



Mount Prospect School District 57
701 W. Gregory Street, Mount Prospect, IL 60056
847/394/7300
<http://www.d57.org>

Notice of Special Meeting

The Board of Education of Mount Prospect School District 57 will hold the following special meeting:

July 23, 2020 Special Meeting for the Purpose of Discussion of Reopening Plans for the Fall
7:00 p.m. Virtual Meeting

- The public will have an option to virtually view this meeting live. If interested in doing so, here is the link to access the meeting.

<https://zoom.us/j/91258754498?pwd=Z3RLbFFWbWhGQjU1bTlzWS9zQzdkdz09>

Passcode: XQb8de

- The meeting will also be available for the public, up to 50 people, to view on a screen at Fairview Elementary School, 300 N. Fairview Avenue (people must enter Fairview at the main entrance on Isabella Street or Door 1).

Agenda

Call to Order and Roll Call

Community Comments

Board Discussion

Discussion of reopening plans for the fall

- In person/remote learning
- Hybrid model of instruction
- Remote Learning

Adjournment

By order of Eileen B. Kowalczyk, President, Board of Education, School District 57, Cook County, Illinois.

Virginia Webster
Secretary, Board of Education
School District 57
Cook County, Illinois

Dated: July 20, 2020

Please post in your building

Community Comments for July 23, 2020 Board of Education Meeting

Dear District 57 Board of Education and Administration,

First, thank you for your hard work in planning for the safety and education of our community's children since schools began remote learning in March. We want you to know that we understand the decisions you are undertaking are some of the most difficult and complex ones you have ever been asked to make on behalf of the District and community; but we are asking you to consider certain items when making your decisions.

Over the past few weeks, we have become increasingly concerned with the push for schools to reopen for in-person instruction. Recent upticks in positive cases and continued deaths indicate that we are heading in the wrong direction from a public health perspective. While we want nothing more than for life to get back to "normal" and to see our students in-person again, we have many concerns as to how we, as instructional assistants would be able to perform our duties safely.

*We don't feel as though we have adequately been told how our job description could change due to these circumstances of learning.

*What will be the added expectations for Instructional Assistants?

*We are in contact with students in more than one classroom and grade level daily. Therefore, the chance of us being exposed is greater, so the chance of having multiple, mandatory 14 day quarantines greatly increases. We do not even have 14 sick days. How will this work?

*How does social distancing apply for students who need sensory breaks, one on one instruction, bathroom assistance?

*When a child gets a bloody nose or falls at recess, how are injuries handled?

*What extra precautions will be taken for us, as the staff that will be closest to these situations?

*How do we handle students that are running away or having social/emotional meltdowns?

*We tie an average of 37 shoes a day and zip twice as many coats, how do we do that with new safety requirements?

*How do we physically and emotionally support students with walking, touching, speaking, eye contact, fidgeting, from a 6 foot distance in a mask?

*Will we have training on all the new approaches to handling this type of behavior and new instruction?

This is what we do every day and we do it with love, affection and connection. Now all of the qualities that make us the caring team of Instructional Assistants we are, is exactly what we CAN NOT and SHOULD NOT be doing because it could cost us our life or the life of our students.

We understand the desires to have children return to in-person learning for various and very valid reasons, but the truth of the matter is – we aren't ready. We aren't ready as a nation, and we aren't ready as a state. The only safe option would be to have online instruction for the beginning of the year. Other schools and Districts have already recognized this and made this decision, and we implore District 57 to follow their leads.

Please allow us to support our students remotely until Covid-19 is truly under control.

Please give us the resources to provide quality remote education until this pandemic is under control.

Please make sure you utilize the talents and resources of every Instructional Assistant through remote learning to give our students the quality education they can receive.

As Instructional Assistants in District 57 our number one concern is the safety of our students, colleagues and community members. It's completely unfair that you are in this impossible position, but the unfortunate reality is that you have an obligation to protect the health and safety of our district's children, staff and residents.

That's what we do every day on the job.

Sincerely,

Many concerned Fairview, Lions Park, Lincoln and Westbrook Instructional Assistants.

Dear Dr. Aumiller,

Thank you for your call for comments. Here is mine:

I wonder if we could do a few days of an outdoor (or one-on-one online) meet and greet so that teachers and younger students can introduce themselves in small groups and get a little inspiration in-person as we kick off this very strange year. An activity like this for remote learners is the type of hybrid situation that I would support. Beyond this, I think a hybrid model would likely create greater risk of exposure (more parents choosing this option because we of course want our kids to interact with their teachers) and would have a detrimental effect on the consistency and stability of teaching (difficult decisions about using sick days/having a substitute, and constant threat of forced quarantine that would inhibit consistency in meaningful planning). The hybrid model would also present risks to the greater community, with students who are in need of full day care exposing additional community members while not in the classroom. Moving between the new reality of school (it will not be school as we knew it) and online learning will present its own challenges and is the teachers and staff who will bear the brunt of living in and navigating this new reality every day. I hope that their voices and concerns are being heard because only when teachers and staff feel safe and well taken care of can they create creating a positive, healthy and effective learning environment for our children whether in-person or on-line.

Emily Hinz

Dear Dr. Aumiller and District 57 School Board Members,

I will be brief: I am writing to offer an alternate proposal for the 2020-21 school year that addresses most, if not all, of the concerns that have been raised for the health and safety of our students and teachers. Begin the school year with all students doing remote learning. For those students for whom it would be impossible for them to do remote learning at home, i.e. for those families with two working parents or limited to no child care, keep the school buildings open and have volunteer staff assist those children with remote learning from the school building.

This would do several things:

- It would ease the numbers of students in school facilities allowing for safe social distancing and compliance with Illinois state guidelines for limited gathering size.
- It would allow all teachers and students to begin on and easily remain on the same footing with their peers, diminishing the likelihood that marked disparities in learning would arise between in person and remote learners.
- In the case that a shelter in place order returns, or we revert to Phase 3 in Illinois, the disruption to day to day learning would be minimal for most students.
- Teachers would remain safe in their remote work spaces and all teachers would be able to prepare for a long term plan rather than a more than likely interrupted school year.
- Students who *require* the most services and support from within the school buildings would be able to receive it at much reduced risk because of the limited numbers of individuals in the school buildings.
- Passing periods and unsafe crowding at Lincoln would be mitigated.

