

### **Public Comments December 17, 2020**

Hello Board, As a parent of two (and soon-to-be three) children in D57, I've been patiently watching and waiting for D57 to make the hybrid return to school. It is obvious at this point that our District is severely lagging compared to our neighboring school districts when it comes to creative thinking and problem-solving on how we get our children back into our school buildings. I encourage you to be PROACTIVE and not reactive in your approach to the return to school. Please make your decisions based on STUDENT-CENTERED (not administration/staff-centered) RATIONALE. Our children have been out of our buildings for way too long now. I urge you to make the return to hybrid learning happen on January 19. Please remember that YOU are our children's and parents' voice on this matter. I feel like, at times, this simple fact has been forgotten. I urge you to be mindful of this, as your decision-making affects countless families in our community. Enough with the delays, let's move forward! Wishing you all happy and safe holidays!

To Whom It May Concern, Please maintain the current plan to provide in person instruction for D57 students, a plan that is consistent with several surrounding schools districts in the area. There is overwhelming support throughout the community to get our kids back in school and off screens in a safe and responsible manner. If needed, please refer to the opening plans of those school districts surrounding district 57 that have been able to maintain in person instruction and will continue to do so after the holidays.

We need to get the kids back in school after winter break. Data continues to pour in on schools not being spreaders and the mental health of children is deteriorating. I firmly believe the board has been overly conservative on metrics and lack of communication with parents on desire.

To the board, I implore the board to get our children back to school following winter break. Both our children and teachers have suffered enough and it is time for our district to step up and follow other districts in the state and around the country that are safely in session and in the classroom. Our new president elect has even said getting our kids back in the classroom is his number one priority. You have an opportunity to lead and do what is right. Those wishing to not be back still have the option in pursuing the remote option. Our kids can't take another push back and false hope response. They and the teachers deserve better and being back in school is the way to make it right!

Please have our kids return to school, no more delays and excuses. D25 in Arlington Heights has 4 full days for Middle School and hybrid for Elementary School, it runs a successful program even during current times with increased cases. We have caused an irreversible damage to our children and will deal with an aftermath over next years, personally with our kids emotions and publicly as a district. Our district chose not to open time after time, create huge divide in our community instead of uniting and guiding us to solutions, chose not to measure our kids progress or lack of and is under an illusion that our standards have been maintained. Please enough is enough, no more delays, no more excuses, no more screen education. Our wonderful and progressive district lost its reputation and will lose its rating the minute we resume standardized testing ( just as districts around us that choose to maintain testing this year). Parents are tired of asking we are tired of begging.

Please send kids back to the classroom! or at the very least kindergarten. Learning is not happening online in Kindergarten because these children don't know how to deal with subpar tech. They will not be ready for first grade because they are not learning mandatory social or behavior skills needed to progress. I am

begging and pleading to get our kids back in school. My daughter is suffering emotionally and it continues to break my heart every day that she is stuck at home in front of a computer screen all day, every day. I understand the hesitation at the beginning of the year because of the unknown, but we all NOW KNOW that schools are not super spreaders. There are protocols and safety precautions put in place at other schools that are WORKING. There is no reason why these kids should not be doing at least hybrid ASAP! We know how to keep everyone safe. They are going to be so behind other schools academically that have been in session since the beginning of the school year. Please, please please get our kids back in school!!

Dear Board and Administration - I am writing again as the parent of a 1st grader, and two possible future d57 students. I am urging you to review the metrics you have been following and adjust to ensure we can return to school via hybrid on 1/19. With the metrics you have currently set, we will never make it back to school this year. We are one of the only local districts who majority of students haven't set foot in a school building since March. The false starts are continuing to hurt the mental health of our students, who have already suffered enough. Please, let the families of our district have a choice. Look to local schools who have been full in person since the start. Look to local public districts who have successfully administered hybrids months ago. Look to the CDC who says the best place for students is IN SCHOOL. Look to President Elect Joe Biden who says his number one task is to reopen all the schools. Please, don't let our district and community fall even more behind.

