

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

March 18 – April 15

This cannot be said enough: thank you for your service this past year. You have devoted hundreds of hours of personal time to navigate an epidemic that has no ideal solutions and a constantly shifting landscape of information. You have had to make difficult choices about the safety of not only students but also staff, families, and the community at large. A responsibility that is only compounded by the hardships facing many students and families as a result. It's a position that I think most people in our community would not choose to be in, and yet you are handling it with grace, professionalism, and compassion. Please know that many in the D57 appreciate your efforts and disagree with Mr. Maye: it's clear the board is passionate about helping our students or they wouldn't have taken the post, and I appreciate that you are making informed, rational decisions—not emotional ones—about the care and education of our children.

I would like to know why students that have been attending remotely are being punished by being assigned all of the live-stream instruction (which everyone agrees is less than ideal). Students who have been attending hybrid in person don't have to live stream most of their core classes. Students who have been attending remotely will have to absorb all of that live stream for their core classes. And supposedly some students who are remaining remote (Keeping themselves and your teachers safe, and leaving room for more distancing in the classroom) get remote sections, I don't know because my student will get livestream for every class but P.E. Doesn't seem to me very fair that the livestream cost of the in-person model gets born by those who get none of the benefits of in-person instruction, and that those who get the benefit of in-person instruction get dedicated teachers while that dedicated instructor is lost for those who have changed schedules and classes twice so that others can get in-person instruction.

Thank you to the board, administration, and school staff for getting our kids back in school and working hard to keep a remote option for those who need it. Our kids are so happy!!! Heartfelt thanks from our family!

Please record in meeting minutes and present video content to d57 community, on record. <https://illinois.webex.com/recordingservice/sites/illinois/recording/2257250a7466426aba6ba00e597ad45f/playback> At about 8# mark, there's the info about how worthless masks are to mitigate covid 19, yet again. Present to public on record, along with snapshot of slide regarding masks.

Dear members of the board and administration, There is an adage, 'if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.' Our remote families have been failed over and over this year. For whatever reason, the board and administration didn't seem to consider that there were families that would choose to be remote all year, despite having health records on file, and despite being told this in focus groups, in conversations, and in letters to the board. I know that I personally have been very vocal on our family's need to stay remote due to health concerns, and I know of many families that have felt the same. And yet, the focus has been on getting students back into the schools. By not acknowledging that some families would need a remote option all year, a dedicated, consistent remote option was not provided to families. Due to the change to hybrid in the winter, and the change to full in person this week, we are on our third teacher this year. That is unacceptable. While some children adapt to change well, some don't. Some children, especially those that are neurodivergent really struggle with transitions. With each change, there has been a video from the school principals on how to prepare your kids for hybrid instruction, or full in person instruction? Where is the support for the remote kids on how to transition again, for yet another change they didn't choose? Where is the support for the families who are juggling multiple kids through these changes? Every time my child's schedule changes, it sends my neurodivergent child into a tailspin- and this is a kid who is fortunate to have a family and a therapist who help her prepare for these transitions. What about the

children who don't have these resources? Each time the school board has had to vote on these changes, we as parents hear about how resilient our children are- but that implies that our children have a voice in these decisions and can advocate for themselves. The reality is that you are forcing our children to show resilience, and you are crushing some of them. Some children and families are really struggling, but when we reach out, we are ignored. It is inexcusable to continue to use the resilience of young children as an excuse not to plan. It is unacceptable to leave our remote students- some of our most vulnerable students behind. The administration and the board need to do better- they owe it to our children.

