

Community Comments

January 28, 2021

Hello, Asynchronous, less direct learning time and extra free time is an issue with the hybrid model. Please review what options there could be to quickly enhance the remote time while hybrid students are home to receive teacher instruction for Social Studies and Science. Thank you

I just want to thank everyone who made hybrid possible! My kids did well with remote at first, but as time wore on, it just wasn't working anymore. They felt isolated, sad, and the tech issues on Zoom caused a lot of frustration and impacted their motivation. The change I have seen since hybrid started is just awesome!! They are happier, excited for school, and so much more motivated. Also, I'm so impressed by all the safety measures. Thank you to everyone who makes this possible!!!

Hello, I wanted to just send a big THANK YOU the board's and administration's way for starting the hybrid model. Even with the limited time in school, we can see our daughter to be so happy with returning to school. Thank you. It made a big difference for her

I would like to express my desire for both my kids 1st and 3rd grade to have access to full day in person learning. Until that is possible please extend Kids Corner to cover lunch too for working parents who need full day support for their kids learning.

I understand at the last board meeting that it was discussed that Lincoln might have 4th quarter 3 options: fully remote, 1/2 day hybrid, and full day hybrid. I have taught in this district over 34 years. I highly disagree with having 3 choices. We do not have the room in our building and we don't have enough staff for this option. I am in agreement with fully remote choice and the full day hybrid choice. I feel these would be able to meet the needs of most parents, students, and is doable for the teachers. I am glad to see students at school, but I have to be honest that the livestream has many technical issues. Teachers are being stretched so thin, please do not add more strain by adding a third option. Thank you for hearing my concerns.

To the members of the Board: I would like to voice my support of the district moving toward full day in person school. I understand that the 6 foot distance would likely be impossible, but it seems that other districts are bending ISBE recommendations in order to get kids back full day (namely our neighbors in D25). During the last board meeting, there was also a discussion about getting the youngest learners (Westbrook students) back as soon as possible. I also support this idea. Although I am thrilled to have my children back for hybrid learning, the asynchronous portion of the day is reminiscent of remote learning in the Spring, which does not feel robust enough. Thank you for your consideration.

First of all, I would like to thank the D57 BOE members that serve our community. I'm sure these positions can be overwhelming at times in trying to balance the varying viewpoints of the community in

these challenging and life-altering times. I would like to express my continued viewpoint that the District and the BOE should follow ISBE and IDPH guidelines for the safe reopening of school. I understand that the guidance continues to be AT LEAST six ft of social distancing between students. I am not aligned with plans to reduce the distance between children. I feel like this should happen only when ISBE/IDPH revises their guidance. The district has taken a very reasonable approach to managing our reopening and followed guidelines and I hope this approach continues as I feel like it is in the best interest of the safety of all the students and staff. Reducing spacing between children would cause me to likely keep my children in the remote setting and I feel like that would be unfair to families that want to (1) get their children back in school (2) be as safe as possible and (3) follow local regulatory guidance. Thank you.

Hello, I am the parent of an 8th grader at Lincoln and I am writing this letter to ask you to consider to open the school and let the kids go in person full day, 5 days a week. You as board members represent the community, not a handful of parents who don't want to send their kids to school and not a handful of teachers who are refusing to teach in person. We are in a pandemic and we need to adjust. The same way as you need to adjust and look around and open your eyes. There are school districts that are back to school in person and it has been demonstrated that COVID does not spread in schools. The 6 ft distance is just a guidance NOT a rule. I have been watching online all the meetings since this pandemic started and I am appalled at what I see every time. Parents are begging you to open the school for kids, and you are mocking them, not listening and probably laughing at them. School has been a joke since last March. I understand that last year in Spring we all were not prepared to face a pandemic, but you had the summer to plan and adjust. Yet you chose the easiest version, and failed the kids. Yes, you have failed the kids. Kids and teachers belong in school that is where they learn and thrive. You postponed and postponed the opening of the school until January of this year. And oh boy, let me tell you, yet another joke. My son is in the AM program, he has 35 minutes' independent work with NOTHING to do, and he comes home, then from 10:35 to 12:15 break. He is not a mediocre student, yet he is not motivated by this type of school. All his grades are above 90-95%, no extra work, no homework. I know what is best for my child, not you! And parents who want to keep their kids at home know what is best for their kids as well. And there should be two options for our kids, full time in person and online. If all the Catholic and private schools are able to do this with no COVID spread, and the schools in D25 and D15 have done this, including D30, and numerous other. The 6ft it is only a guideline not a rule. The other schools that are in person are following the 3ft – 6ft rule. Last week, restaurants are allowed to have in person dining, with restrictions, teams are allowed to practice sports again, high school sports is allowed, so let's revise these rules you are abiding by because there is has been demonstrated that COVID doesn't spread in schools. You were all selected as board members to be advocate for kids and teachers. But it seems that during this pandemic you are only advocating for the teachers and some kids. What are you doing for the kids' mental health? These kids were not allowed to go outside and socialize, and they are not allowed to go to school either. Suicides are on the raise, look what happened at Glenbrook North? How many more suicides you want to see? My son's mental health is declining; he is locked in his bedroom since last March!!!! You want to expand Lions Elementary, but people are moving from this school district or sending their kids to private school. I myself looked into 3 schools already, but they put my child on a waiting list. I have moved 3 years ago, from the neighboring school district, because Mount Prospect schools were some of the best I the region. HA! A joke. My taxes are thru the roof for what? For my child to attend a school that is a joke? Thank you!