I am writing to provide some feedback on the subject of in-person education of the Special Education community. I feel that there have been some general discussions about the subject from the administrative perspective but none from that of a parent. My son is a three year old in the Circle of Friends program. He has been identified as "developmentally delayed" by Westbrook's Therapists and Special Education Department. Now once again I am emphasizing that he is three years old. In listening to the Board meetings, it has become apparent that most of you that have children in the district, have children that are older and not in pre-K through First Grade. Therefore, I would like to remind you about the development of a three year old. On average, they have a 6 to 9 minute attention span (if that). They are just starting to understand the connection between ideas so reasoning with them can be difficult particularly over a screen. In addition, understanding and managing their emotions is something they are working hard to learn. What I just described are kids with normal development. Add to that a speech delay, a cognitive delay, and/or a physical limitation and you can imagine how much harder the above challenges become. Now add a computer screen, virtual breakout groups, a learning environment within their home, parents as teachers and learning with kids ranging in age from 3 years old to 5 years old, and learning becomes utterly impossible for this specific population. Imagine how disconnected these kids must feel over a computer screen. Think about how developmentally inappropriate this is for this age group and how impossible it is for our delayed, early learners. Finally, put yourself in the guardian's shoes and think about how discouraging and disheartening this must be for parents watching their children struggle. At this time, my son gets two in-person days based on his IEP needs. When the district announced that they would go hybrid on November 9th (pending metrics), I reached out to administrators to find out if that would increase my son's in-person time. I was certain it had to; if normal development kids were going to have more time in school, you would think that special education kids would too. Well that was not the case, he would still get two days a week in-person and they would just make it a little more inconvenient by changing his two days. I expressed my disappointment and was advised to call an IEP meeting because formal meetings like this would be the only way I can increase his face to face time. I agreed to play the game and called a formal meeting. This turned out to be three different meetings. The primary focus was my son's first IEP goal related to attentiveness. My point was clear, he was not meeting this goal with virtual class and therefore deserved more face to face time to do so. I think everyone agrees that if something does not provide worth to a child's education and instead causes severe anxiety for the child

and parent, it is actually detrimental to that child's development and of no benefit to anyone. It took three meetings for the correct "metrics" to be collected with the conclusion that my son paid attention during table time where kids used scissors to cut or painted (about 7 minutes of the virtual class) so it satisfied the goal and therefore did not prove that he needed additional help. Seven minutes was enough for them to consider a day's worth (about 85 minutes) of learning worthwhile. After one informal meeting and three formal IEP meetings with XXX's team, my husband and I had enough. We could no longer play the "game". It was costing us too much stress, anxiety, time away from work, and general anguish and we were not willing to continue to be led on by the Student Services Director. We told them that we did not want to meet with them anymore unless they had something to offer us that would help us. Thus, our son is now enrolled in a Parent's Day Out Program once a week, possibly going to two days a week if the District continues to kick the can down the road in regards to return to school for all kids, but particularly for our special education young learners. Ironically, the last IEP meeting was held on November 19th - the day the D57 School Board considered pausing in-person education for the Special Education population. I applaud you for ultimately making the right decision. I was sick that this was even brought to the table as an option. I immediately realized that I had to say something. It has been consistently presented to you that the school is meeting the needs of special education families. They are not. They have done what they feel is enough - enough to avoid scrutiny, enough to present to you for approval, and ultimately enough to avoid litigation and audit. Yes, I realize that I have a very pessimistic view on this but I think you would too if you have had to go through what my family has. I know there are many discussions and decisions that have to be made about returning to school. I know there are a lot of kids and families counting on you to give them options and finally make in-person education a reality for them but I ask you to also consider the future of the Special Education young learners. Despite what is being reported to you, the schools are not doing enough to meet their needs. When voting on in-person return to school for the normal development population, please request that schools increase in-person time for those in the Special Education program as well. Finally, I would like to end by thanking our educators for all they have done; whether remote or in-person I know that you are all trying your best to juggle your professional responsibilities while doing what is best for your family. From one essential worker to another, I thank you for serving our children and community. Sincerely, A Very Concerned Parent

