

August 3, 2020

The Board of Education, Community High School District 99, met in a Workshop with Action Items session at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 3, 2020 at South High School.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, the following Board members answered present: Nancy Kupka, President; Mike Davenport, Vice President; and Members Sherell Fuller, Dan Nicholas, Terry Pavesich, Rick Pavinato and Joanna Vazquez Drexler.

Also present were Hank Thiele, Superintendent; Janice Schwarze, North High Principal; Ed Schwartz, South High Principal; and Juli Gniadek, Secretary.

There were 38 visitors, the maximum allowed, per Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan, which states a maximum of 50 persons are allowed in the same space. A copy of the Visitor Roster is attached.

1. RECEPTION OF VISITORS – PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Thiele read an opening statement acknowledging planning for students to return to school has been very hard on everyone and urged people of differing opinions to remain civil to one another. He reiterated the Board and administration are doing what they believe is best for District 99. He assured the community that families who choose for their students to learn remotely under the Hybrid Plan will be fully supported and everyone will receive a quality education. Dr. Thiele concluded by thanking the school community for participating in the process and the Board for its service to the community and their confidence in him.

Val Hardy, DGEA President, accompanied by Jake Giblin, DGEA Vice-President, read a statement in which she thanked the Board and administration for their work on the return to school plan and stressed, once a decision is made, teachers will work diligently to provide the best education possible to students.

Dr. Thiele stated, at the Board's request, 60 minutes would be allowed for Public Comment, with individuals being limited to three minutes.

Parents, students, staff and community members Nicole Proimos, Kelly Tracey-Wood, Melissa Rausch, Chloe Sheppard, Caroline Pleune, Rich Bennema, Bob Sheppard, Owen Nystrom, Julia Fisher, Debra Walters, Joe Rabig, Luke Rheintgen, Colleen Halloran, Roland Johnson, Erin Reichert and Mary Beth Werner advocated for how they believed the school year should begin, whether it be Hybrid or Fully Remote, and if the start of the school year should be delayed.

Public Comments submitted via the on line Public Comment Form are attached.

2. (4A.) UPDATE ON REMOTE LEARNING AND RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDANCE

Dr. Thiele reviewed the staffing challenges associated with returning to school in the Hybrid Plan and stated there were 58 medical accommodation requests from staff and approximately 50 staff had child care concerns. He noted, when he initially presented the Hybrid Plan to the Board on July 20, the availability of staff was a concern. Dr. Thiele stated administration is recommending schools open with a Modified Hybrid Plan for one week, follow the Remote Learning Plan for two weeks to allow

time to address staff shortages, and return to the Hybrid Plan on September 8, if it is safe to do so. Dr. Thiele stressed the Hybrid Plan follows all of the guidelines established by the CDC and students will have the opportunity to get PPE prior to the start of school. Dr. Thiele stated families have until August 7 to select the Fully Remote Plan, will be eligible to return to the Hybrid Plan after nine weeks of school, and will remain in the courses they signed up for with their assigned teachers.

Janice Schwarze and Ed Schwartz explained Remote Learning will be very different this fall than it was in the spring. They shared there would be synchronous learning every class period, assessments would be administered, grades would be given and students would be required to be visually present in class for attendance. Ms. Schwarze and Mr. Schwartz also explained how the Fully Remote Plan will work, noting the Monday schedule would be the same in both the Hybrid and Fully Remote Plan.

Dr. Thiele stated administration looked at a Remote for Most Plan and is not recommending it at this time.

Dr. Thiele then reviewed administration's recommendation for the school year to start in a Modified Hybrid Plan and displayed it visually. He explained the key components of the Plan, which include:

Hybrid Learning – Week 1

Meet nearly all teachers and get supplies. Experience the safety protocols.

- *Families can choose to be remote this week.*

Remote Learning – Weeks 2 & 3

Experience improved Remote Learning and prepare to return under the Hybrid Model.

- *Accept all administration recommendations for Remote Learning for Driver Education; TCD; programs requiring off-campus activities; following IHSA guidelines for athletics; allowing activities to continue mostly remote, and in-person when approved by the principal; and T99.*
- *Families will not have to commit to Remote Learning in the Hybrid Model until August 7.*

Hybrid Learning – Week 4

Return to the Hybrid Model - if IDPH health guidelines and metrics are being met and staffing is complete.

- *Remain in Hybrid Model for as long as safe to do so.*
- *Suspension of Hybrid Model would result in transition to the Remote Learning format and schedule.*

Dr. Thiele stated it is the recommendation of administration that the Board vote in favor of the Modified Hybrid Plan and if the Illinois Department of Health numbers change, an emergency Board meeting may need to be called and plans may need to change.

3. ADDENDUM TO 2020-2021 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Dr. Thiele stated the Handbook Addendum has been shared with the Board multiple times and will allow the District to carry out the recommended return to school plan. He noted information regarding masks matches CDC guidelines.

Dr. Thiele recommended the Board approve the Addendum this evening, and noted once approved, it will become part of Board policy.

4. 2020-2021 AMENDED SCHOOL CALENDAR

Dr. Thiele stated Election Day, November 3, is now a school holiday and families will have this day off. He shared the District will use one of its five Remote Learning Planning Days on October 12, and teachers will work that day, which will allow the District to schedule the November 3 holiday without extending the school year.

5. MASTER FACILITY PLAN PROGRESS

Dr. Thiele reviewed progress on the Master Facility Plan at both North and South High. He invited Board members to contact him if they would like to take a tour of the campuses.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

President Kupka acknowledged the donation from the Bonfield Express and thanked them for their continued support.

Member Fuller moved and Member Pavesich seconded the motion for the Board of Education to approve the Consent Agenda as presented which includes: A. Personnel Report - Resignations Classified; B. Acceptance of Donation - Bonfield Express; and C. 2020-2021 Amended School Calendar.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Fuller, Pavesich, Pavinato, Vazquez Drexler, Davenport, Nicholas and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

7. DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO BEGIN THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR AS DECIDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION UNDER AGENDA ITEM 4A (*Update on Remote Learning and Return to School Guidance*)

Member Davenport moved and Member Nicholas seconded the motion for the Board of Education to direct the Superintendent to begin the 2020-2021 school year as decided by the Board of Education under Agenda Item 4A (*Update on Remote Learning and Return to School Guidance*).

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Nicholas, Pavesich, Pavinato, Vazquez Drexler, Fuller and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

8. COVID-19 RE-OPENING PLAN APPROVAL RESOLUTION

Dr. Thiele stated the Resolution does not allow the Superintendent to broadly deviate from the Plan the Board approved; it does allow him to make minor adjustments, in consultation with the Board President, and the Board will be informed of these changes. He stated major changes to the Plan may require a Board Special Meeting and approval by the Board. Dr. Thiele stated the Resolution protects the Board and administration from liability in the execution of the Plan and the Resolution is recommended by the Board's attorney.

Member Davenport moved and Member Nicholas seconded the motion for the Board of Education to approve the COVID-19 Re-Opening Plan Approval Resolution.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Nicholas, Pavesich, Pavinato, Vazquez Drexler, Fuller and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

9. APPROVAL OF ADDENDUM TO THE 2020-2021 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Member Pavesich moved and Member Davenport seconded the motion for the Board of Education to approve the Addendum to the 2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook.

Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Pavesich, Davenport, Fuller, Nicholas, Pavinato, Vazquez Drexler and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

10. APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL TEXTBOOK FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Dr. Thiele stated the textbook is for a CTE dual credit course.