- Not having to revamp interior spaces for large numbers of students requiring social distancing would save funds that may be able to be redirected to hiring part time staff to fill out in school supports.
- I would give the school district *one* plan to manage.

I hope you consider this option.

With Hope,
Corrin Bennett-Kill, parent to an incoming Westbrook Kindergartener and Lion's Park 4th Grader

Greetings,

Thanks for the opportunity.

I am assuming that the inclusion of a hybrid model to the agenda means it will either be added or you will expressly address why it is not viable. If it is being added, what has changed in these past few days to make this a viable option? Why wasn't this viable a week ago?

Lastly, the more details you can provide the more comfortable, confident, and supportive we can be as a partner during these times. Only sharing high-level direction, without those details, presents as if details are still being worked out as we enter the end of July.

Regards,
Dan Glovier

Dr Aumiller and members of the School Board,

We are uncomfortable with the two choices proposed for the new school year. We feel that they are on both ends of the spectrum. We think that there are students whose parents will definitely find a fit for them at these two ends of the spectrum, but not for the vast majority of families. We don't think either choice is acceptable in the current situation.

Lincoln is incredibly overcrowded. We feel like 80% of parents are torturing themselves this week with this impossible decision to send the students back full-time to an overcrowded building with potential COVID risk exposure OR keep them home and sideline their mental health, social growth, and maybe even their education.

Please consider a hybrid plan that will help reduce the capacity inside Lincoln. District 57's plans need to make sense for the vast majority of us to feel more confident in our decisions. Please consider reducing the capacity at Lincoln with your plans and/or adding a hybrid option.

Thank you very much,

Karen & Mark Pearson

Dear Dr. Aumiller and Board Members:

First, let me thank you for your time and service to District 57. I really appreciate all of your hard work on this, and I appreciate how hard it is to make a decision.

However, I am very concerned about the special board meeting called for July 23, and I will articulate my points below:

1. To come out with a decision last week about what options would be available for students and then changing your mind because some parents are complaining is disruptive and a bit nonsensical. You are never going to make everyone happy. Never. There is no decision that you can make that will allow the whole community or even a plurality to reach anything close to satisfaction. This is a horrible situation we find ourselves in, and all plans have positives and huge negatives. Trying to cater to squeaky wheels will get you nowhere because other wheels will start squeaking. But, you made a plan and sent out a survey asking parents to make a decision. Many of us did. I know my family did. We chose the full day option, and we are trying to now prepare for what that entails. Changing plans is unfair and cruel now that you have sent us down this road. Sure, plans can change. The governor could send us all back to remote learning, but you flip flopping is only compounding that problem.

2. If you decide to go with a hybrid model instead of a full day option, you won't be keeping any of these elementary school kids any safer. It might be safer for the middle school kids, but it will be more dangerous for grammar school kids. All of the Westbrook, Lions, and Fairview households that have two working parents are going to have to find daycare for their children for the times that they aren't in school. Many of these kids will go to facilities like Kindercare, home daycares, Kiddie Academy, etc. These children will be exposed to more non-District 57 kids and then come back into the buildings the next time they are to go to school. Is this safer than keeping the students in their respective buildings? Middle school kids and high school kids can handle a hybrid model because they can be at home alone. This is obviously not possible for younger students.

3. In conclusion, do I want to send my first grader to in person full-time learning? No. Do I want my first grader to do remote learning? No. Do I want a hybrid model for my first grader? No. But of those plans, full-time and remote learning make the most sense. You either have families who can utilize remote learning because they have jobs working from home or have the luxury of a stay at home parent, or you have parents who want the full-time option because they think that's the best for their children or both parents work. If you take away the full-time model and replace it with a hybrid model, you are only catering more options to families with parents at home, and you are freezing out everyone else.

Thank you,

Chris Kostro

After watching the board presentation and reading the frequently asked questions document provided, I have some concerns regarding the ability to safely social distance with the in person model, specifically for the primary grades.

First, it is my understanding that kindergartners will be sitting at tables with 4-6 children per table. This will not allow for adequate social distancing, experts call for 6ft. between people for social distancing to be effective. Students will not only be closer than 6 ft. apart, but they won't even be 4-5 ft. apart as many other districts are proposing when 6ft. is not possible. Students should not be seated at tables. All

students, including kindergarten, should receive a desk that is 6 ft. away from another student and for their own personal use only.

Furthermore, the plan for plexiglass between kindergarten students is not effective for social distancing. It is my understanding that the plexiglass barriers will simply be placed on the top of the table and not installed with a more sturdy method. Do we really expect those barriers to stay upright with 5 and 6 year olds? I agree that plexiglass should be used as another safety measure for students and teachers, however it should not simply be placed on the top of a table or desk. Plexiglass barriers should be securely fastened to the surface in a means in which students would not be able to move it around.

I understand that as a parent, I have the choice to have my child participate in remote learning for the first trimester, but I'm trying to do what is best for my child who says that he is so excited to start school and meet new friends, while also trying to ensure that all students, teachers and families are safe. The social distancing safety measures you have in place so far for the primary grades are not adequate. More needs to be done to protect the students and teachers before schools reopen this fall.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. I hope that you will consider doing more to keep the hard working teachers and students safe if in person learning is to take place this fall.

Sincerely,
Melissa Hilty

As we get ever closer to the start of the school year, we watch local communities continue to struggle with rising case counts for COVID-19, read about park district pools and high school sports camps closed or canceled due to positive COVID cases, and see places like Chicago go back to more strict guidance on in-person gatherings. It seems prudent for our district to focus its energies on preparing the best possible remote learning experience for its students. We may decide to commit to this one month or one grading period at a time, but failing to make such a commitment puts us at risk of not being prepared for what most agree is not a possibility, but an eventuality: remote learning. Our communities rely on each other, and with teachers commuting in from a variety of suburbs and the city of Chicago, we might find ourselves trying to problem solve teachers who cannot get to work due to quarantines in their communities or exposure that results in quarantine.