Dear D57 Board Members & Administrators, Thank you for taking into account the safety and well being of our students and staff as you have planned for students returning to school in a hybrid format. I would encourage you to continue to use the metrics as your guide, and allow hybrid students to return to school as soon as the metrics allow. As a teacher in nearby SD25, I have been in the school building with students since October. We have had low transmission in our schools, due to mask wearing, 6 foot distancing and temperature checks upon entry. Teachers simultaneously Zoom half the class and teach the other half live in person. While not ideal, that plan allows for fluid changes for families to go between in person and remote as the need for quarantine arises. While there is no perfect option during these challenging times, I would urge you to consider an option that would transition more smoothly between in person and remote and also could start the day the metrics allow. Thank you for your consideration.

Hello BOE members, I hope this finds you well. I am very concerned that a number of parents have not received emails or feedback from the BOE. I have talked to at least ten families that have sent emails (sometimes twice!) to no response. My understanding is that BOE president is supposed to respond to D57 parents well-thought out and concerning emails. I understand that this is one piece of your life. However, if you cannot at the very least respond to people's emails, I would kindly ask the BOE to consider reshuffling responsibilities. In my opinion, by not responding to your fellow community-- you are quite frankly-- sending a message that our concerns/ideas and opinions do not matter. The only person that has responded (and in full transparency sometimes I only contact her because I have found it to be the only avenue to get a response) is Dr. Gorr. I find it baffling that BOE cannot find the time as well. I sent

this over two weeks ago-- Hello fellow Board Members & Administration, Good evening! I hope you had a wonderful, albeit, unique Thanksgiving this year. I hope you had a much deserved chance to rest and relax with your families. Now, we are back at school. I've had a couple things mulling over in my head--- that I think are important to share. 1) There has been a lot of talk about listening to the government about travel restrictions and no more than ten people at gatherings, etc. I have found in the D57 community that families have been very mindful and responsible. While there is always an outside chance of a "loose cannon" I think at this point, we need to trust our community to follow COVID-19 guidelines. We are used to adapting and changing. While you are asking for us to listen to local experts, I would hope that you all can listen to leading experts about the importance of the kids having in-person learning. The CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, many epidemiologists and countless others have from the get go strongly advised in school learning. 2) As a licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) therapist- I have been on the front lines since March on how this has impacted people's mental well-being. Prior to moving to private practice, I worked in the school setting. While children are resilient and can adapt to change...they can only endure so much. They have not been in school since last March. The longer this continues the more emotional, physical and mental health damage we will do to our most vulnerable young minds. 3) With no mask-free time and no eating half-day hybrid presents a safe option for both the children and teachers/staff. This presents a very low chance of mitigation and exposure. My two children (first and third) are not thriving but declining in a remote learning. They desperately (and I feel like I am begging you at this point) need in person learning. Also, I agree with one other parent that switching hybrid teachers right after break would be most ideal AND best for children who are hoping to go back to school. 4) Lastly, if remote learning continues after the Jan 19th date this will be very detrimental to the community, families, and overall morale. There are fallout and consequences for this when there is no compromise on the other end. I think hybrid for families who want in person learning--- is an adequate solution to solving kids that so so need in person. learning. If we can continue to kick the can down the road---families especially with young children will have run the course on patience with D57. I am not saying this in a negative or threatening manner, but rather a frank reality. You will see a lot of for sale signs this spring and people enrolling their children in private schools. At the end of the day, families are going to do what they believe is best for their child. This especially rings true, in seeing other schools in Illinois (and Cook County) open for hybrid or in-person. I believe in choice, which has been given to families who wanted remote. Also, what about teacher's choice? Many were ready to go back to in November. We can do this safely, mindfully and KID centered. To end, I hope you can take a kid-centered approach and be open to the back to school task force ideas. I believe the partnership will be invaluable.

