, a student's social and emotional well being is critical to take into consideration. The current hybrid approach is working and students are achieving and growing, so why do we as adults feel the need to push another change upon them?</p> <p>From my perspective, the ultimate destination is something I would love to see happen, but not in a rushed, hectic, and stressful way. I urge the board to think outside of the box when considering the change to full in-person learning. What if we only had K-5 return as a trial? What if we returned 100% for one month?</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. Thank you for putting our students first in the decision to make changes this school year.</p> <p>Sincerely, Lisa Powers</p>
2/8/2021 13:17:27	Mary	Youngman	CHMS	<p>How will contact tracing be completed if we go back with a full day schedule and increase in student numbers in attendance each day? To do away with social distancing while we are still experiencing a pandemic is of great concern to me especially for our teachers in the classroom.</p>
2/8/2021 13:42:28	Charlie	Pearson	The Lane School	<p>We have lived in the district for 7 years and have two children who recently began their District 181 education at the Lane School.</p> <p>There is a great quote that has been cited by the district in the past by George Evans which states that "Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way."</p> <p>For the students in the general education population who are struggling, but deemed not eligible to receive an Individualized Educational Program, what is the district doing to proactively ensure they don't get pushed along in the general education classroom and fall further behind their peers? For example, in the School Improvement Plan there is a stated goal for Math of having 80% of students exceed the 69th percentile. What is the goal for the other 20% who aren't deemed eligible for an IEP despite struggling with diagnosed learning disabilities? From our experience within the District, there does not seem to be a coordinated and transparent plan for administering specialized intervention that addresses the unique needs of this cohort.</p> <p>In Math specifically, it has been acknowledged by the Special Education Team that "Math intervention is always a struggle" (12/3/20 board meeting). Dr. Robinson has also noted previously that "Math needs explicit instruction". Despite these statements, the district continues to rely on the DreamBox app for tier II and tier III Math intervention. An app that both of our children started this year with the instruction of having them perform the lessons independently. While we recognize this can be a beneficial and cost-effective tool for some students, it can also be an incredibly destructive form of adaptive technology if left unmonitored without feedback or scheduled assignments. The latter has been our experience.</p> <p>It has been acknowledged by the Academic Success Committee previously that there is a need for Tier III remediation in math. We would like to know what immediate actions are being taken by the board to address this.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Charlie &amp; Ashley Pearson</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 14:00:13	Charity	Richardson	Prospect & CHMS	<p>My name is Charity Richardson and I am the nurse at Prospect School and I have been a nurse in D181 for 5 years. I am also a 181 parent of 2 children and a Clarendon Hills resident. I am sending this comment in my capacity as a healthcare professional, one who has been living with the reality of covid issues related to staff and student safety, since the beginning of September. As a nurse, I feel it is a mistake to return to full-day attendance at this time.</p> <p>Precautions that have been put in place have been working, why risk that now for 45 days. With full-day school mid-day sanitizing protocols will not be as thorough increasing the risk of transmission. With the addition of lunch periods, large groups of unmasked students will be in close proximity to each other for an extended period of time, once again putting students and staff at risk.</p> <p>Full-day school will result in the loss of 6-foot distancing, relying on masks to keep us safe, Masks are frequently worn incorrectly, students come to school with a non-approved mask and several kids come to school with no mask. With spacing less than 6-feet any positive students will likely send home 8 other students to quarantine for 14 days and loss of in-person instruction. It is shocking the number of students who still come to school with family members with symptoms or awaiting test results. It goes against everything we have learned about how to stay safe.</p> <p>I feel it is also poor judgment to plan to return, immediately after Spring break when families will travel and potentially bring covid home with them. Even with most of the staff vaccinated there is the possibility to acquire COVID and pass it along and it is unknown what effect the vaccine will have on the upcoming variants. While testing would be nice, it will no be mandatory and testing is only good for the day it's done.</p> <p>We should be proud of ourselves as a district, for being in school safely, since the beginning of the year. What we are doing is WORKING. Nothing has changed to say we don't need to do that anymore. While we would all like to have full-day attendance and be back to normal, we are not ready for it yet. It is not because we don't want to work, we are working harder this year than any other year, it is because we already know what works. We are nearing the end of a successful school year. Let's give a little more time for an increase in mass vaccinations and a decrease in positive cases. Children are learning safely and staff and students are protected with the current protocols in place. Let's not risk everything we have achieved. As a district, we should follow IDPH guidelines and continue to do what is safest for everyone.</p> <p>Thank you, Charity Richardson Prospect NurseD181 Parent and Resident</p>