Member Davenport moved and Member Vazquez Drexler seconded the motion for the Board of Education to approve the textbook "Foundations of Interior Design" for the 2020-2021 school year.

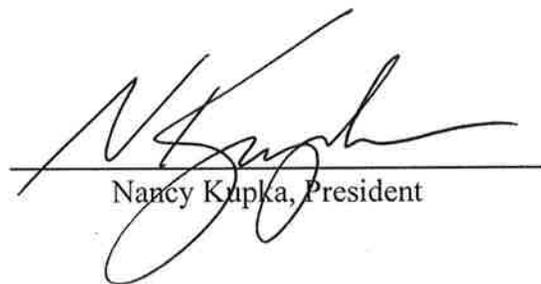
Upon the Secretary's roll call, Members Davenport, Vazquez Drexler, Fuller, Nicholas, Pavesich, Pavinato and Kupka voted AYE. The President declared the motion carried.

11. RECEPTION OF VISITORS – PUBLIC COMMENT

Melissa Rausch, parent of a freshman, urged the Board to stand by teachers and to provide additional professional development and pedagogy for teaching remotely. She also thanked the Board for their work.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, Member Pavesich moved and Member Davenport seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Upon the unanimous voice vote of the seven members in attendance, the President declared the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:16 p.m.



Nancy Kupka, President



Juli Gniadek, Secretary

Community

HIGH SCHOOL District 99

BOARD OF EDUCATION

AUGUST 3, 2020

VISITOR ROSTER

#	Wants to Speak	Name
1	X	Nicole Proimos ✓
2	X	Kelly Tracey-Wood ✓
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mia Wood ✓
4	X	Melissa Rausch ✓
5	X	Chloe Sheppard ✓
6	X	Caroline Pleune Pleune ✓
7	X	Rich Bennema ✓
8	X	Bob Sheppard ✓
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sam Bull ✓
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maeve Diet Rich ✓
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gretchen Lucina ✓
12	X	Owen Nystrom ✓
13	X	Julia Fisher ✓
14	X	Debra Walters ✓
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mary Beth Werner ✓
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tim Werner ✓
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heather Pleune ✓
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rebecca Bossard ✓
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Drexler
20	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kris Rabig

Community

HIGH SCHOOL District 99

BOARD OF EDUCATION

AUGUST 3, 2020

VISITOR ROSTER

#	Wants to Speak	Name
21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joe Rabig
22	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Luke Rheintgen Rheintgen
23	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heather Kelly
24	<input type="checkbox"/>	Angela Fields
25	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yvonne Busdeker
26	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kim Workman
27	<input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Fletcher
28	<input type="checkbox"/>	Erin Reichert
29	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anastasia Antonicic
30	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chris Antonicic
31	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tracy Dirscoll
32	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diane Crisp
33	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roland Johnson
34	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Piotrowski
35	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deena Winkler Dinkel
36	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Colleen Halloran

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Name	Comment
Deanne Pettit	<p>Schools, teachers, administrators are essential businesses/workers and as such there should be the necessary precautions taken to perform the duties as all other essential workers and businesses have during this time. I work for a grocery store and have been lucky enough to remain employed but have also gone into work on a regular basis because it is essential. Taking all the precautions necessary, masks, distancing, cleaning, etc.</p> <p>I am concerned why so many staff opted for this medical documentation or leave.</p> <p>As essential workers you have a duty and obligation to the community. Take the proper precautions as the rest of us essential workers and get our kids back in school. Thank you.</p>
Becky Rheintgen	<p>Please reconsider the plan to be a full hybrid plan. If needed, maybe delay the start date until you can get the staff in place for the hybrid approach.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>
Nicole Szydlowski	<p>CDC director Robert Redfield has been widely quoted in recent days acknowledging that sending kids back to school is a public health issue versus a public health issue--that the mental health of our students is as important as their physical health. Whether or not this Board votes for hybrid learning, please, please, please allow sports to happen. Sports provide critical socialization for hundreds of students in the district and in significantly smaller groups than having 1,000+ students indoors at the same time.</p>
Maggie Camporese	<p>The District 99 community and Board of Education should know that no high risk staff member has any idea the status of their accommodation requests that were submitted in Mid-July. For example, I submitted an accommodation request on July 15th and was told I would hear back no later than the end of the month. When I contacted HR Friday 7/31 to find out why I haven't heard back, I was told that the district was finally meeting today, 8/3, to determine if "they can honor" the accommodation requests of their most vulnerable staff members. In the same email, I was told, with less than a week until we are to report to school, that "somebody will contact you next week." It's completely unclear who is a part of the decision process and why it has taken so long to determine something so important. However, one thing is clear: our most vulnerable staff members seem to be an afterthought in our district's reopening plans.</p>
David Mooney	<p>E-Learning for those unable or unwilling to attend school is available. In school options should be made available to willing and able students by teacher and staff who are also able to work (if age, illness or necessary contact with elderly or compromised family members is a concern, that teacher may be excused).</p>
Thomas Nelson	<p>Dear Dr. Thiele and Members of the Board,</p> <p>Let me start by saying I am disappointed, but not surprised by the pushback by the teaches not to adopt the hybrid schedule that you worked so hard to develop. We expect the district to provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum to its students. Since it appears, we will be heading to an online format, it needs to be better than the embarrassment that was delivered by district 99 last school year. You had three months to adapt to the new learning environment, yet nothing changed and apathy became the status quo. When the students were told that their grades could not go down, any motivation for learning and preparation was compromised. The students should be required to attend classes 5 days a week as if they were in school. Most of the science classes will already be lacking since the students will not be able to apply the scientific method to their labs, because they will not be doing them in the upgraded facilities that the taxpayers generously approved. If the faculty and staff are unable or unwilling to dedicate the same time and effort they would provide via classroom learning versus e-learning, maybe consideration should be made to cancel classes altogether and furlough everyone until a time when that effort can and will be made.</p> <p>Respectfully yours, Thomas Nelson DGN parent</p>

Public Comments Submitted via Google Form

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Michelle
Davis

I am a teacher at South high school and I urge you to begin the school year with extended remote learning. Currently, our community is experiencing a dangerous increase in positivity rates, creating an alarming and unstable environment for reopening. Staffing alone should not be the deciding factor on when we should reopen our district's schools; Science and data should be the driving factor.

We lack control over this virus as infections rise and test results continue to take weeks for some community members. Isolation, testing and contact tracing are vital means to reduce spread. Additionally, the school hallways and stairwells go against the CDC recommended 6 feet of distance, posing a major threat for spread, as particle transmission from talking, shouting and laughing will frequently occur.

I want to acknowledge that the benefits of in-person learning are significant -- it is the reason why teaching has continued in brick-and-mortar school buildings even as technology expands by the second. Social-emotional learning, cooperative learning, and teacher-student connection are all fundamental in order for learning to take place. These student needs should not be downplayed, but rather reimaged, during such an unimaginable time. Because while these needs are important, the safety of students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community, is paramount. Learning and connection can be replicated in a virtual environment, but lives cannot be replaced. Furthermore, the foreseeable warnings of a future shutdown prove that our efforts should be towards making the hybrid model a future goal within a remote setting, rather than the inverse.