For Thursday's board meeting: I'm imploring you (which I can't believe I have to do for something that I pay for via taxes) to re-open our schools on January 19. We cannot continue down this path. Follow the science and listen to the doctors and scientists who have time and again stated that in-person learning is low risk as long as protocols are followed. The education that our children have received is sub-par (don't even get me started on the NUMEROUS asynchronous learning days for my Lincoln students). Teachers and students need to be in the classroom together. As an employee of an essential business, I continue to go to work in person. The job I do is NOWHERE NEAR as essential as a teacher's job to teach. The only truly effective way they can do their ESSENTIAL job is in-person. The board has continually taken a much too conservative approach that has been nothing less than detrimental to our children. It's time to stop with the surveys, stop with the excuses and ENSURE our students are back in school on January 19.

Will there be an update on the back to school task force? Will the latest survey results be shared tomorrow night? Is there a presentation for the back to school hybrid update? Last time there wasn't a presentation or any specifics provided ahead of time, yet the Board voted on targeted services and the

1/19 return date. It would be very helpful to the community to have some sort of preview as to what the discussion will entail, especially if there are things up for a vote. Thank you.

We are hoping we can begin discussing the return to school plan. Many other districts in the surrounding suburbs are going to attempt to return to school in January, as they watch the numbers. I teach in one of these districts and am hoping since I am returning, my son can have a chance to also. Our son's teacher has been amazing, and all the teachers are working so hard, but things are still harder within this environment. We have appreciated how carefully the district is watching metrics, but the longer this goes on, our fear is we will not go back this year, and keep pushing until we get that perfect number. Our son has struggled at home, and we support him as much as possible. We have understood the reasoning, but if we continue to be one of the only districts not returning, it does become confusing and concerning. Safety is of utmost importance, but again, if other districts are making the return to school work, why can't we consider this?

A public visitor filled out the following form on Mount Prospect School District 57's website on 12/16/2020 at 3:32 PM. Below is the data submitted.

Good afternoon! As we are just about a month away from our proposed start date of in-person instruction, I want to ask that we, as a District, keep moving forward with the plan to open our buildings to our students on January 19th. While I do not think we should disregard the community metrics altogether, I think it is important to put more focus on our own internal metrics first. Covid-19 is here to stay, and while it's promising that the vaccine is starting to be administered, we are a long way away from the average person receiving it. Our children need to be back in the school buildings with their peers. Right now, school involvement is at an all time low. For example, at Lions Park, only about half of the 5th grade class has ordered a T-Shirt. (Over a month since communication about the shirt has been sent) This is a time honored tradition for 5th Graders at Lions Park and it's sad that so many are missing out. I know it may seem like a silly thing to point out, but I think it speaks volumes to the mood surrounding our school and community right now. We need to pull everyone back together, and get our children back inside the schools. We are now 4 months into the school year and I have received no communication from the school regarding my son's 504 plan and he has received no accommodations. His grades show that he is slipping, and he has a 504 plan to help him be more successful. I am doing all I can at home, but I feel like the system is failing him. There are so many things we are dropping the ball on while the students are at home. So many ways we are not fulfilling our promises to these young children. We need to begin to get the children into the schools, and continue to work towards successful learners. I wanted to write this message to remind the Board and Administrators that so many of us still want and need to get our children back into the buildings, and as soon as possible. Please do all you can to ensure this happens on January 19th. Thank you for your time.

To whom this may concern, I understand and respect the school districts position on protecting our students. If we are to guide our next steps with data informed decision making, we can see that schools are not super spreading events. One could could site several data points but simply looking around at other school districts should suffice in giving the board, administration and EA all of the data they need in order to make a student centered decision. Otherwise, it is suggestive that D57 believes neighboring school districts have it wrong. I would question this notion. Our children need to return to school. While some risk factors may always exist, we are living in a current state where some level of trepidation will exist for the foreseeable future. We cannot place our children into a bubble. We cannot expose our children to 8 hours of screens per day, going against years of medical research- just to protect them from

something that has been shown to be a low risk event when necessary precautions are made. Precautions in which D57 clearly made through the use of significant funds prior to the 2020-21 school year. The consequences of staying remote will far outweigh any protection provided to children by keeping them home. Rather, the social emotional impacts of isolation will be seen in our children for years to come. Is D57 ready to take on that burden for years to come? Research clearly shows that extended periods of loneliness and disconnection from peers is linked with mental health conditions. A global pandemic has already done this to our children. Please do not add any additional stress through educational inaccessibility. The transparency of your decision moving forward will be clear. Please make the right choice.