Thank you for sticking to your plan and starting the 1/2 day hybrid plan on January 19. The change in my child's mental health, and I assume other children as well from the big smiles on their faces at drop off, is apparent. My concern is that there is not a push to plan a full day return at this point. There was not a plan for hybrid in August, which led to many false starts until the January 19th date. We could have sent these kids back for a hybrid in the fall with success. It is time to start working on a full time return plan.

Attached below is guidance from Brown and Harvard on school re-opening, based on data that we have from schools that have been re-opened since fall. The research states that for young learners, 3-6 ft of distance between desks is acceptable if other mitigations - hand washing, temperature checks, and masks - are being adhered to. It is time to survey parents yet again and find out who would be comfortable with "as much distance as possible," even if it isn't 6 ft. My hunch is most people choosing remote, would stay remote regardless, and those in person could be comfortable with less than 6 ft if it meant full day for students. The 1/2 day hybrid is great for stepping foot in a classroom, but the asynchronous time is not doing our young learners any favors. They are falling behind those who have safely, successfully been in school (with less than 6ft of distance) since fall. It is time to do what you say you do, and put students first. Please survey, ask the important questions, and develop a plan to send the students back to school full time once all teachers are vaccinated.

While it's been less than two weeks since hybrid has started, I can already see a change in mood with my children. They now have a sense of purpose they haven't had in a year. While one says he prefers remote learning, the reason he prefers it is because it is EASY. Do you encourage your own children to take the easy way out? Do you want your children to be challenged in school? I certainly want my children to work to the best of their ability, be challenged and learn. Middle school is supposed to prepare students for the rigors of high school. If we continue on our current path and into the Fall, our students will certainly be part of the Lost COVID Generation. While hybrid is an improvement from remote learning, it is not a long-term substitute for in-person school. The district is failing our children right now. We've heard for months "We're all in this together." We can no longer say this. Our neighboring District 25 has kids back in school full time. Many D25 students, like those in 57, feed in to Prospect. If we continue with this sub-standard learning model, our middle schoolers are going to be far behind when they move on to Prospect. I've heard from many D57 parents, that during a normal year our middle schoolers are not as prepared as D25 students when they start Spanish at Prospect. The gap is only going to widen as some D25 students are receiving foreign language instruction in-person whereas our D57 students are barely given a chance to speak the language which is essential to learning another language. Parents who are fighting for their children to return to in-person school aren't "angry parents." Many of us have been room parents. We have volunteered countless hours and donated items and money to PTOs and the Education Foundation. Many of us gave money to support the referendum. We knocked on doors and made phone calls asking community members to vote yes for the referendum to keep the high quality of education we all value in this district. We did this for our teachers for them to receive a comparable salary to those in neighboring districts. We did this to save art and music. We did this to improve our buildings which were empty for months. Many parents are feeling that we worked so hard to get the referendum passed for our teachers and the kids; why aren't we all working as hard NOW to give our kids the education they deserve? The BOE and admin needs to make getting kids back in school full-time the number one priority. With a new superintendent starting in the summer, we cannot wait until July to start planning for Fall. Parents want transparency. If the plan is to continue remote learning into the Fall, many parents may want to look at private options. Please listen to all of your constituents, the people who voted you into office and the people you represent. Thank you.