Contrary to popular belief, a large majority of our students felt successful with virtual learning. According to the District 99 survey, The majority of students--65%--were comfortable or very comfortable with Remote Learning. 26.6% found Remote Learning to be 'somewhat challenging,' and another 7.5% 'struggled greatly.'" This satisfaction will only increase with more preparation. Additionally, adequate time should be devoted to that smaller percentage of students that struggled with virtual learning. Our students are hardworking and care about their education, in whatever means they can obtain it. This intrinsic motivation, paired with a dedicated faculty, such as ours in District 99, will result in outcomes that are drastically superior than what many currently believe possible.

Students, parents, teachers, community members -- what we are all craving, is normalcy. However, it is imperative that we stop focusing on what once was, and begin to readjust to what is. Desire is not a solution to this virus. Hope will not keep students, teachers, and community members from getting infected, or worse, experiencing trauma and death.

Please vote for remote learning until numbers in our state begin to stabilize and decrease. Thank you.

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many moving parts mixed with a huge dose of uncertainty; thank you for working so hard on finding a solution that is best for all involved. With that being said, I respectfully request that the hybrid option remain in place. I was hopeful after the 7/20 meeting that the choice would be available, with a small possibility of maybe adding a third onsite day. Learning that we are moving toward all virtual, especially with the option for sports and after school activities to continue, was more than disappointing.

Has the board received data about how many families will lead toward all virtual vs hybrid? If a higher number of families choose virtual, that would leave less students opting for in person. Thus, more social distancing opportunities and safety parameters in place. I understand if it was a 90/10 split, it wouldn't make sense to offer a hybrid option, but if there is no data yet, there's no way to know how this will impact offering an option.

I respectfully submit the following as reasons behind preferring a hybrid option for the school year:

1. Please do not remove the choice if at all possible. I know the most recent communication of lack of staff may impact this, but I respect every family's decision to do what is best for their family. The board should too.

2. This has to be an "all or nothing." If we are all virtual, then no sports or after school activities. If the board and community at large really feel that there is too much risk congregating children and adults, then allowing sports and activities should be just as risky. As it stands now, kids are playing with other kids outside, sports have resumed, and yet we are debating the safety of being in school for half days. If the board chooses all virtual, that should include everything. What message are we sending with the "virtual, but sports and activities are allowed" option? We can't pick and choose what's okay and what's not, but if we are going down that path, academics and student growth should outrank sports and activities, at least right now. I have students involved in both and still feel this way.

3. While it's hard to predict, it's very likely we will be all virtual come winter. Allowing the students as much face time as possible on the front end will likely lead to a more positive outcome on the back end should this happen.

4. If we go all virtual now, what are the numbers needing to look like in order to return to in person school? Very specific parameters should be put in place before the all virtual option becomes the only one. One board member used statistics from DuPage County, while another mentioned that we should be looking at community specific data, which I agree with. A solid plan for return to school needs to be in place before the hybrid option is taken off the table.

5. For the students in their last year attending TCD, they have an amazing opportunity to have the skills and certification needed to start a career right after high school. EMT/fire science is an example. With TCD's decision to be in person 5 days a week. I would request that the school work with families interested in having their student attend TCD as much as possible. I understand it will be our responsibility, but ask that the permissions be granted as much as possible for those who choose this path.

6. I know student compliance will not be optimal; kids are kids. I get that. But this is not elementary school. It's high school and I think we can expect more from our students.

Please don't take away the choice if at all possible. None of this is easy. At all. Of course I will respect any decision that is made, but am hopeful that the board will reconsider. I am a graduate of DGS and, when we moved back to the area, I specifically chose to live in a neighborhood that would feed into the DGS school system because I wanted my children to have a good high school experience, which they have.

Thank you again to all involved in this process. I am truly grateful for your efforts to make the school year as safe and effective as it can be.

Marianne
Hynd

Public Comments Submitted via Google Form

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Eric Naff	<p>I here is a strong push to return to school by D99 families. However, data and science show this is not a safe time. Likely many families would have "voted" to stay open in March, to have prom and graduation and sports seasons per usual if they'd been given a chance to weigh in in March, April, May...they didn't. LEADERSHIP took the bold action to shut down. Its time to be leaders again.</p> <p>People are at odds. Politically charged. Spitting and breathing on each other, protesting, mud slinging... not because they're bad people but because we are all scared. If not for our health, for our economic safety, for life as we knew it disappearing before our eyes...</p> <p>It's actually not fair that this decision is in your hands. Local, state, and national officials are "passing the buck" or offering you "localized control", depending on how you see it. Either way, you're a volunteer board doing your best and the stakes have never been higher. That is why you MUST ignore the myriad opinions and emotions we are all slinging your way. You MUST go with science. Science says we are not safe with anything but remote for most. Please be scientific of mind and courageous of heart.</p>
Keri LaMantia	<p>Please find a way to go hybrid, these kids need a teacher in front of them in a school setting!</p>
Missy Carlson	<p>No matter what the plan going forward, our students will receive a less-than-ideal education this year due to the constraints this pandemic forced upon us. Despite the desirability of in-person instruction, both for students and staff, the safest way to ensure the best and most consistent education is to start remotely for a significant part of the first semester for these key reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recent studies show that kids carry the virus as much as adults. They are not immune or protected by their youth, which will impact everyone who attends in-person.2. Schools and camps attempting to convene young people have had to scramble or even shut down within days, not weeks, because of infected students in contact with others. This is true in places very close to us, such as Lake Zurich. We cannot control the behaviors of people outside the school building.3. The hybrid model, even for one week, puts every student and staff member at risk. Inevitably, we would have to plan for quarantining, or worse a significant outbreak, leading to a return for remote instruction. This instability is not good for students' learning practices, nor for parents' planning, nor for teachers' instruction.4. The hybrid model seems financially untenable. If the plan, even for the first week, relies on in-house substitutes and administrators covering classes, that is a huge loss of man-hours. Over weeks, this and the costs of constant cleaning and additional PPE purchases may grow out of control. <p>Please allow our students and staff to begin instruction completely remotely for a longer period than two weeks, as it is the only way to safely provide consistent instruction. Many thanks to you and all school staff on your diligent work on this matter.</p>
Jennifer McCann	<p>The proposed plan for back to school makes no sense and is confusing to an adult let alone our kids. Why not just delay the start of the school year until you can figure out a viable plan and have enough staff to execute that plan? I am in full support of sending the kids back to school.</p>

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Gregory Kus	<p>If the trend continues with all virtual training, it could cost the jobs of many traditional teachers and school systems. Companies or other organizations will innovate in this environment... much like the DotCom industry and digital revolution taking place now... companies like:</p> <p>Uber destroyed the taxi industry and even car rental industry with online booking of ride sharing.</p> <p>AirBNB greatly impacted the hotel industry by opening up whole other realms of vacation rentals.</p> <p>Going all virtual will make entrepreneurs seize the opportunity to make schooling more efficient or give alternative options. What if a teacher or central government chose to pre-record a whole years' lesson plan with all the sessions... it's the same material every year and they just "press play" every year for all schools everywhere. Someone may decide that works just as well and eliminate local teachers...</p> <p>Why have local teachers if that went all virtual? They could outsource it to a virtual teacher anywhere in the world that is pre-recorded with no mistakes conveying whatever they want.</p> <p>This already happened in corporate training in the early 2000's. Much of the technical in-person training was replaced with CBT, Video ILT and distance learning - negating the need for costly classrooms, materials, computers and other equipment as well as jobs of corporate trainers. They've recorded the classroom sessions and ship it to 1000's of people at much higher profit margins. Hope this doesn't happen to local schools... but it could.</p> <p>I think you want to have teachers back in school bringing the full value experience to the students and community - helping shape a generation with education and in-person relationships.</p> <p>Students need in-person interaction with teachers and fellow students. School is more than just training online... it's education which is far more.</p> <p>As educators, you are essential workers that can help shape American students' lives. I hope you do rise to to the challenge. Otherwise entrepreneurs may innovate and come up with an alternative.</p>
Chris Folise	<p>If the board decides to go to a remote only model, how will that affect students who are supposed to attend TCD? My follow up would be if you say online only through TCD, how does that work for someone requiring a hands on like welding or Cosmetology?</p>