I am the parent of a Westbrook 1st grader and a Fairview 2nd grader. Although my kids are very close in age, they are having vastly different experiences with remote learning. My 2nd grader has an amazing teacher but struggles with the amount of time he's in front of a screen. He also has difficulty staying focused and is frequently distracted by the Chromebook and all the things he can do on it. He craves social interaction and stimulation on a level that can't be achieved by learning at home day after day. I unenrolled him from PE for a screen break, and we take a walk together during that time. Sometimes we walk by St Paul and see the students going to Owen Park for recess. It always sparks heartbreaking conversation about why those kids can go to school and my son can't. My first grader is having a very different experience with remote learning: she also has an amazing teacher and is thriving academically. However, I know her struggle will arrive when it's time to inevitably return to school. She's an introvert by nature and had really been breaking out of her shell in kindergarten. She's regressed since then, no doubt a result of the pandemic and remote learning. I know it will be so difficult for her to attend school after being home for so long, including not even being able to finish her half day kindergarten year in person. And the longer she continues to learn at home, the more difficult it will be for her and other students like her to return to school. As a parent with children only at the beginning of their time in District 57, I respectfully request that you offer parents the choice of hybrid or remote, with the hybrid option beginning January 19th. It seems the only way to do this is to make updating the metrics a TOP priority.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read all the emails and comments by members of our community. I would now like to ask you to take action. The hybrid plan has been thoughtfully made by the district and approved by the board. I personally had a meaningful and thoughtful email discussion with D57 administration and through this I have learned the metrics we are using are the same as neighboring districts. However, our interpretation and decision making based off these same metrics are drastically different. At this point in time, I ask you to reflect on your decisions made thus far. Ask yourself the difficult question, have your decisions been student-centered? In any time and especially hard times, it is crucial to be advocates for our children. What is best for them? Please allow our children's best advocates the choice for in-person learning. You have given that to us on paper and in theory, but put the plan into ACTION. Otherwise, we continue this state of comfortable inaction. We can't change the past, nor is it useful to dwell on it. But we can change our approach moving forward. Please allow us, our students, our wonderful D57 staff to move forward with the hybrid plan on January 19th. This seems like the next appropriate step to get our students back into the classroom. As an elected board member, you are responsible, "in establishing a structure and an environment designed to ensure ALL students have the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework." This framework doesn't get thrown out because of a pandemic, you adapt, you listen to science, you try, you learn from past mistakes, and you correct them moving forward and you grow, that is what we should be showing our children. The needs of ALL students are not being met through remote learning and your organizational framework needs to evolve to the times we are in. We need to TRY our well-thought out

hybrid plan and make adjustments as necessary. Otherwise we live in a world of complacency. Thank you for your time and efforts!

I just want to reiterate that the decisions you make impact families. Both my husband and I work. We now have one kid enrolled in hybrid AM at one school and our other kid with hybrid PM at another school. Two totally different schedules for each kid even though we requested mornings at both schools. How are we supposed to work and transport our kids to and from school every 2.5 hours throughout the day? And I will not pay for a bus service that is unreliable and that we have to pay an arm and a leg for considering the taxes we pay. All day in-person options should be implemented considering the number of articles that time and time again indicate that schools are not super spreaders. It would benefit the kids, it would benefit the parents, and needs immediate consideration.

I feel it is imperative that our children return to in person school in a safely manner to support their social/emotional needs

I know there is a lot of drama surrounding d57 and its decision to stay closed to in person learning. I am sure the board has received many messages imploring the board to open schools up. I just wanted to send a quick note to thank you for all you have done and all you are doing. I know this job has been more than difficult this year and you all are acting in the best interest of the kids and teachers. By no means are you keeping them out of the classroom for arbitrary reasons. While we are one of the lucky families where remote learning for our 1st grader is going great, we recognize this is not the case for all families. Again-I can't begin to imagine having to make the decisions you have had to make. Of course we look forward to the day the kids are back in school but we trust that will come soon. So with that - please accept our note of thanks for all that you do.