A parent in another district asked this question and it resonated with me. ***If we require children attending school to verify that they have been vaccinated against a host of diseases that we know are highly contagious, crippling, or deadly (measles, mumps, polio, etc.) then how is it that we are willing to have all of our children in school as a potentially deadly, highly contagious disease is active in our communities while there is no vaccine, no reliable treatment, and unknown long-term health impacts?***

We all want our students to be safe and productive. We all want our schools to be a place where our students feel welcomed and protected. I am hard-pressed to see any form of in-person instruction that will lead to that outcome. We will all be separated, masked, and extremely vigilant. Students will spend time learning how unsafe school can be if they don't keep masks on, stay apart from everyone by at least 6 feet, and wash and sanitize hands regularly. They will not see smiles or enjoy worry free meals or recess. Even social workers will need to be in masks when talking to students who may struggle with this new normal. Students will not be able to see the reassuring smile or feel the comfort of proximity. Teachers will send students who cough, snuffle, sneeze, or show any of a multitude of COVID symptoms to the nurse in an effort to keep students safe.

If we commit to remote learning, we can then focus on how best to deliver it and prepare for the coming school year with that goal in mind. Our district and schools can look at ways to help support our community through a school year that is going to be difficult, regardless of our choices. We can focus time and energy to serve our most vulnerable students and families and seek ways to help all families manage remote learning challenges. We can focus on moving forward with a plan that keeps the most people safe while we wait for our infection rates to drop and our risks to seem more manageable and less life threatening.

Sincerely,
Christopher Schmidt

I am writing today to voice my support to keep our schools remote this Fall. After watching the previous board meeting and seeing what is happening around the world, it is very likely that an in-person OR hybrid option would both end up having to transition to remote learning during the school year. Requiring teachers to prepare for both options is a lot to ask and will disrupt the quality of our children's education. On the last board meeting I heard many teachers fearful of in-person schooling right now. I also heard Dr. Aumiller talk about the further strain on resources a hybrid option will require--resources that the district doesn't have.

I am concerned that preparing for a hybrid or full in person learning will not allow staff and teachers to put an important focus on making remote learning robust, high-quality and as engaging as possible, compromising the level of education our children will receive -- even though remote learning could inevitably be where the entire district ends up without choice.

I believe the focus should be on providing professional development to support these new roles for teachers and to provide more interactive, engaging materials, classes and check ins. Please let's place the focus on making e-learning better while doing our part to keep the community, teachers and our children safe.

Thank you!
From Maggie McFadden

Before the meeting, I just wanted to get some of my thoughts out. I know how difficult all of these pieces are to put together- as a teacher in another district, my head is spinning. I empathize, and I'm sure the district has been working hard. I appreciate you opening up the conversation to include the hybrid. I am just writing to implore the district to move to either an e-learning or hybrid model. At this point, there are still so many unanswered questions out there, and to have an option be all in 5 day a week school just doesn't seem right in a global pandemic. If anything, schools should be easing students in, as many businesses have.

On average, class sizes have been 20+ kids, within a small classroom. You did say with transparency that the 6 foot distance would not be able to be maintained. How is this safe for the students and the teacher in that room? How much learning will actually be accomplished between handwashing, mask checking, masks breaks, planned bathroom breaks, etc.? At least with the hybrid you can have some in school learning and split the class in half. Also, students wouldn't have to eat lunch in their classrooms without their mask and spread the droplets around.

If students have to be in school, you should reconsider the self certification piece. You are only requiring parents to self certify, and not planning on temperature checks at the door. The reality is the parents will

lie- I have seen it at my own school. They will try to mask symptoms so they can send their child to work so they can go to work. Again, it puts students and staff at risk.

I am still unsure of what I am going to do with my son- I know what I want to do, but with 2 working parents the decision is not so simple. While I wish the district would go full remote and force me to make the decision, I would also feel better with a hybrid, where I can know some learning would balance out the independent pieces.

Just a consideration. I know many families would support the full e-learning or hybrid piece, but many do not want the all in model.

Thank you for your time.
Gaviela Schar

If we select the in-school option, is it flexible to go in/out of school based on travel? My job requires travel and if I'm in a hot spot, we'll need to self-quarantine, so if my travel resumes, I want to ensure I can still get my children into school if that's what I prefer, but also have the flexibility to keep them in/out using the eLearning model. If it changes, will his teachers change? If someone from in-class is required to stay home and eLearn, how will the new instructor catch up with the students history? How will the student be able to quickly adapt to the new requirements and expectations of that instructor?

Amul Ganger

Hello Dr. Aumiller,

First thank you for all that you're doing. I want to comment to please try to mirror the schedule/plan of other districts in the area to help staff who live outside of D57 who have small children. To not do so, may cause a staffing issue.

Thanks,
Denise Isaacs

In response to your email requesting that questions and comments be submitted prior to the board meeting tomorrow night, I have the following questions~

* What will remote learning look like in comparison to what it looked like in the spring? Will teachers actually be instructing students via Zoom or Goggle Meets, or will students be expected to carry out a list of independent tasks?

* Will remote instruction include in-person lessons being streamed in real time to students who are working at home?

* How will students who are working remotely receive assistance from teachers if they need extra support?

Thank you for this opportunity to pose questions prior to the board meeting.
MaryCaren D'Anniballe

I hope you can help answer some questions in regards to next year that I'm still uncertain about. We are still very much up in the air about what to do with our two boys and have a week to let you know. A couple of weeks ago we were for in-school learning. Now as the pandemic has gotten much worse we are leaning for remote for at least the first trimester.

We have one child starting kindergarten at Westbrook and one starting 6th grade at Lincoln. Both my husband and I are unable to work from home. We are willing to enlist grandparents and babysitters if we choose e-learning for the fall trimester. However, we still have questions in order to make the best decision possible.

- 1) How will text books be obtained for our Junior High student?
- 2) We don't have the ability to print worksheets everyday. How will in class practice work be done?
- 3) If the my kids return to school for second semester, how will the school help them acclimate to a new building. They are both starting at new schools
- 4) Movement breaks are part of my son's 504. How will his be handled if we choose to have him attend in-school?
- 5) Will teachers actually be conducting class online? The list of tasks to be completed from the spring was a waste.
- 6) If we do remote learning will my boys have the same teacher the entire time? We don't want to have to remind various teachers of our oldest's 504 plan over and over.