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Barbara Pearcy	<p>1. The suggested plan of one week of hybrid learning, then two weeks of remote, then returning to hybrid when staffing permits is concerning as it appears to quite possibly mean that we will remain in remote learning indefinitely.</p> <p>2. My suggestion is to push back the first day of school for those three weeks to give the district time to staff the school sufficiently to open at least with the hybrid plan.</p> <p>3. The teachers who choose not to instruct in person could do so remotely, with an instructional aide in the classroom monitoring the students. These students need the structure and consistency of going into the school and interaction with peers. These young people are not doing well emotionally or physically being out of school for this amount of time, per the CDC and Academy of Pediatrics; they are both warning that these children are at high risk, not being in the classrooms this fall, for depression, suicide, anxiety, drug abuse and overdoses, to name a few.</p> <p>I strongly suggest that District 99 adopt a plan, now, as to when the school will reopen to daily in person instruction. Our students desperately need this as per the CDC, Academy of Pediatrics and the Illinois Board of Education.</p> <p>As I am sure you are aware, District 58 has developed a plan to have five days of in person instruction, 8:00-2:00, beginning October 26, beginning the school year with a hybrid plan of 2.5 hours daily.</p>
Barbara Pearcy	<p>I propose pushing back the first day of school for three weeks to give the district time to staff the school sufficiently to open at least with the hybrid plan.</p> <p>If it is still decided to do the remote learning after a week of hybrid, I am suggesting that the teachers teach, from the school building itself, or at home, requiring the students to log in on time, attendance will be taken and the students and teacher will remain logged in together, on zoom or google, with video on, for the entire class period. This can be done for the entire school day, all class periods, all five days. These students need the structure, accountability and instruction daily. If the teacher does not have lessons to teach the entire time, they can allow the students to work during this time, still online with video, while the teacher is also online and available for questions and concerns.</p> <p>The majority of teachers last spring gave their email and/or phone numbers for students to contact them with questions. The majority of students this age do not have the confidence to reach out to a teacher, or even school counselor, themselves in this manner. Another reason for in person instruction, even the minimal amount offered in the hybrid plan, allows for interaction between student and teacher; My suggestion above would also address this problem.</p>

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Wendy Fredricks	<p>Hello - After reviewing the revised plan, I thank you for listening to the community and starting back hybrid! I hope that the plan passes so that you can work on a successful start to the year where our kids received a quality academic education with the ability to focus on mental, emotional, and physical concerns. I am happy to hear that our reasons for moving to remote after the first week are due to staff level concerns, and not health concerns. This aligns with the data that the community has been providing. I have a few questions to help answer 'what's next' - Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If Sports/Clubs are discussed please VOTE Yes to keep them active. Since we are starting hybrid, and that small groups training and following safety protocols can be achieved, I hope the board approves allowing participation in sports and clubs. It is essential and administration can keep our students flexible on levels or participation as recommendations and rules change from the state and IHSA.2. For remote days, student NEED a schedule to follow (consistent and not movable) Ex: on Monday, everyone will have strict start/end times for per 1-8 with teachers leading class and being available during their scheduled time. Consistent and accountable.3. When remote, will teachers be in their classrooms to have access to all their tools and be distraction free? If at home, how will we ensure they are distraction free to be able to focus 100% on teaching.4. When will we discuss the 'return to hybrid' for Sept 8th? Will there be a board meeting open to public so parents can stay information and involved?5. What metrics will dg99 be looking at to evaluate if it is still safe to return on Sept 8th?6. What measures are being done to fill open teacher spots to be able to staff hybrid Sept 8th? Since the decision to open hybrid, then move to 2 week remote was made due to staff shortage, it seems that the issue to solve for us is to identify staff available to be able to return to hybrid Sept 8th. <p>Thank you for your work and time, Wendy</p>
Margaret Bednarz	<p>Overall worry/Covid ? How safe it will be for kids?</p>

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if,” said Harold E. Olin, superintendent of the Greenfield-Central Community School Corporation, but were “very shocked it was on Day 1.” Let’s not be shocked. Let’s not bring kids and teachers into the building even for one week until we know for certain we are doing the right thing. Also, COVID-19 has run rampant through low-income families, multigenerational households and communities of color. The impacts of disease and death are often amplified in families living with economic and other types of insecurity, and we will not do these families any favors by putting their children at greater risk of contracting the virus. Even for the first week!

Yes, "schools provide critical support for student mental health, and we would need to be creative to serve students’ social and emotional needs well remotely. But when we use student mental health as a reason to go back to school during a pandemic, I wonder whether we have deeply considered the environment we propose to send students back into. This will not be a year of teacher hugs and lunch with their friends and awesome collaborative projects. All the normal stresses will be compounded by anxiety about the virus, constant vigilance about safety, and possibly even the need to cope with the deaths of teachers or classmates.” We are only going to add to their anxiety with the flip-flopping between hybrid and remote. Students need stability, support, and confidence that we are doing the right thing. They will see it in our eyes above our masks that we are afraid. We keep saying this is such a hard decision, but for the acceptable deaths to be zero, there is an answer better than the other.

For the students who are worried they will fall behind, we will not let you. We are lucky to have technology and educators who can do an amazing job to support and enrich students through this pandemic that many other districts do not have. We have the tools to keep the students on track, and now we have more experience, knowledge, and allowance for a stronger and more accountable process. We can also utilize this time to prepare and teach students more about communications via technology. Many large companies are changing their culture indefinitely. Meetings, training, interviews, collaboration, etc. are all being done online. Colleges are getting creative in how they hold lectures and have students collaborate which will actually open those students up to new skills that will be vital in working and communicating in what will be their adult world. This will be the future for many of our students even when the pandemic is over. Why aren’t we preparing them for remote interactions and work? Why are we sending the message it “can’t” be done as well as it can in person. Just because it has been that way for us. Their world is going to be so different, and we need to prepare them for that. We need to get better at meeting their social and emotional needs using technology and creativity. We can do this. We can give students structure and support with a more stable and completely safe option.

Lastly, I have experienced anxiety and what I think is depression for the first time in my life because of the pandemic, and I know I am not alone. I thought seeing my family and friends would be the cure. People need in-person interaction, right? It felt good in the moments I spent with my mom who I hadn’t seen in months. It felt good to go for a walk with a friend and see her new baby. But after I left them, my anxiety worsened. I felt guilty. I felt like I was going to get sick or get them sick. I began taking my temperature each day and smelling things in my house to make sure I still had my senses. I spent days after that in my room in bed afraid again to be in groups. I am now looking into therapists to see online because during a pandemic, “seeing people in person” is not the solution. The solution is to live, learn, work, create, heal, all at a distance so the numbers can go down until we get a vaccine. Bringing our students back in groups of people will not solve their anxiety, but it WILL increase risk. Thank you so much for your time and all your consideration.