Thank you for your time and years of commitment to our district. Our School Board needs to make decisions as a board and not refer to administration. Catering to fear is never a winning strategy. Our children need to return to school immediately. PLEASE stop pushing the dates further away. According to the CDC, 4 days ago, Covid-19 is less fatal than the flu to all ages except elderly. But we already knew that. This is a travesty! Based on growing body of evidence, researchers suggest that schools do not serve as hot spots or major points of spread for COVID-19. Instead, they argue the number of cases in schools reflect both the infection rates and social distancing policies of their surrounding communities. The data suggests schools can remain open at in-person instruction with adequate policies in place. Recently, the Covid task force said it's safe for students to be in class. CBS news reporter, Bo Erickson, asked Joe Biden at a press conference, "Are you going to encourage unions to cooperate more to bring kids back to the classroom, sir?" Unfortunately, Joe responded, "Why are you the only guy that always shouts out questions?" Please tell the parents of D57 that the union is not heavily involved. The state guidelines require the effort for in-person learning. We need to refer back to June 23, 2020, when the ISBE issued a document called, Starting the 2020-21 School Year, Part 3 Joint Guidance in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health (<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Part-3-Transition-Planning-Phase-4.pdf>). As you are aware the document is understandably long and lays out the detailed set of plans for safe return to school along with important guidance and observations, including: 'no amount of technology can replicate the effect of face-to-face interactions and instruction between teachers and students' and 'in-person instruction is strongly encouraged' and schools and districts are encouraged to provide completely in-person instruction for all students in Phase 4, provided that the school is able to comply with capacity limits and implement social distancing measures.' NY Times piece: "School children seem unlikely to fuel Coronavirus surges, Scientists say." The science says kids should return to school. We

need to stop hurting our children. The long term effects are far worse than the disease. The CDC and National Safety Council recently stated "Chances of Death in the United States" heart disease has a 16.7%, Cancer 14.3%, Car Accident 0.94%, Drowning 0.089%, Choking on Food 0.038%, Sunstroke 0.013%, COVID-19 Infection 0.013%, and Electrocutation, Radiation 0.008%. The recent survey that was sent to families should have been separated into two groups (one returning and one staying remote) to provide an accurate representation for D57. Why would I want to know the statistics for families choosing to stay remote over a family who wants to return. Those will skew results. District 57 has approximately 2,200 students originally 59% of the students planned to return in August and 41% chose to remote learn and 2% were uncertain about their choice. That is approximately 1,200 students dispersed among four buildings. 10-12 students per class, six feet apart and masks. Small class sizes, students being protected by masks and six feet apart. This could have been done safely in August but fear and fear alone was the deciding factor. No attempt was made to open in September, October and November approached and now here we are. One question that I ask is how can I take my child to shop at Target/Walmart/Mariano's for five hours but I can't send my child to learn in school for 2-3 hours where the environment is safe and clean. Employees that go into work each day and interact with hundreds of customers each day do not get the option to work from home and healthcare workers that are at a higher risk open their facilities to treat the community. Teachers are essential workers. I work at a public school that placed the students' academic and social needs ultimately first. I left my own children at home so that they could learn on the computer for 7 hours a day/35-40 hours per week/120 hours per month/600 hours since August. Ultimately, decaying their frontal lobe and learning how to be "alone." Something is ultimately wrong with this scenario. We have a relatively small school district and spent millions renovating Fairview for the building to remain closed. Yet, the school board chooses to talk about expansion at Lions Park when the district, out of ear, chooses not to even open their buildings. Last year, I was in the Fairview building and there was a period of time when at least 6-7 students were out of a classroom for 5-7 days over a period of a few weeks and there was not a concern to close the building to stop the spread of the virus. However, here we are covered in masks, sanitizing every inch of the building, temperature checks, signed documentation that students are fever free, six feet apart, 10-12 students per classroom and this warrants the school district to remain closed. Think about that statement for a moment? I end this letter with a plea to open the elementary schools to offer in-person learning and remote learning. Families that have medical and emotional needs that prevent in-person-learning or families that are not comfortable can be given the option of remote learning. The mental health of our children is crucial at this time. **KIDS ARE SUFFERING!**