District 57 Board of Education and Administration Team, RE: Remote Learning Fall 2021 Thank you for sending out a survey regarding the interest for remote learning for the 2021/2022 School year. There are many unknown factors at the moment and many of our D57 families continue to need a safe option for school in the fall. We all hope that everything will be back to normal soon. But with the variants and break through cases it is too soon to tell exactly when that will be. The country is currently just 23% of the way to herd immunity. Why some kids/families might need to stay remote in the fall Some kids have medical conditions that put them at higher risk of severe covid. Some students have parents who have a medical condition that either prevents them from getting the vaccine or lowers their immune system so that even when they have a vaccine they might still be at increased risk (examples: cancer, chemo, some autoimmune conditions). Families may be concerned about break through cases. (this can be especially concerning to families who have medical conditions that could put them at higher risk, but anyone could be affected by break through cases). Please see attached article. While schools are not super spreaders - there is some spread in schools. Three feet distancing assumes there will be some cases in schools. Asymptomatic spread could be dangerous for families with medical conditions. There are families who are concerned about variants (some new variants are more contagious and create more severe disease). Families are concerned about the long term health effects for kids and adults. Even people who have mild cases can have significant long term health effects. Neither Illinois or the U.S. is anywhere close to herd immunity yet. It makes sense to plan for a quality remote learning option for families that need it. If we reach herd immunity by fall – that would be great! But it doesn't make sense to forego planning for a quality remote option – when it is not certain if herd immunity will be met by the time school starts. The following are suggestions from the remote community. We are asking you to please consider these topics as you make plans for remote learning for the upcoming school year: Reasonable Time Commitment A full year commitment at this point in time is not what remote families are looking for when planning for the following school year. Please reconsider a shorter commitment timeframe so that if it does become safe enough to return, remote families can offer their students the same benefits of in person learning that their peers are experiencing. It is possible that vaccines for children and adolescents may not be approved and/or readily available until fall or winter. Please allow families to choose remote quarter by quarter (grouping kids together from families who chose remote for 4th quarter), or at least for half a year. Invest in Remote Students' Success At a recent school board meeting, the board discussed using extra money in the budget (that was saved by not doing certain projects) to support remote learning. In addition, the federal government has allocated money to help schools during COVID. Some of this money should go to support remote students. A minimum of one class per grade (and one remote section for each core subject for each grade at Lincoln) seems reasonable. There should be plenty of time to hire additional teachers for fall if needed since we will no longer be facing the same hiring challenges we did for this last change in spring. Live Streaming Live streaming is not the method of learning most parents or educators would want for our students. Many districts are moving away from live streaming. While families are making it work for these last 7 weeks of school, this is not what we would want for an extended time period in the coming school year. We know from previous board meetings that live streaming was problematic part time. Live streaming part time and also having the benefit of in person the other half of the time is one thing, live streaming all day, every day is another. If the federal government is giving money to schools to help during these times, and remote classes do not take up any space, it makes sense to hire additional teachers, as needed (even part time if needed) , to ensure a quality remote learning experience. Social Emotional Needs This past year has been traumatic for everyone. While we know that there will be a

continued focus on social emotional well-being throughout our district for staff, students, and families. We are asking you to really work on developing the resources and professional development needed to address this going forward. This needs to be built into the structure of the school week and consistent across the district to ensure all staff, students and families social/emotional needs are being met and that no one is being left to struggle for support. Being a remote student is harder socially and emotionally. It presents its own unique set of barriers. Please ensure there is additional focus, support, and programs to meet these needs of remote students. Because there are variants present in the US that are affecting the health of children, this is a concern for many families in our district. With concerning variants, break through cases, and uncertainty when vaccines will be available to kids – it is important for families to have a quality remote option in the fall Thank you for all your hard work and for taking our suggestions into consideration as you plan for the upcoming year. Attachment: . Break Through Cases We are attaching an article that talks about break through cases. There have been 246 break through cases in Michigan, as well as break through cases in other states. Break through cases happen when people are fully vaccinated and then weeks or months later test positive for Covid. In a recent interview Dr. Fauci said that no vaccine is 100% effective and he is aware of the break through cases. Of course, the vaccine is very helpful in preventing most cases. But people still need to take precautions. It is sad and rare, but there are break through cases where people are fully vaccinated yet they contract covid, some are hospitalized, and some have died. Break through cases can be especially concerning to families who have medical conditions that could put them at higher risk, but anyone could be affected by break through cases. This could be a concern for teachers, staff, students, and families. <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2021/04/06/vaccinated-covid-19-contrast-virus-coronavirus/7101678002/> The Remote Advocacy Parent Group