Lauren
McSweeney

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Clarence Krolc	<p>I don't understand the midweek message sent to the community from the superintendent. I have watched the last several board meetings virtually. I saw the board charge the superintendent with creating a robust "remote for most" plan. Instead of details regarding that, we receive communication that he has decided to do hybrid then remote because of staffing issues?</p> <p>The board clearly did NOT authorize administration to make decisions without board oversight at the 7/20 meeting. The board clearly articulated his charge was to take this week to better develop a strong remote plan at the 7/27 meeting.</p> <p>How does staff medical waivers affect either of these? If anything it seems to me the fact we have staff who can more safely teach remotely but cannot do so in the hybrid model should have only strengthened administrations efforts to create that stronger remote plan - as the board charged admin to do. Admin instead doubled down and put effort on creating their own 3rd hybrid-of-a-hybrid plan - in other words, taking control and making decisions on their own in ways the board specifically said they would not authorize.</p> <p>I wanted to see a strong remote option before determining what my family is going to do. This doesn't feel like its about kids anymore or creating whats in the best interest of the community as a whole. This feels like digging in heels instead of accepting what IS.</p>
Mary Beth Werner	<p>The Superintendent has stated that, at this time, there are not enough instructors to accommodate a full hybrid schedule. How many positions will need to be filled and what is the process for filling these positions?</p>
William Pogorelec	<p>I find it disheartening to learn that the teachers have voted to not return to teaching unless the district goes to a full remote learning plan for the upcoming school year. Everyone has agreed that in person learning provides the best environment for our children to learn and excel. While not perfect, the administrations hybrid plan provided the best of both worlds striking a balance between the safety needs of the students and staff as well as the educational development needs of the students. All of this while meeting or exceeding all of the safety guidance provided by the health experts. Instead, we are being asked to accept a remote learning plan, which proved to be a complete failure in the spring. I understand that the guidance from the state presented challenges but nowhere within the guidance did it say to stop teaching. While some of the teachers accepted the challenge a majority did not and simply stopped teaching or even reaching out to their students. How will this time be different? The same challenges and distractions of working out of your house will be present. We are being asked to trust that somehow, this time will be different; however, trust is something that needs to be earned.</p> <p>What has been lost in the discussions so far is the economic impact of the virus. I know some people will take offense to that and say I am putting the economy ahead of the safety and health of the community. That simply is not true. While I wished we lived in a world where we did not have to make that choice, the fact is we do not. Instead, we need to make a choice that strikes an appropriate balance between the two. The financial Impact has already begun to put significant pressure on the budgets of families within this community, the school district itself, as well as the state and country. When you consider the logistical challenges of manufacturing and distributing a vaccine to more than 300 million people in this country let alone the more than 7 billion people in the world it is clear that we will be living with the effects of the virus for the foreseeable future. The financial toll of this will be devastating if we do not find a way to strike a balance between the two.</p>

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Therese M Larkin	<p>My husband, Paul, and I are parents to DGN incoming 11 & 12th graders of strong standing, and firmly feel that they would benefit most from in-person education. We, along with our children, have been active members in the DGN community. Paul and I have also participated in Principal Schwarze's meetings re: options for the upcoming school year and have complete confidence in the ability of the DGN staff to safely execute the proposed hybrid schedule. We sincerely hope you will take our opinion into consideration when voting this evening.</p> <p>That being said, we do appreciate the new staffing constraints the district is facing. As a healthcare worker who has been going into the acute care units of Christ hospital consistently for the past several months, I understand the teachers fears, but don't agree with their decision to not teach. None of us signed up for this. Masking and hand-sanitizing work! Of the hundreds of hospital staff I encounter on a daily basis, less than 5 have been diagnosed with COVID. Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Gratefully, -- Therese Murphy Larkin DGN Parents' Club Board Member Attachments area</p>
Nathaniel H	<p>In terms of the district's plan for starting school, the understanding was that the administrative team would work with teachers to create a remote plan that worked for everyone in accordance with the Board's straw poll guidance. That is not what happened, though. Instead, administration worked without teachers to create a new proposal that is essentially going back and forth from in-person to remote on the original hybrid plan. They did not create a new remote plan that would maximize instruction or line up with "remote for most," and gave the appearance of blaming it on teachers due to "staffing needs." But what's done is done. Looking forward, the idea of looking at the area COVID data and determining when to come back from remote learning is sound and logical; starting with a week of hybrid is not. I understand the goal - to allow students to meet with teachers and establish the foundations for their classes. But in-person learning is not better than remote in all circumstances. Starting with the hybrid plan is endangering students and staff for the APPEARANCE of more effective learning, but the reality is that it will most likely be inferior and everyone will be put at risk. This first week will be spent dealing with establishing in-person COVID protocols more than building relationships. According to the hybrid plan, no new learning can take place. Students will not see their teachers' faces or be able to approach them. Students will not see their peers faces or be able to approach them. Students will not get new instruction except through remote means. Students most likely will not, despite our lofty expectations, feel comfortable establishing bonds and building SEL while distanced and masked. They will, however, be mixing during passing periods and on buses. They will, however, have to wipe down desks every period and hope not to infect themselves in the process. They will, however, be set back a week when they have to adapt to remote learning the very next week instead of spending the first week acclimating to a solid remote plan. It seems most prudent to start students remotely so that there is a minimum of switching between plans and then go to in-person as soon as it is safe. I want students and teachers back in classrooms, but I also want to maximize instruction AND safety. Let's not play to appearances, but instead do what's best.</p>

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Riley Love	<p>As the board decides how to move forward with our 2020-2021 school year, I ask we consider what is best for kids.</p> <p>Over and again, I have learned that best practices in both teaching and in parenting include consistency, clear expectations and empathetic understanding.</p> <p>I am concerned that our district's proposed plan to return with a hybrid model (one that administration clearly articulated would be short lived before we are shut down) is a plan that does not include consistency nor does it help create clear expectations for students, families, or teachers as it is inherently transitory. This new 3 week model provides for these things even less.</p> <p>I am empathetic to the concerns of all involved and, recognizing we cannot *please* everyone, return to the belief we must be consistent in our approach, which, like it or not, seems to point toward remote learning at this unprecedented time in modern public health. Politics aside, it seems the best way to preserve consistency for families and students and create clear expectations around this year's school experience is to adopt the remote model of education that appears inevitable at some point this school year.</p>
Maryann Flock	<p>Fundraiser in the community to give D99 teachers what they want to feel safe to teach in the school under D99 hybrid plan. (The community needs more awareness and transparency of what the teachers needs are. Sad that it seems all 3 parties (board, teachers, admin) are using bureaucratic tactics.)</p>
Dave Zajack	<p>District 99 Board Members,</p> <p>With our daughter entering her Senior year, we feel it is in her best interest to have as much in-person time with teachers as possible. We understand that there are risks involved with bringing students and faculty back together, but we feel the benefits outweigh the risks especially after assessing the disappointing experience she had with remote learning last spring.</p> <p>The hybrid plan proposed by Dr. Thiele seems to balance the risk/reward concerns and properly supports in-person teaching with strong safety guidelines. This option also allows families a fully remote option should they not feel comfortable with in-person training.</p> <p>Why would we go to a fully remote option when the hybrid plan supports both?</p> <p>Lastly, if the full hybrid plan cannot be supported, we would hope other options can be explored that include some in-person learning opportunities. The children cannot afford to risk any further impact to their educational needs.</p> <p>Thank you, Laura & Dave Zajack</p>
Holly Pappas	<p>Thank you for all your hard work and commitment during this difficult time. With the latest development of not enough teachers available to instruct in-person for the hybrid plan, I am hoping that the board insists that school administration execute a robust and challenging remote learning plan. A remote learning plan where teachers are required to teach the full regular school schedule safely from their classrooms via Zoom. Zoom classes can be recorded in case there are any technical difficulties and can be used as a resource for review when students miss part of the lesson. My child took a course via Outschool this summer and we found recorded Zoom to be a very valuable resource. Please make sure that teachers are required to teach the regular full schedule so that our children don't fall behind. Other districts had success with remote learning in the spring using Zoom for the full schedule. We should be doing the same thing. Please don't let our kids fall even further behind.</p>