Hello Board of Education and D57 administration. After reviewing the agenda for the Board meeting I do not see any update relating to the hybrid model, COVID metrics, or the school reopening plan. I have some questions that I hope can be answered at the meeting. First, our targeted students did not receive any increase in in-person minutes following the switch to hybrid on January 19. Our targeted students need and are entitled to additional in-person time as we move forward. Remote learning is not an option for many of these students. What is your plan to get these targeted students the additional in-person minutes they require and desperately need? They are currently just falling more and more behind their peers. Can the gyms or multi-purpose rooms be used for these students especially if we are going to be hybrid for the remainder of the year? Please explore EVERY option for these students, especially our youngest students with IEPs who CAN NOT tolerate remote learning. 50% is not good enough. We can and should do better. Second, when can we expect an update from the Task Force? The February 4th meeting appears to be canceled. Is there a closed session in its place or can that meeting be used to get an update from the Task Force? The 3rd trimester is fast approaching and discussions need to take place urgently. Third, there is some information floating around that students will not return to full in-person learning even after a vaccine is widely available to our teachers. Could you please clarify your stance on this? Many parents are rightly hopeful that a vaccine will move us to a full reopening of our schools. Could you please discuss the timeline of teacher/staff vaccination and how it will impact our return to full in-person learning. Fourth, could you please survey elementary school parents asking how they feel about a desk distance of 3ft vs. 6ft? This is valuable information as we move forward with our reopening plan. Numerous school districts near us are social distancing “to the greatest extent possible” in order to safely get their children the best education they deserve. We need to be open to having this discussion as well. Thank you for your time and consideration to these matters.

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to express some thoughts, questions and thanks. First, thank you for allowing our district children back in the classroom. Overall, my children have fully enjoyed being back in the schools. My middle schooler has experienced such happiness and a positive change in her attitude since being back in school, which can only be attributed to being in the classroom around her friends, peers and teachers. She is looking forward to seeing what a full day of school feels like in the coming weeks. My elementary schooler, while elated to be in school with friends and teachers, is experiencing an emotional rollercoaster due to the afternoon/remote portion of the day. Some comments, thoughts and questions: **Overall, 2.5 hours of in-person learning is not enough. Period. It’s a disgrace. The kids need more in-person time with their teachers and peers. **Why is Science and Social Studies not considered core courses and taught in-person? What is being done to include these important subjects into in-person learning? **The at-home curriculum for elementary is not learning. If I am unable to sit with my daughter, she completes her work by 1:30. >Independent work: This means I need to find something educational for my child to work on. Why? Because homework has become a distant memory. >A video of teacher explaining to read a chapter in Social Studies? A video does not replace a live teacher teaching. It’s shameful to think this was an adequate solution. I need to sit with my child to ensure she reads and then answer her questions about what she read. I am not a teacher. >Intervention: More independent work. More time for me to find an educational task for her to complete. >Even my daughter has said this is like last spring where there was lack of work and no learning. She is disengaged and I am spending more time with her to ensure she stays focused and I try to “fill in the blanks” so she can learn something. **Why are the in-person elementary children being punished by receiving less of an education vs. the families that chose remote? Remote children receive full day instruction with a teacher. My child receives 2.5 hours instruction plus specials with a teacher. This curriculum MUST change. It is inadequate. **What work is being done to re-look at this model for the final trimester to allow more teacher

interaction and learning? As the school year is drawing to a close: **What plans are being made to move to full person? The community needs to know so appropriate plans can be made for the fall. Last minute decisions and communications are not acceptable. **When will a survey be sent to parents asking about full day in-person options? **When will a survey be sent asking parents about changing the metrics of distancing to 3-4 feet vs. 6 feet? Why do the Board members get to be the only decision makers in this metric? I believe many families would accept a shorter distance (3-4 feet) if it meant having the option to have kids in-person full day. Please prove me wrong and ask the question. Or are you afraid of the answer? Our district is great at surveying the community, but bad at asking the right questions. I am not suggesting to eliminate remote for those families that continue to want/need that option. I would like to see the same compassion and understanding for the families that desire full-day in person. When do we get a choice to do what is right for our families? As previously stated, the current plans in place can not be sustained. Our children have already suffered for far too long. What is being offered to the elementary children is doing more damage than good. Your commitment to the district when taking your position was to put the children first and ensure they receive a quality education, an environment to achieve maximum potential and be an advocate for the children. Please be an advocate for our children and their education. The current models are not meeting quality standards and not allowing for maximum potential to be reached. Put pressure on the administration to create plans and solutions for full-time in-person learning. We cannot wait until fall. I would hope the Board and Administration learned from their previous experience this school year. You need to be proactive and create plans now before it is too late. Hybrid options are good first step, but now let's start looking beyond this and move us to full-day plans. Thank you.

Hello, I would like to urge the board to make a very clear quarantine/testing policy for staff and students who travel outside of IL. With spring break coming many people are planning to travel and without a clear policy we run the risk of an outbreak.