Regards,
Amy Nielsen

Good evening,

First off, thank you for taking the time to read this and the many other letters from parents and staff. I'm sure it's a lot to go through and I hope it helps you to come to a decision that can keep both our students and staff safe.

Although I will be either watching or listening to the meeting to hear the discussion tonight, I want to be upfront and share that we have already decided to keep our children home this school year. Now for our family, this is not an easy task. While it's made manageable by the fact that I'm able to be home with my children, it is in no way ideal for either of our learners. Both my children (11 and 3) need supports that would be better suited coming from trained and experienced staff. I will however do my best and I'm hoping that we can all collaborate to make this time at home not only safe, but beneficial to my children both academically and therapeutically. But I'd be lying if I said that I wasn't concerned and a bit heartbroken that this is where we have to land on this issue.

Most of you who know me, know that I'm not shy in advocating for not only my family, but for the special needs community in D57. I am constantly pushing for more inclusion and social/emotional support for both students and families. I have always wanted my child who struggles in those areas to be accepted and to have real life experiences that can help him to become more naturally social, and what better place to practice those skills and have those experiences, than in the accepting family of D57. He is in General Education for most of the day because it's what is the most beneficial to him. My youngest will be entering Westbrook this year and will be with a teacher we love and can't wait to work with again. I was so happy the day he qualified for Circle of Friends because this meant he would get the support he needed to continue working on his language development and social skills which are so important between the ages of 3-5 years old. But today I'm not advocating for them to be in school where they can access those supports more readily. Instead I'm asking that you choose to keep students home and teachers safe by creating the safest environment for learning during this terrible situation. While it might not be the ideal choice, for us it feels like the right choice. We have always stood behind D57 and supported it's teachers/staff, and choosing to remote learn is the best way we can think of to continue to support them and show them how important they are to our family and community.

So I'm asking the board and school district to please consider starting the year remotely like so many other districts are choosing around the country. Please listen to the amazing teachers you've hired when they tell you they aren't ready to come back and don't want to come back until it is safe for not only themselves, but for our children who we all know they care deeply about. I know this doesn't sound ideal and will make things more complicated for some families, but I'd rather lose a short time in their school lives, than say goodbye to someone forever because there was pressure to open up too soon by government officials who don't have to be in a school filled with hundreds of students a day.

I will also propose that if in the end 100% remote learning is not an option, that you present these options differently. Remote learning 1st and in person or hybrid only if you must.

I appreciate that you want to give families choices, but this isn't a choice for teachers and staff, It's a lottery. Some will win and some will lose when they are selected to teach in person. While it would be a huge loss for D57, I wouldn't blame any teacher or staff member who chooses to walk away from the security of a paying job they love, for the safety of themselves and their loved ones. To be clear to any who read this, I do not have any judgement to those who have no other choice but to in person learn, and I whole heartedly hope that the numbers continue to decrease and that everyone they must interact with follows the guidelines for safety in order to best protect each other in this less than ideal scenario. But I do want to say for all of us who can, Let's be honest, NONE of the options are what any of us want for our children or the teachers that we have come to love in this district. Choosing to stay home, even if it doesn't seem easy or ideal, is the ONLY control we have in this situation. It's the ONLY solution that will truly help the numbers to decrease and it's the ONLY way to ensure that we are NOT the source of an outbreak that could lead to long lasting health issues and possibly death.

I know that these decisions must weigh heavily on every one of you, please know that we do appreciate all the time and effort from everyone involved in this process.

Thank you,
Christine Pellizzeri

I'm submitting a comment/questions regarding the hybrid model being discussed at Thursday's meeting:

I understand the advantages of a hybrid model. However, without knowing exactly how that would work, I have concerns about how this additional potential option may affect full-time remote learning...

As I understand it, with the original two options, there would be dedicated teachers for remote learners and dedicated teachers for in-person learners. This way, teachers can focus their time and energy on creating the best possible learning experience for the students in whichever option their family selected.

Also, if it turns out that some or all students need to move to remote learning at some point, then a solid and well-thought-out e-learning model will already be in place, that somewhat mirrors the in-person class schedule.

I think this is a practical approach that addresses a range of family situations and preferences, while still making sure the district is well-prepared to switch everyone to online learning if needed.

Now, with a hybrid option on the table as well, I'm concerned about how that will affect the planning, implementation, robustness, and learner experience for full-time remote learning.

Can you please speak to how the addition of a hybrid model would impact the current plans for full-time remote learning? For example:

- How will staffing work for hybrid and full-time remote learning? Will full-time remote learners still be taught by dedicated e-learning teachers?
- Will the remote learning day still be structured with the best interests of full-time remote learners in mind, or will e-learning be slotted in to fit in with a hybrid schedule?
- Will the current e-learning planning and development efforts be shifted to focus on integrating online learning with in-person learning for a hybrid model, rather than on continuing to develop a strong, fully remote learning plan? If so, that could be time lost if something changes and everyone needs to move to online learning. It could also take away from the experience of full-time remote learners.

We will be choosing the full-time remote option for our family, which is why we've focused our questions around this aspect. However, these concerns apply to everyone because it seems very likely that at some point this year (possibly even for a long period of time), all students may end up doing full-time remote learning.

We understand that no decision is ideal in these circumstances, and no decision will please everyone. So regardless of the meeting outcome, we want you to know how *very much* we appreciate the time, effort, and thought you are all putting into planning for this incredibly challenging school year. Thank you for all that you do!

Christine and Dean Laughland

I am a parent of two in the D57 district and would like to provide you with positive feedback from last weeks' readiness presentation. I agree with your decision to move forward with either an in-person or remote option. You conducted a thorough survey to solicit a wide spectrum of feedback from parents, and made decisions based on that information. I encourage you to stand by the survey results and the decision to provide in-person or remote options, which would allow the district to focus its available resources and provide a positive learning experience for our children in the 2020-2021 school year.

I recognize the on-going debates on social media regarding the benefits of providing a hybrid approach. On this point, I encourage you to trust the data and information received through the surveys which represent a much deeper and diverse set of feedback. Please consider this as you move forward.