2/8/2021 14:34:18	Amy	Moody	Monroe	<p>I am writing today in support of a full time return to school. The hybrid model has been a success in terms of keeping everyone safe from Covid transmission- and I applaud you all for your efforts in making that possible. However, hybrid school cannot become the new normal. We know so much more now on how to remain safe with proper precautions and with the soon to be administration of the vaccine, all teachers/staff will be protected and safe from the disease.</p> <p>As a family, I have sacrificed a return to work so that I may be able to support my children's academic needs. Two of my three children are receiving tutors on top of that 2-3 times/week. We live in a community where most of us are blessed to be able to afford that. But that was an attempt to merely maintain skills- not further them. MAP scores may reflect the schools alone are doing well, but please don't be blind to the fact what the parents and tutors have done to maintain their children's academic success.</p> <p>The teachers are making lemonade out of lemons everyday and have been fabulous- thank you teachers! But it is time for our children to receive in person music, art, PE, lunch, social studies, science and lunch!</p> <p>Their social skills have been stunted. Their emotions have been big at the times they are frustrated because they are learning Economics on a recorded screen at 9. Their ability to physically move has been stifled because I do not have an indoor gym where they can freely play when it is cold, rainy or simply inclement weather. Home cannot replace school- nor should it.</p> <p>Having a degree in school counseling and psychology, we know academic success is important, but so are social skills, physical activity and being able to manage their emotions. This is where we as a community have failed our students. The time is now to return to school full time with some very well thought out problem solving. Kids will be flexible with new teachers. New procedures. New kids in their classes. That's the beauty of being young- they are resilient. But after being home for almost a year- we have 99% of the knowledge we need to make a return to full time a safe success for all. Thank you.</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 14:34:26	Jayne	Witte	Walker	<p>I am writing in support of staying in a hybrid model. First and foremost I know that we all have the same goal of wanting our children to get the best learning opportunities, create an environment for emotional growth and have a foundation of being physically safe. How we get there looks different for each family.</p> <p>Having 1 to 2 people in the classroom vaccinated does NOT make the environment physical safe to reduce the distance between students or take off masks during lunch. We are still in the middle of a pandemic where it is not safe to gather close to people outside your family or pod.</p> <p>If full in person learning is decided it is important to anticipate an entire classroom quarantine. I have a younger child in pre-school and received the phone call that another person in the classroom had Covid. As a result the entire classroom was shut down and our entire family had to quarantine. It creates stress from potentially having Covid ourselves, having our children potentially be carriers and passing it on to family who most likely would not survive to the very real challenges of working from home with young kids and aiding them in school work.</p> <p>When there is not 6 feet of distance between each student the risk of getting Covid or passing Covid as a carrier significantly increases.</p> <p>I would like to see our district focus their resources and time to full in person learning for the Fall when the vaccine will be more widespread.</p>
2/8/2021 14:37:17	Jorie	Parwani	Monroe	Please open our schools full time.
2/8/2021 14:53:00	Vishakha	Mishra	HMS	<p>First, I wanted to express my heart felt thanks to D181 administration, it's leadership and the board for their ongoing efforts to bring our students back to full time in-person learning. This is a step in the right direction.</p> <p>Today, I have a few questions about curriculum.</p> <p>What effect did current Illinois priority learning standards versus previous full set of learning standards have on the curriculum offered by D181 for this academic year? Did our district re-define, restrict or diminish our curriculum to better align with Illinois priority learning standards? If yes, then what plan does the district have to bridge that gap in education, to bring students at par with previous standards? Similarly, can the district assure us that the curriculum offered during full-time in person teaching will be per previous full set of learning standards and not per the reduced priority learning standards? Thank you!</p>
2/8/2021 14:55:30	Mike	Burgstone	Oak	Please open our schools back up. The overwhelming majority of parents would like their children back in school full time. Those that feel unsafe are welcome to select the remote option. The science says the kids should be back in school. This has gone on for far too long. The private schools have been open for the entire year with very few incidents.