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Charlotte Davis Gallovitch	I am imploring you to open the schools. We want 5 days a week live learning. Letting this negatively impact our children's mental health and education is not an option. The science backs up the lower risk to children and people under 60. If staff members are unable to return to work for true underlying conditions let them have medical leave and hire new teachers. This craziness has gone too far. I want my request noted as full time live learning but will back up the hybrid model absolutely as a last resort. Full remote learning shouldn't even be on the table. Thank you.
Pam Petruilis	<p>I am truly disappointed that we will not be able to have the hybrid option. But I can understand the staffing concerns at this point. If we need to do the remote learning, there must be more interaction and accountability. As everyone knows, the spring was worthless and the kids may as well have not "attended".</p> <p>My kids are both special needs - autism and processing and ADHD. Without constant interaction, they fail.</p> <p>I have been weekly remotely since March 17 and have been very successful. We are on constant Webex calls and put our cameras on to help engagement.</p> <p>I am a single, working mother with 2 special needs children and cannot replace the teachers.</p> <p>If you must do remote learning, please make sure the teachers and students are engaged and accountable.</p>
Nancy Fielding	<p>I appreciate the ongoing hard work that is taking place regarding planning for the upcoming school year. Despite these efforts, it is dangerous and unethical for schools to re-open for any type of in-person instruction.</p> <p>Some say they worry that students will "fall behind." Fall behind whom? The entire nation is in the same pandemic, and students will catch up. Cases continue to rise across our state, including DuPage. There are reports of people having to wait a week or longer to receive Covid test results. If schools reopen, there will be cases of students and staff getting sick, but we won't be able to protect others from getting infected due to the slow turnaround of test results. Thankfully, as I parent I have chosen to keep my son home. But what about his teachers, friends and coaches? Their health matters to us, too.</p> <p>If District 99 forces their faculty to teach in-person, this demonstrates a lack of compassion and concern for the people who make the district great. No child's education is worth the risk of someone dying.</p>
Maryann Flock	Fundraiser in the community to give D99 teachers what they want to feel safe to teach in the school under D99 hybrid plan. (The community needs more awareness and transparency of what the teachers needs are. Sad that it seems all 3 parties (board, teachers, admin) are using bureaucratic tactics.)
Tracy Sweeney	Will the teachers who are asking to stay at home and do remote learning be compensated the same as if they were teaching in school.
Ryan Reyes	As of today, the number of COVID cases is still increasing. We should rely on logic and data to make our decisions— not a desire for "normalcy". His new plan appears to be a compromise, but there is no compromise when people are being asked to put their health and safety at risk. The rationale for returning for one week is so that students can meet their teachers and gather materials. If these are the only goals, then I cannot support this plan because I do not believe there is any significant learning or social-emotional advantage to entering a potentially dangerous place. The only safe way to return to school is by implementing a fully remote model. Thank you.
Tracy Sweeney	We should have the option as parents to send our students to School if we so choose. I here are many substitute or new teachers who would love to teach in person if other teachers opt out.

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Carrie Swenson	<p>am an educator (both in the classroom and for last 5 years virtual only). I am very aware of all things having to do with our education system. I know how things work. That being said, we all get that this is a unique and challenging time. We all have been dealing with these difficulties for months. This includes everyone in this community. Not just the board members, administrators, parents, students, but people in ALL professions. The state has clearly listed specific guidance and protocols that are not only conservative compared to other states, but according to the Governor himself, based off scientific metrics and many expert advice. The IDPH has also listed clear and specific protocols for schools based off all the pertinent experts. The ISBE has also listed clear and specific guidelines and protocols for schools. If we can not listen to these people then you are being remiss in your duties. It is not your personal opinion that guides the return to school. It is not the Board's job. Your job is to listen to the administration that you hired. Your job is to listen to the community that voted you in. The board consist of 7 people, and you have been voted in to represent the people and students in the 99 family. That is it. Not your feelings, not your opinion (especially when it is based off of false, callous misinformation). Following what your role is the overwhelming majority want hybrid when we return, the administration has recommended it. Your job is support and move forward with how to do that best.</p> <p>Next, teachers and teacher shortages. As it seems the teachers have spoken, I believe that their voices were not heard either. The public was misled. It is disappointing to say the least to divide a community the way the administration and the board has done. The teachers have a right to have safety concerns validated. However, I have a very hard time when I see teachers posting on social media vacation photos to Florida, visiting restaurants and beaches, then claim to be too worried to hold in person learning. Or the teacher that just completed a 4 state college tour for their child, yet does not want to return to school. They are essential. They need to step up. They need to hear their concerns raised and be assured of safety precautions as listed by the IDPH, Governors Office, ISBE. They are contracted employees, and if they chose to refuse work, union or not, CARES act or not, then stay home and hire new ones. There is no way that we do not have enough staff to teach these children that have legitimate medical fragilities restricting a return to work. In my opinion, being a teacher my self, this is careless and selfish behavior by not all, but many. They are professional adults. These are still children. The schools will be 50% capacity with masks and spacing. You can not convince me that their behavior in daily life of all the teachers returning is consistent of being so worried about this safety they are claiming. I have seen the family gathering photos, the playdates with their children, the vacations, many things that are considered risky behaviors they do daily. Yet, not their job? And yes, I recognize that some are cautious making choices daily to protect their health, cancelling vacations, avoiding shopping, sticking to low risk gatherings etc. This is behavior that warrants not wanting to return to school. The rest is hypocritical.</p> <p>Finally, the current plan and remote learning. The newest recommendation is ridiculous and disruptive. Come in to school for one week with some staff, but maybe a substitute? This completely contradicts the argument that creating that first time teacher/student connections, setting up expectations, getting a feel for the teachers and students. Then 2 weeks remote. Really? Members sitting there know that is an empty plan and we will not return. Which leaves remote learning. The community expects teachers to return to school to teach in the empty classroom. Make it work. there will be no students, and risk from others adults is less than the grocery store. Make it work. Teachers will need child care. Teachers will need to make plans. If this common sense approach does not happen, then we expect a full class day of learning. The exact amount of time students will be in school. This does not mean a teacher is lecturing remotely for a 50 minute class, this means that teacher is logged in and has presented a lesson for part of that class, using break out rooms,</p>
Patricia Fugate	I would prefer the Hybrid option to start the 2020 - 2021 school year.