Finally, I am highly encouraged by the financial position of our district and the ability of the district to fund the additional resources which will be needed to provide a safe in-person classroom experience. The upcoming year will require budgeting for an unknown set of variable expenses and I am confident that the district is prepared to handle them. Please accept my thanks for ensuring the district is in a sound financial position.

I wish you both the best of luck tomorrow night, and I hope that this message of positivity is a helpful one.

Sincerely,
Robert Taylor

Thank you to the board for all the time and thought you have put into planning options for our students, faculty and staff. Your hard work

is appreciated.

After watching the last board meeting, I have a handful of questions about the 'In-Person' learning option. It's unclear to me if this option will still be available if a hybrid is rolled out but these are mostly still applicable to the 'In-Person' rotation of a 'Hybrid Model'.

1. Will there be a cap on the number of students in the classrooms for the 'In-Person' learning? Is this something that can be considered?
2. Is a switch from 'In-Person' learning to ' Full Remote Learning' allowed at any time?
3. If a student gets a fever, I believe the recommendation is to remain fever free for 72 hours before a return to school. Would 'Remote Learning' be offered to that student during the time at home?
4. If a full switch to 'Remote Learning' is rolled out at any time, will the previous 'In-Person' student be placed with that same teacher they physically had for remote learning?

Thank you in advance for your time and clarification of the above questions.

Tracey Mederich

Dear District 57 Board Members,

Thank you for your service to our community and for calling this special meeting. I think the board members felt what so many other parents felt: the presented plan lacked critical details. I know all decisions around the next school year will be difficult to make and won't please everyone.

I am struggling with my decision on whether or not to allow my children to return to in-person school or keep them home for remote learning. What's making my decision even more difficult is the lack of information being given to parents. I watched the last board meeting live in its entirety and then re-watched the video again the next day to make sure I wasn't missing anything. What was missing from the video and discussion of the two plans was what a typical day will look like for either scenario. While it's easy to imagine what a typical day will look like at our elementary buildings, it's impossible when it comes to Lincoln.

At Lincoln, will students be placed in pods so that kids in Group A, for example, would be those whose track is Accelerated Plus Math, Accelerated English and Spanish? The presentation mentioned administration is working towards eliminating passing periods to the best of their ability and having teachers travel to students. However "working towards" isn't enough for me to make an informed decision for my children. On the flip side, I also would like to know how remote learning will look for accelerated track students. Will Lincoln kids move from one remote teacher to another based on their placement track?

Is there any consideration to making broad experience classes like music, art and computers remote only, while we are under these special circumstances? For in-person learning, if longer passing periods and more breaks means less instructional time, I'd prefer that art, music and computers be shelved for the school year. I recognize they are important for a well-rounded education, but their temporary absence won't hamper scholastic development in the same way as core curriculum.

Some other topics, mainly pertaining to Lincoln, that I would like to be discussed on Thursday are:

- Reading and literature is a large part of ELA curriculum at all grade levels. Online programs such as Raz-Kids, will never replace reading a physical book. Will students be given actual books for reading at home? How will students have access to books?

- What will Lincoln's daily PE look like for remote learning?
- How will students be taking tests and how will teachers ensure they aren't cheating/being helped by their parents? Will parents have to supervise tests and it's an honor policy?
- Will teachers be willing to work outside of their contract to properly prepare for remote learning in the Fall or will professional development opportunities for e-learning be optional? I'm unsure that three days before school will allow for a vast improvement from the Spring.
- If the district moves to full-time remote learning, will teachers be required to stay in-state and not travel to high risk states such as Florida and Arizona to do their jobs remotely from there?
- What happens if during remote learning, a teacher's Internet and/or power unexpectedly goes out? If it's out for a day, does that mean there is no instruction from that teacher for the day?
- Will teacher in-service days follow the board approved contract, meaning, unlike in the spring, every Monday will not be a teacher planning day with no active instruction as it was in the Spring?
- This isn't an all or nothing approach. Lincoln students are old enough to be left at home during the day. A hybrid approach of one week in-person, one week remote with kids being sent home every day before 12:30 could be an ideal situation for Lincoln that would decrease the number of students in the building.
- How will paraprofessionals and other staff members be utilized during remote learning if they are not actively engaged in student instruction?
- I know busing will be an issue in any decision. Have you surveyed parents who are considering choosing in-person learning if they will utilize the bus?
 - How do we ensure any option provides equal education for all?

Like so many members of our community, I value our schools and our teachers which is why the recent referendum passed by more than 70%. We voted for art and music in our schools and we voted for the referendum to prevent staffing cuts and keep teacher salaries at the same level of other districts. Every family wants to do what's best for their children without being shamed for their decision. Some parents have to go to work every day and might not have family nearby willing to help or be able to afford to pay someone to stay home with their children who cannot legally be left at home due to their age.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Thomas

Good afternoon. I have several questions regarding remote learning for the fall...

- I'm curious if a "day in the life" type example can be given, broken down by school? I'm guessing my first grader's daily schedule will look much different from a middle schooler.

-how much actual screen time will be expected of our children? Again, maybe broken down by school?

-will all assignments due for grading be online? Such as IXL, boom cards, Raz kids? Will there be worksheets for homework that we can submit somehow?

-my preschooler has an IEP for a speech delay. if I choose remote for her, but her SLP is one of the teachers who will remain in-person, how will her minutes of therapy be met? will she be assigned to another SLP who's doing remote learning?

I appreciate you taking the time to read, consider, and answer my questions and concerns.

Lisa Tallurico

First, I would like to thank Dr. Aumiller and the school board members for all of their hard work and dedication during such a challenging and unprecedented start of a school year.

My daughters, who now attend Lions Park and Lincoln Middle School, have attended schools in the district since Westbrook and we have always had a very positive experience every year.

Although I would love for my kids to go back to school in person, full time, just like any other year, I feel that a hybrid option would allow them to go to school more safely due to smaller class sizes to allow for 6 ft. social distancing. Sitting closer than 6ft. apart, especially during lunch time, is very concerning to me. I would love if a hybrid option could offer either AM or PM shifts so that kids could eat lunch at home since they will be unmasked during this time. If this is not possible, I would also support going to school 2 or 3 days a week and the rest remote if that means smaller class sizes.