2/8/2021 14:59:24	Barbara	Luchette	The Lane School	<p>The Public Health crisis continues.</p> <p>School has been operating in a hybrid model relatively safely with PPE supplies, cleaning and social distancing. To pursue a different model will require recommendations from the public health experts and agreement from the staff.</p> <p>CDC officials said in a study published on January 26, 2021 in JAMA, that schools should resume in-person learning as soon as possible if social distancing and masks are properly enforced. Social distancing is defined as "keeping a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces."</p> <p>Relinquishing social distancing in full attendance is not safe.</p> <p>The district should continue to rely on scientists' and experts' recommendations to determine the best way forward, not the opinions or wishes of people. Whether or not the school remains open or to what degree is what the public health experts alone are able to determine with our best interests, both short term and long term-in mind.</p>

Timestamp	Your First Name	Your Last Name	Your School Attendance Area	Your Public Comment
2/8/2021 14:59:27	Susan	Goeckel	Madison	<p>To the members of the Board of Education:  The Board  On August 3, 2020 in a 6-1 vote, the board voted to require 6 feet of space between the students in the classroom. Dr. Garcia and the Administration stated that this decision would result in a hybrid plan because our schools did not have the space to satisfy the 6 feet. Why, last August, could we not acquire more space (trailers, community buildings) to satisfy the 6 feet requirement? And why aren't we trying to continue to trying to satisfy the 6 feet today? What happens to the approved vote for 6 feet?</p> <p>The Teachers  The teachers were asked one question on a survey to which they overwhelmingly responded (84%) to continue with the current model. This survey turns those in our community who support full day schooling against the teachers.</p> <p>The Ad Hoc Health Committee  In an August 14, 2020 email, Dr. Garcia shared that there will be a Superintendent's Ad Hoc Health Advisory Committee focused on transitioning between learning models. This group has not been consulted.</p> <p>The Administration  Dr. Garcia had the district parents and teachers vote on a survey without providing any details of a plan. Missing from the results posted in board docs is the survey response for the hybrid-only families: "If key indicators, community interest, and other internal and external factors warrant the District transition to a Full In-Person/Full Remote model, then I would choose: either full in-person or full remote. This was a required question. I could not submit the survey without answering. The Administration needs to report on this percentage before the board makes any decision because it will demonstrate how many families will leave in-person school.</p> <p>The Board needs to set the expectation that the Superintendent is responsible for making administrative decisions. Our community needs to be confident in its leader – the Chief Executive Officer – the Superintendent. The superintendent should ask himself "Am I forcing the board to make administrative decisions because I don't want to take the responsibility?" Our community has been here before where the decision preceded the work. I ask that the board do the following before a motion to approve a full day. The board should ask the Administration to develop a comprehensive plan, including maximizing social distance as the board voted on last August. The administration should also engage the Ad Hoc Health Committee, and most importantly, meet with our teachers to discuss why a current model is preferred vs full in-person and identify major obstacles that will occur. The board also needs the percent reported from the survey question as to what current hybrid families will elect should the school choose to pursue full time. Finally, the board will need to collectively decide what it plans to do about the 6 feet that was voted in last August.</p> <p>The board should realize that the decision they make will affect future expectations between the board and the administration and a community interpretation of what the roles and responsibilities are for each.</p> <p>I want to thank each one of you for all of your hard work and your dedication to the board and the community. I realize this has been an extremely challenging and unexpected year, and I appreciate all that you do.</p> <p>Now is the time for all of us to hold the Administration accountable.</p> <p>Sincerely,  Susan Goeckel</p>
2/8/2021 14:59:51	Jennifer	Carmody	Monroe Elementary and CHMS	I support the return to full- time in person schooling.

[1] Responder updated this value.