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Throwaway Throwaway	<p>Dear District 99 Board Members, I am commenting tonight to voice some concerns over the recent proposal that Superintendent Thiele sent out.</p> <p>Last week, the straw poll indicated that the Board would like to see a robust remote plan. What could the safety and potential of e-learning look like if administration and teachers put their minds together to create something that would SAFELY meet the needs of most students in a way that addresses equity and health? What was delivered was a Frankenstein approach that was not, in fact, co-signed, designed, or brainstormed by any of the people who actually matter in the delivery of this plan-- the teachers.</p> <p>If you truly believe that the right number of deaths in District 99--and the surrounding community-- is zero, then we are wasting precious, precious time here to develop a remote plan that works for all. As Mr. Thiele stated two weeks ago, it is essentially only a matter of time (he stated 3-4 weeks) before he believes we will be remote anyways. Why not actually put resources and time into that like many of the surrounding districts have done? Jumping from in-person to remote to hybrid and then, most likely, back to remote creates a logistical and continuity nightmare for our students, teachers, and parents. Any form of hybrid, including this hybrid-remote-hybrid-remote plan, will only continue to deepen the equity divide in our district and make things that much harder for our population in the most need. Given that numbers in DuPage are increasing every day, we must make the decision based on science and science alone. We all the know the saying, but in the midst of a pandemic, it is always better to be safe than sorry.</p> <p>Lastly, you have no doubt noticed that I am submitting my comment anonymously. The reason behind this is not because I do not stand behind my words; rather, it is because this decision is creating vitriol and hate across our community by creating an "us versus them" mentality. Teachers with medical and childcare issues have now become the scapegoat of this hate. You are all elected officials, elected because our community trusts you to make the right decision for our children and teachers, and at the basis of that decision is a fundamental right for everyone to feel and be safe.</p> <p>Please consider safety to be the utmost of concerns tonight and make the right choice for our community by voting for a fully remote start to the school year. Thank you for your time.</p>
Greg Hensel	<p>Being a teacher in this district and seeing/hearing the comments being made by the school board, school administration, fellow teachers and community members is very surprising. I've always felt that this community was professional, respectful and supportive. I know that we are all invested in this process to do what we believe is right for our students, however I've never felt more defeated. I choose to look at the numbers. I choose to look at the facts. In a time like this, all we can do is educate ourselves to try and understand what's happening in our world. I always thought of our district as being innovative. We've never been followers, only leaders. We became a 1:1 district with Chromebooks before most. We became certified in ALICE before most. We've always taken the first step before schools around us so we could be ahead of the game to provide the best for our students. Now we're faced with another opportunity to lead, to be different and veer away from these districts throwing students in schools to make breeding grounds for the virus. The numbers show that young people may not be affected by the virus, but what about my family? What about your family? Don't they matter too? Am I supposed to take the chance I could bring this virus home to wife? What if I wanted to see my parents and gave it to them? Stop thinking about the lives of staff and students. Start thinking of the possibility of our family members catching and dying of this virus. If you want to bring back students in-person for their social and emotional health, please consider what their emotional health will look like after a death in the family from COVID-19.</p>
Katelyn Schaefer	<p>I am concerned that the community does not realize we cannot give new instruction during the in person learning with the hybrid schedule. It is purely meant for review, students to ask questions from remote, and replicate things we cannot do at home (ie- labs, band practice together, etc.). This is an important piece of the puzzle that we need to communicate.</p>

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Peggy Halik	<p>TCD has offered a hybrid model. Regardless of whether DGS offers the hybrid model recommended by Dr. Hiele at the July 27 meeting (which I support) or a remote only model, TCD students have the ability to attend in-person at TCD all five days of the week. However, it has to be approved by the home school. I would like assurance that my son will be able to attend TCD in person even if DGS is remote. I do not see a reasonable way in which a student can attend an automotive program from their home. I would also like to know whether DGS will provide transportation to and from TCD. If the student is responsible for his/her own transportation, will CSD99 allow students to drive and park at TCD? Below is an excerpt from the communication I received from TCD.</p> <p>TCD Description: 1. Schedule—Our Plan is being labeled a Hybrid model in an effort to accommodate all of the hybrid models from our sending schools. TCD will offer In-Person schooling 5 days a week. This means that there is a possibility of students having daily attendance in their program in person all 5 days in a week. There is a caveat to this as we have some programs that will have to have a limit on daily in-person attendance due to capacity restrictions in the program spaces (based on IDPH and ISBE guidelines). We will also be providing remote instruction for students who cannot attend TCD all 5 days as well. In order to follow the guidelines for social distancing, we will work with each high school to determine if we need to adjust processes and procedures for the days, any school will be allowing students to attend in-person.</p> <p>A. All Choices for your students' schedules must be coordinated through their home school. This means if you have chosen an online only option with your child's home school and still want them to attend in-person classes at TCD that is a possibility that must be worked out through the home school. The same goes for students attending on remote learning days for the hybrid model their home school is offering. Below are the choices that must be worked out with the home school:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Online at the home school and in-person at TCD2. In-person at home school and online at TCD3. Online at home school and online at TCD4. In-person at homeschool and in-person at TCD <p>B. Any transportation questions are to be directed to the sending schools.</p> <p>I. Certain schools do not allow students to drive to TCD on their own. The privilege to drive and park is determined by the homeschool. Parents are also welcome to drop off and pick up their students if they choose.</p>
Jena Abrahamsen	<p>Please consider an all remote plan that will provide for the most consistency for our students. Public health concerns must be placed in the highest priority given that our community will suffer, most likely low income families who have proven to be most susceptible to contacting COVID. No one created this pandemic, but it defines who we are by how we respond. Our students must see that we value them and their families first and foremost.</p>
Madeline Naisbitt	<p>As a senior at Downers Grove North, I support the Modified Hybrid Schedule and encourage the Board to continue its emphasis on the health and safety of D99 students and staff. Lives should not be put at risk to slightly improve my education.</p>
Amy Laverty	<p>Please reconsider the Hybrid option for the majority of students in District 99. The Hybrid option that the Superintendent and administration developed was a perfect solution for those who are in favor of remote learning and those who desire in person, structured learning for their children. Please review all scientific data especially the research indicating the very low risk of children in the age group 0-20. The Hybrid option is the optimal choice for academic success and takes the health & safety of teachers and students very seriously. If there are funds needed for PPE or safety equipment then please address that issue with the tax payees who are willing to help subsidize the district to enhance the safety measures for those who are ready to learn and teach in person.....Thank you!</p> <p>Amy Laverty Parent of incoming Freshman DGS</p>

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Nicole Stopoulos	<p>I would like to thank the Board, Superintendent Thiele and the task force for all the work in support of our children's education. I would like to express my support for the proposed learning plan that Superintendent Thiele has presented - which includes a hybrid model be implemented as soon as possible. I fully support the hybrid model and believe it is the best option for students, teachers, administrators and the community.</p> <p>I urge the board to fully support and adopt the recommendation of Superintendent Thiele.</p>
Michelle Larson	<p>How does the current plan set our kids up for success by equipping our kids with the experiences and knowledge they need to get to the colleges of their choice? Does DGN plan on amending the school schedule to complete a normal year of curriculum? How does this compare to neighboring schools and why does DGN have different needs/ standards for our kids?</p>
Sean Lovelace	<p>Hello, my name is Sean Lovelace and I am a teacher at DGS and I have previously made some statements to the board in regards to the 2020-2021 school year. At DGS, our PBIS initiative is the Mustang Way, which is to be Responsible, Respectful, and Engaged, today I will focus on respect. I have respect for the work that our Superintendent put in this summer in not only our district but also providing guidance and structure to many other districts in DuPage County and throughout IL. I respect the D99 school board for their continued work in building a strong educational foundation for both DGS and DGN and how they have always put the student's best interests in mind with their actions. I respect the work of the DGEA this summer and in spite of many other unions across the state, they did not recommend a specific plan of action for the 2020-2021 school year, instead they chose to focus on the rights of their respective members and ensuring that it was indeed a safe learning environment for the staff and students. I respect the community, who has let their voice be heard throughout this process and as we can see today not everyone in the community is on the same page but their passion for their children's education is evident. I respect my fellow D99 staff members, who chose the profession of teaching to help students build a better future. Many of these members have legitimate medical concerns that put them at high risk in the current global pandemic. Most of all I respect our students, who have remained resilient in a tumultuous time that has turned some of their formative years upside down and could have a lasting impact on them for years to come. While I have been a proponent of in-person learning and our hybrid schedule, I respect the views of others and have continued to listen and examine all sides of the situation. This is what we teach our students to do and this is what we must do together going forward, respectfully. District 99 is an unbelievable community to be a part of, we must move forward with respect to come to the best possible resolution given our current situation.</p> <p>Respectfully, Sean Lovelace Special Services Teacher/Head Wrestling Coach Downers Grove South High School</p>