I also think temperature checks should be done if possible as another way to keep kids, teachers, nurses and other staff as safe as we can. I also support the kids being outdoors whenever possible. Improving ventilation in classrooms as much as possible would also be great.

I think everyone wants the same thing, which is the safest possible environment for both teachers and students, while meeting the academic and emotional needs of our students. I understand each families' situation is different and I respect those that choose all remote or full in person learning as well, but a hybrid option is what works best for my family.

Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate all of your hard work and your willingness to explore all options.

Sincerely,
Tracy Gruen

I realize that there are people who will disagree with me but I feel this needs to be said. With the exception of frontline workers, there are no other companies asking their employees to come back to work and be with 25 people without proper social distancing for 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, without temperature checks!!! Most people would decline going back to work under these conditions. Yet somehow, we think that putting our school staff in this position is ok. How? I have great confidence in our teachers and administrators that they will make remote learning be very successful and that it will look very different from Spring. Remember, teachers can get into their classrooms for materials. They could not in the spring. They had 4 hours to grab what they could with the impression they would be back in 2 weeks. We would all love to have schools open. Their safety is as important as everyone else. Why not go remote and look at things again in November? I am all for parents helping parents. That seems like a win win. Schools are not daycare or babysitters. Your child will still get an education. This is a national pandemic. Teachers did not sign up to be frontline workers or even trained to be them.

Thank you for all your efforts and working through these extremely difficult times.

Leslie DeFrisco

Dear Dr. Aumiller and Board of Ed Members,

Thank you for hearing us and having this second meeting. I will keep this brief.

We went home in March because it was too unsafe for the children and staff to be together. Scientists and experts have learned more about this virus and we need to listen to them. School is not safe.

I love my job as an Instructional Assistant with SOAR because the students feel like my family.

It is simply for that reason alone that I do not want to put my school family nor my home family at risk. My job is to provide a safe place for the kids to learn and grow and according to the experts and state guidelines, I cannot do my job.

I won't be able to hold a child with pressure to help soothe him or her during an episode of anxiety. I won't be able to put my hand over theirs as I help them brush their teeth and brush their hair. I won't be able to sit quietly alongside a child in a reassuring manner and I won't be able to help a child button up after the bathroom. I won't be able to place my hand on a child's shoulder, guiding him or her in P.E. class, walking down the hallway. 75% of our time, this is what we are doing. We are physically alongside of them, fulfilling their sensory needs so that they have an easier time learning.

I understand that many parents are incredibly worried about this virus but they have to work. I'm a single mom of 4 kids and I have to work, so I get it 100%. I feel terrible that we are all in this position. I just wanted to apologize ahead of time and give the parents of the students I work with a real picture of what school may look like. If I am back to work in person, believe me I will be as dedicated and caring as before but I wanted to at least speak up and be honest about how afraid I am for all of us and how sorry that I am because I won't be able to give their children the help that they need.

Thank you for listening and caring,
Eileen Kane

Initially, after reading Dr. Aumiller's email, I found myself sitting on a fence, feeling equally pulled in both directions. After thinking about it all weekend, I came to recognize that I was feeling torn between remote learning and going back to school, but on some level, my idea of "going back to school" was about going back to normal. In fact, the version of In-Person Learning we are considering for our students is very far from normal, with limited hours and attendance, teachers trying to teach through masks, the constant stress of trying to maintain social distance and safety, and uncertainty hanging over each and every day. Not only would the community and administration be in a constant state of fretting over whether the unfolding situation is still appropriate for In-Person Learning, but also parents and students would face the daily stress of questioning, is my child healthy enough to go to school, are the coughs or sneezes just allergies, or is it something more, is that tummy ache just nerves, or is it something more.

Would I prefer my children to be back in school with our awesome teachers? A Hundred Times, Yes! But this version of Back in School is so fraught with limitations and stress, for everyone, I deeply question how much more effective it would be than Remote Learning.

And here's the real issue: **why would we needlessly be forcing our teachers and staff to work on the frontlines, at significant personal risk, for a very limited benefit.** We would be raising the risk for them, as well as for our families, and for our entire community. For a very limited benefit.

Thank you for listening.
Anna Pentikainen

Thank you for all of your work during these challenging times and for your consideration of the community's questions regarding District 57's reopening plans.

I have two children at Westbrook (Adam, 1st and Claire, K) and have a question and a comment on the upcoming school year.

1) Can you please provide more information on how physical space will be used in the classroom to maximize health and safety? For example, how will group activities and centers work, how many teachers and additional adults will be in each classroom, how many kids will be in each classroom, etc? The district did a great job providing an overview last week, but I'd like to know more about the individual classroom plans at Westbrook specifically.

2) I am interested in learning more about the potential hybrid learning model under consideration. My wife and I will both be working in-person (neither of us will be work-from-home) during the fall, and so any flexibility on a possible hybrid model is greatly appreciated. We appreciate the importance of consistency for school personnel, but for our family, and presumably some others in the district, balancing childcare, work, and school is going to be very different than it has been in the past. We are interested in hearing about a hybrid model, and also in learning whether there will be any family choice in which days students might be in-person vs. remote.

Thank you for all of your work in planning a safe return to school for our students.

Regards,
Jeff Rosen

My top 2 questions are related to self-certification and remote programming for accelerated classes.

Question 1: What does D57 need to implement a plan for temperature screening students? According to D57, the three reasons for self certification are congestion, asymptomatic cases, and false sense of security. I see these as excuses rather than challenges that can be overcome with planning. D57 talks about a "growth mindset" except when it comes to addressing this issue.

Self certification is not reliable, period. A proper program would have both preventative (don't send your sick child to school) and detective (we found a child with a fever) practices. This is the foundation of any risk management program. Entrance to school using 6 feet distancing will take longer anyway and a quick forehead temperature scan would not have a significant impact on congestion if done properly. Like after September 11th and requiring ID checks to enter an office building, it will take longer at first. But once procedures are understood by children and testers, it will speed up.

Asymptomatic cases is a risk regardless of what procedures are followed. Deciding to NOT test for symptoms because you won't catch everyone does not make sense. Is this the "growth mindset" attitude you want to display in the real world for our children? Or would you rather do your best to keep as many cases out of the school as possible? I'd rather have 5 asymptomatic cases in school than 10 total cases because self certification is not accurate.