I hope someone will recognize that the highest teaching institutions on the planet don't teach that viruses harm or kill people. We need to wake up. [https://www.pscp.tv/va\\_shiva/1djGXQwYkoyJZ?t=18m23s](https://www.pscp.tv/va_shiva/1djGXQwYkoyJZ?t=18m23s)

I read this article that got me thinking about the solution proposed for students falling behind in distance learning always being "get them in the school". <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/education/2020/12/13/covid-online-school-tutoring-plan/6334907002/> Regardless of when in person instruction begins, that may not be enough to help the students who are following behind to simply be in the building, much less with hybrid, socially-distanced instruction. Some struggling students may not be in the building even when allowed due to health or family reasons, illness or quarantine. My take-away is that students falling behind should be identified and supports put in place now, online, as well as for that future day when they are learning the classrooms again. Some modest changes listed in the article reaped big rewards. It may be that the district is already identifying and targeting interventions toward struggling learners during distance learning, in which case that would be important to highlight, but if not this could be an important area to direct additional resources. I know teachers are all working hard to engage and outreach their students, but additional district or community support in ways not typically offered in general education could make a big difference. Thanks for taking a look.

While I understand why you have to say it - I have a hard time with the canned tech response to my comments. With 3 kids in 57, we've probably received this message 20+ times and worked with the tech team to clean, test, swap, rebuild, wash, troubleshoot the many issues we've experienced. The Chromebooks cannot withstand Zoom all day + other apps. After several efforts through the school, all 3 of my children are zooming on our personal ipads in order to not experience the excruciating delays that other children are. It is what it is. I am grateful we can afford the ipads.

The 'tech' issues I am referring to in kindergarten are (mostly) not those the tech team can fix. If you want to know what I am talking about, I IMPLY you to sit on one 2.5 hour session with 5 year olds. As I expected, despite best efforts from teachers, they are too young to learn this way. Behavior, listening, concentration, learning, being able to sufficiently see the screen of a book being read to them - it is not possible. And now, with guided reading introduced - those that are not pulled into a breakout room are expected to do 'work on their own' for 30 mins. The ONLY way this gets done is when I sit next to my child and facilitate it with her. This comes at the sacrifice of my job, and I know I am the few lucky ones that even can manage being able to sit with my child...most of these kids are alone and left to fend for themselves.

I have a 1st and 2nd grader as well. I can make comparisons as to what 1 more year of life can do for e-learning. While I want all my kids in school - it's clear that the ability to manage this is not possible for a 5/6 year old who is still learning how to follow basic directions. At this point I cannot imagine my child being ready for first grade on all levels. I beg and plead - please get them back.

[https://www.pscptv/va\\_shiva/1djGXQwYkoyJZ?t=18m23s](https://www.pscptv/va_shiva/1djGXQwYkoyJZ?t=18m23s) Scientists are telling us that viruses do not harm or kill people. I don't want kids going to a school where they don't even acknowledge what is being taught in the highest institutions in the land - MIT. The immune system doesn't work the way the CDC wants us to believe. Please wake up.

If the decision makers believe e-learning is keeping our children, teachers, and parents safe you are truly mistaken. The mental affects have already taken an alarming toll on everyone involved. In home stress among families have escalated and causing mental breakdowns, and depression with our kids. Domestic disputes, fighting, have risen and setting poor examples for all. This needs to stop! Every precaution necessary needs to be taken and kids need to get back in school. We pay way too smart to let unwarranted fear dictate all of our well being. We also pay way too much in taxes and living expenses to sustain this. Mark my words. Families will leave the district and our schools will deteriorate. Open the schools! We will succeed and overcome the challenges together!