There is no false sense of security in a global pandemic where people are wearing masks everywhere. Again, this is a poor excuse and easily corrected.

With these excuses taken away, what resources does D57 need to temperature check each child coming in to school and can the Ed Foundation and parents help in any way?

Question 2: How will children in accelerated programs at Lions and Fairview be taught if we choose remote learning? Will the accelerated teacher switch between in-person and remote classes during the day to teach all accelerated students?

Thanks,
John Nowak

Dear Dr. Aumiller and District 57 School Board,

I am anonymously writing this letter as a concerned parent and former educator. I, along with everyone else, am deeply concerned with the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We are experiencing a very difficult time in our lives and in education, which is why we need to listen to science and what is best for the teachers **and** the students. Sadly to say I feel we are no longer listening to science or the doctors.

I am very upset and disappointed that a month ago the district said we would be doing full in-person learning. Then a week or two ago we were given the option to choose in-person or remote learning. Now we are doing full remote learning. I feel we are no longer thinking about what is best for everyone. Parents/Families should be given the choice as to how they want their children educated. Teachers should also have a choice. However, I feel people are being pressured to choose a certain way to have their children educated, when it should be an individual choice.

Could all the new surveys the district completed be shared with the community? Based on the last survey, 60% of parents wanted their children to participate in in-person learning. What happened to their desires and wishes? How many teachers wanted to go back to in-person learning? The data should be looked at and followed.

Now our children will be stuck at home without any socialization or modeling from their teachers. The children will be feeling the stress of everyone being at home at the same time, and/or parents not being able to be home with their children because they have to work. How are children supposed to learn in this way and be successful? How is this going to benefit our students and teachers? How are children going to receive a meaningful education, especially our at risk kids.

It makes no sense that our youngest learners have to do 5 hours of remote learning everyday while parents try to juggle work and help their children. But yet, the high school students get to choose if they are going back to school or not. Aren't the high school teachers scared and afraid too? Yet, they are going back. There are more students in a high school compared to an elementary building, and there is less movement in an elementary school.

It is ridiculous and absurd to say that we will go back to school in October. How does that make any sense when we all know the flu starts in the fall? You mean to tell me that we are seriously going back to school when we are dealing with the flu and this virus? In other words, our children will NEVER set foot in the classroom the entire school year! We cannot wait a full school year for a vaccine, which may or may not be effective. We never shut down our schools before, so why are we starting this trend now? Yes, we have to change the practices, and yes school will be different, but not a complete shutdown to start!

I completely understand the teachers' concerns. I was impressed with all the safeguards and money the district is and has put into place for the students and the teachers. For these reasons and more, the district

should give our students and parents the choice of in-person learning or participate in remote learning, or even the hybrid model. Then, down the line, if we have to do strictly remote learning, we can. Why start off with the most aggressive option first? Then there is nothing to fall back on if needed.

I don't envy the decision that has to be made. I feel no matter what there will be unhappy people and there are still risks. Thank you for listening to these concerns.

Thank you for offering parents the opportunity to pose questions about the re-opening plan. Here are the questions we have:

1. Is 5 day a week full student attendance "off the table" at this point?
2. Will families be selecting an attendance option each new trimester?
3. If we choose hybrid for the first trimester, can we switch to all remote *during the same trimester* if family circumstances require it?
4. Kids Corner: Will it be offered as part of the hybrid model? If we sign up for Kids Corner on 8/3, but our family circumstances change during the first trimester, are we able to drop out of Kids Corner without having to pay for the rest of the trimester?
5. Will the deadline to decide on an attendance option and Kids Corner be extended?

Thank you again,
Cole and Diane Lanham

Dear BOE,

Thank you for calling this special Board Meeting. This demonstrates to all your stakeholders that you are listening and it proves that you want to represent and make decisions on behalf of all who put their trust in the proper and effective governance of a local Board of Education.

We have three boys in D57. Our youngest is entering First Grade at WB, our middle son is entering 4th Grade at FV, and our oldest is entering 7th at Lincoln.

We can honestly say that we have been pleased with the education offered to our children over the years since our oldest began Kindergarten in 2013. This is the first time in 7 years we have experienced such pause and concern over the integrity of our local school district, such that it has moved us to write this letter to the Board of Education.

We understand the seriousness of Covid-19. Everyone's health and safety are undoubtedly a top priority. We agree, per the IDPH, that maintaining 6ft social distance, wearing masks when that is not possible, and proper hygiene practices are the proper public precautions, *indoors*, which include the school setting.

We also understand, and agree, that temperatures and symptom checks must occur when students arrive to school. The honor system will not work under these circumstances.

We appreciate the different options that are being presented tonight at this special board meeting. However, we are strongly opposed to a full-time remote option.

Here are 3 major obstacles with full-time remote:

1. Employed parents of students would be backed into a corner.

2. D57 is a public-school service designed to meet varying needs of the taxpayer and is not necessarily privy to the advantages of private schools.
3. Implementation of best educational practices would be severely handicapped regarding how students learn.

In addition, the board should consider statistical evidence in its plan such as, determining how many teachers in D57 are above the age of 50. Could they be offered a one-year position to focus on the remote learning services? The risk of death due to COVID (if contracted) is relatively low below age 50 (<1%) as cited below

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/coronavirus-age-sex-demographics/>

Let us talk about the reality of public-school services.

- Public schools, as we are all aware, are funded by local property taxes.
- Choosing full-time remote, the district may be forcing an unintended consequence of putting households in financial jeopardy. This may have a domino effect on public funds.
- Public education services do not function like private schools for stakeholders. If a private school does not perform up to the tuition-paying parent's standard, the parent can opt to leave. This is not an option for public school services. The taxpayer in IL does not currently hold school voucher power. Our only recourse is to use the BOE to advocate for the needs of stakeholders.
- Public education services are obligated by law to effectively meet the needs of all learners under their care. The ISBE has made it very clear that in-person student learning with the proper health and safety pre-cautions be met to the best of the school district's ability.
- Full-time remote learning would negatively affect the population of students who depend on special services in their IEP's.
- Full-time remote would impair the ability to serve any student who looks to school for their basic social-emotional and physical needs.