I don't understand why the students cannot go back for full days. It would be easier on them if they could do this and keep their current teams, going two full days a week. Instead now that I choose Hybrid, my girls will go in the afternoon, although I chose morning times but so did 80% of the other parents. Now, because they are going in the afternoon, they will be on a new team and have new teachers, this makes no sense. Why aren't you looking at what other schools are doing and see that it is safe and working. My school district, the middle school kids go two full days, have the same team and teachers that they started the year with. This is just sad that my daughters last year in district 57 has to end this way, with them loving their current team of teachers and now they are being told that they will have a whole new set of teachers that know nothing about them. This sucks!

THANK-YOU for all you do and the sacrifices you make. It is not easy being in your shoes during a once in a century pandemic. You have not run from your responsibility, but instead have embraced it under enormous pressure. Stay the course. You are the only elected decision-makers although every parent likely has a different view on the best path forward. Cheers

To whom this may concern, I understand and respect the school districts position on protecting our students. If we are to guide our next steps with data informed decision making, we can see that schools are not super spreading events. One could site several data points but simply looking around at other school districts should suffice in giving the board, administration and EA all of the data they need in order to make a student centered decision. Otherwise, it is suggestive that D57 believes neighboring school districts have it wrong. I would question this notion. Our children need to return to school. While some risk factors may always exist, we are living in a current state where some level of trepidation will exist for the foreseeable future. We cannot place our children into a bubble. We cannot expose our children to 8 hours of screens per day, going against years of medical research- just to protect them from something that has been shown to be a low risk event when necessary precautions are made. Precautions in which D57 clearly made through the use of significant funds prior to the 2020-21 school year. The consequences of staying remote will far outweigh any protection provided to children by keeping them home. Rather, the social emotional impacts of isolation will be seen in our children for years to come. Is D57 ready to take on that burden for years to come? Research clearly shows that extended periods of loneliness and disconnection from peers is linked with mental health conditions. A global pandemic has already done this to our children. Please do not add any additional stress through educational inaccessibility. The transparency of your decision moving forward will be clear. Please make the right choice.

I am disappointed that there is not a presentation regarding the Back to School plan. It seems like there should be much to present and discuss at this critical point of the school year. Since the BOE is either unable or unwilling to provide community members with additional specificity regarding the Back to School plan and discussion before tonight's meeting, I will share what I hope will be discussed tonight. First, are we on track for the January 19th start date? What has to happen to ensure this start date happens? Second, what are the plans for the 3rd trimester for k-5 and 4th quarter for 6-8? Will there be new enrollment registration forms sent out? What will the options be on the enrollment forms? When do the enrollment forms need to be sent out to ensure a February 22 start for elementary? Third, is our model flexible enough to allow for eventual full in-person learning if the situation allows in the Spring? How would we be flexible enough to make that transition? Would current hybrid students just start going full time? Would a new enrollment form be required? Is that information we can collect ahead of time so that we are prepared? Fourth, what are the latest survey results? What did we learn and was it a valuable use of time and resources? What way could a survey be improved upon in the future? Could we ask for parent's opinion of ALL possible options, including eventual full in-person learning? Fifth, what is the update from the Back to School task force? When are they meeting and what is the timeline for their deliverables? What are their deliverables? Lastly, could you please provide the evidence that you are using to keep schools closed? The leading public health officials, doctors, and scientists all state that schools are a safe place for teachers and children in relation to COVID-19. The data and scientific evidence is in overwhelming favor of keeping schools open. Please be able to provide the community with your evidence to the contrary. We can no longer rely on subjective feelings or subjective metrics in such matter. I am hopeful that tonight's meeting will address many of the things that I have outlined above. Thank you for your time and dedication to representing the entire community.

As our school board, we recognize that you are receiving requests from all directions. We would like to ensure that you don't lose sight of the hours that have been put in by administrators and teachers to develop the plan that has been presented, and the hours that would need to be put in again with any changes to this plan that might be requested. We feel that the plan our administration has presented is a good one and hope that you will take into account the time that would be necessary to reconfigure, if a new plan is requested.