If we understand how students learn and we know D57 utilizes many of the best educational practices in the classroom, then:

- How can you ask parents to feel comfortable by going all remote learning? And for how long?
- By the time August 20th rolls around, students will have been home for 6 months. How much longer, as a community, are we willing to compromise the quality of our children's education?

Of course, these are unprecedented times. But we must ask ourselves if we are living up to the challenge.

- What are the factors truly driving our decisions: financial obstacles, facility obstacles, fear obstacles?
- What are we willing to let deteriorate?
- What will the long-term consequences be by going full-time remote for an extended amount of time?

These are all very tough questions to answer. But let us be honest, one size does not fit all. Whether we like it, or not, schools are essential services to a healthy functioning community. Admins, teachers, and staff provide community essentials that maintain the foundation of a stable and productive society. Schools are not just places of employment. Schools and staff are called to be something other than participants in employment for a paycheck. With all the chaos caused by today's uncertainty, fear, and social relations, our kids need quality structure in an environment that can offer them stability and predictability. We need our school buildings open and functioning with safety and integrity.

We sincerely appreciate all the work that has been done, especially in the last week, to address the parent concerns in consequence to the BOE meeting on July 16th. And we thank you for taking the time to read this letter and to truly consider the needs of parents and students in Mount Prospect all the while ensuring that the school environment will be safe and a healthy place for students, including teachers and staff.

Sincerely,
Jason and Lindsay Mulligan

Thank you Dr. Aumiller, Admin, and the board of education for providing the readiness plan in an easy to access format. Giving parents the two options outlined gives us all the opportunity to do what most closely falls in line with our beliefs. There will be no exact match for anyone and we understand that! We also appreciate the districts following of the current guidelines and not just moving to remote learning only. We are in phase four and feel the plan you have laid out is inline with that and the hope of moving forward and not backwards.

We urge you to please stay the course you have laid out as it includes what the majority of the parents polled expressed. I am not sure of your teacher poll, but am in hopes they can feel safe and if not, have an option to take another assignment or leave of absence if need be.

Thank you for all your hard work,
Anne and Bill Barrett

Hello Dr. Aumiller,

Thank you for continuing to consider the safety and education of our children. Before asking families to make a decision regarding available options, can the district please state the targeted student/teacher ratio for each option? Can they also provide the number of students that can be in a classroom while maintaining 6 feet of social distance?

Thanks so much for your flexibility and responsiveness in these unprecedented times.
Paul and Rachel Depcik

Thank you so much for rethinking the options for the coming school year. While we lean toward the belief that remote learning is safest for all to start the school year considering the gradual uptick in COVID-19 cases, we would like to see an option for a hybrid approach if at all possible. At the time of the initial survey, we were excited to have our kids get back to school this fall. Just prior to the initial board meeting last week we had sharply changed our tune based on the evidence pointing toward a certain increase in cases. At this point the only in-person model we would entertain would be a shortened day that excludes both lunch and recess. We are a dual employed family and will do what we can to make this option work for us. We are fully aware not everyone has this option, but frankly, the full day option – even a split week hybrid with a couple of full days for half the students – does not allow for the optimum safety for teachers and students. I know there is criticism for all formats, but below are our thoughts as a fellow educator and mental health professional...

- Lunch in school completely negates the purpose of/benefits of masks in the first place
- Recess, while socialization and fresh air are needed, is better served by parents continuing to socialize with families and friends in which they are comfortable. This can be arranged outside of school hours and helps limit mask-free socialization with families people are unfamiliar with.

- A full day, no matter the class size, will become tiresome for kids under the current and necessary regulations. They will not have the school experience their “I want to go back to school” minds are anticipating – we as parents need to be making this decision ultimately. Sure, they understand they’ll need masks, but that’s just a part of it. The anxiety that is inevitable with efforts to maintain social distancing, hygiene, and mask compliance for the entire school day will likely be worse on their enthusiasm for school and overall social-emotional health than remote learning and/or a shortened more controlled day.
- A half day (AM/PM) hybrid potentially allows for a more controlled environment for in-person core-curriculum instruction, homework sent home, and smaller class sizes to maintain social distancing. Remote learning for the other portion of the day that the student doesn’t attend should not need to rest on the individual teachers for planning. Instead, couldn’t a team plan approach be an option to provide a consistent curriculum expectation across each grade level for the non-core subjects (perhaps this could be part of a Wednesday off/remote learning option for deep cleaning & teacher planning)? They could then collaborate for engaging pre-recorded lessons, slides, etc. With this remote piece being only the non-core subjects the burden on parents is somewhat lifted. This also allows for those with IEP’s and/or 504 plans to have time to check-in with the appropriate support staff as needed. We feel a half-day hybrid ultimately gives students and teachers a more appropriate threshold for compliance of health and safety regulations by staying in one room with one peer group of 10 – 12 students and one teacher for a significantly shorter day indoors, and also eliminates the need for unmasked points throughout the day (lunch & recess).
- The idea of kids being more exposed using a hybrid model, while true because more families would likely be choosing hybrid, is much less risky than a full day due to thoughts mentioned above: easier compliance with masks (because of shorter expectation and no mask-free time), less time in an indoor space, ability to maintain appropriate social distancing, and less need for movement throughout the building. Ultimately, no matter what the model kids will be in childcare as needed, they will be in activities outside of school that are allowed, they will be playing with trusted friends, parents will be running errands, and many parents will be at work – some for the first time after months of working from home. Exposure is everywhere. Our best course is remote learning to wait and see, rather than jumping in feet first in August and hoping for the best; however, the working parents needs are real and hopefully employers will begin to step it up and be cooperative with those who have elementary aged children. A half day hybrid at least allows for a safer option than full day & some more feasible childcare options and/or negotiation of work day options for parents.

There is no set plan yet, but even so, because of the wonderful community we live in, many parents and former educators are already stepping up and offering to help minimize the stress of childcare for working parents via small group cohorts. This has been really refreshing and encouraging to see.

We are truly looking forward to a well thought out and structured plan. We also feel it very important to have a much clearer understanding of the policy and procedure in place to address positive COVID-19 cases within our schools.

Thank you for your time!

John & Whitney Gipson