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Rebecca Schmakel	<p>mind, please take into consideration what those families want for their children. The hybrid model provides that choice! Why am I for the hybrid model: I have a Freshman and a Senior this year. Starting with my Freshman- the Spring was a very sad time for me as I watched my straight 'A' student who had NEVER missed an assignment before and that strives to be an over achiever plummet in every class. NOT just 1 class, EVERY class! His anxiety spiked, his worry about failing was constant, and he became depressed and withdrawn.....not just from his school work but in every aspect of his everyday life! This is a child who has been seeing counselors since grade school and meeting with social workers to stay on track and focused. He had finally gotten to a 'good' place with himself when everything shattered around him March 13th. I am a VERY involved parent, as well as an educator myself. I had his school email synced to mine and I was overwhelmed by the number of messages recieved daily (at all hours of the day and night). Emails stating what was due, what was late, what was incorrect, what was incomplete, upcoming assignments, verge of not passing, etc.....HOW DEPRESSING for a child that is already at risk and struggling. This year he is enrolled in 2 honors classes, Spanish 2 and the AVID program! I am extremely proud of this great accomplishment of going into his Freshman year with such a challenging schedule and he LOOKED forward to it. Now He and I both fear the devastation that this schedule will have on his social/emotional well being. This is a schedule that he absolutely could conquer in person but it will set him up for failure remote. Do I regress my child with what he is capable of accomishing because of Remote learning? That answer is yes, because his well being means so much more than a grade. I will not be home to encourage him to work on his assignments as for my school is going back in person. I can almost guarantee that he will fail without having a support system at home with him. This is HEARTBREAKING for me because he is capable of such greatness in school. My son has been dreading going back to school all summer long with the fear of it being remote. Kids are supposed to enjoy their summer vacation. What programs and services are going to be put in place for children like my son? How are they going to be attended to and assisted to stay on track? They are actually going to be graded now, not just pass/fail which will add even more stress! I fear that WE, as a community, will deal with WAY more cases of drug use, suicide, etc. staying home than cases of covid.....SCIENCE and statistics already are proving this to be true.</p> <p>Onto my Senior. All the opportunities that COULD await him this year, everything a Senior looks forward to upon entering the doors of their high school the very 1st day of Freshman year. My son has been so excited to be part of the TCD welding program as he is set on having a career in the trades. He will miss out on this amazing opportunity if full remote. Students enrolled in TCD have to follow their program in suit with their home school. How is my son going to learn welding remotely? This is a program that highly requires the hands on experience in order to learn the trade. This is his future!! Will the school some how be able to work with TCD to allow them to attend their program in person while taking their classes at DGS remotely? How are these students going to be advocated for? As for remote learning outside of TCD for my Senior, in the Spring it worked well for him and he actually was able to raise his grades working at his own pace. Remote works well for some but not all! This is why there NEEDS to be a choice so that families can CHOOSE what IS BEST for their children! The education system is put in place to assist children in reaching their full potential while working within their zone of proximal development. Taking the choice away DOES NOT help them to reach their full potential but the opposite....set them up for failiure! Not everything is a one size fits all-there are various learning styles that teachers are supposed to accommodate and adapt to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Visual (Spatial)Aural (Auditory-Musical)Verbal (Linguistic)Physical (Kinesthetic)
Molly O'Toole	<p>I believe that we should give students an opportunity to meet with their teachers in person. The option to opt-out gives parents a choice, however if we go straight to remote the parents who want to send their kids to school do not have a choice. Some students depend on school to escape households that may not be an ideal learning environment. Students may also depend on in person learning to keep their mental health in a stable condition. Many schools such as Naperville and Lyons Township are going back full time, with A and B groups and they are significantly bigger than North and South. I believe that the health of our teachers and students is important, but I also believe that we should give the hybrid schedule a try and if it does not work out, we can go to fully remote. Going fully remote limits our capability to see what works and what does not for North and South. We need to give it a chance to keep students safe and mentally healthy, and give students the needed in person interaction of meeting their teachers and learning in person. I know many people who have struggled with e-learning because they need that in person learning. People have a chance to opt-out, and I believe we need to keep both options open to balance the many students and different view points.</p>

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Kerry Mooney	I know there is a lot of fear and anxiety regarding returning to school, but I ask that we return to the hybrid schedule as soon as possible. Or at least give parents the choice. Obviously it's what is best for the students, as we have seen depression rates in children rise and e- learning fail them in their need for education. Our children are the most precious beings in the world to us as parents. If we follow the requirements outlined by the Illinois health department we should feel confident that we can keep everyone safe. This virus is not going away- we have to learn to live with it by following these guidelines, and getting these students as much in- person instruction as possible.
Yvonne Busdeker	I would like to know what the plans are for September? Are we able to go to remote learning? When will this be decided?
Yvonne Busdeker	What proof do we have that hybrid learning is better than the spring? What is different? What has been implemented? What are the checks and balances? How do we know our children will not continue to suffer under remote learning?
Heather Frank	With the modified IHSA schedule, many sports now extend into/conflict with schedules school trips. Can a modification to the trip dates be made?
Ann Pogorelec	I have several questions in regard to remote learning. First, why re-evaluate after 2 weeks? What is going to change in 2 weeks? We all know teachers will not return to the classroom despite a DuPage County positivity rate of less than 4%. Secondly, exactly how will remote learning be different than last Spring? Will teachers be required to teach from their classrooms (similar to other districts) or will they continue to teach from home with many distractions? With no students in the buildings, teachers should be able to socially distance themselves. Will teachers be teaching full periods, posting web videos is NOT teaching? Not responding to students emails until late evening or the next day is not acceptable. Thirdly, how will you evaluate if remote teaching is working and how will it be determined if teachers need to be held accountable for not giving an adequate amount of time and effort to the students? Next, how will the state mandated SAT be given to our seniors? Finally, will state approved sports now be canceled? With only 2 weeks until the start of school, why should parents trust that a remote plan has been well thought out and why should we trust that teachers that did not act professionally last Spring will do so now?
Jenny Kay	Board Members, Let's be proactive and realize there are more coronavirus cases in our county now and the positivity rate is higher now than in the spring and keep learning to strictly remote with no sports and help keep our community healthy and safe. Why send students back to substitute teachers for a week to only keep them home for two weeks. The teachers realize it's dangerous to attend school, students will not even be meeting whom should really be their teacher in many cases. Remote learning is the only safe answer for the first quarter of the school year!
Sarah Thompson	My daughter is an incoming freshman. She is very diligent student, but e-learning this spring was exceptionally difficult for many reasons. I felt she got very little out of e-learning, but not for lack of trying. It was very frustrating for her and our family. I think there is great importance in starting the year in-person, even if only for one week. I have feel the administration has a well-thought out plan that follows the national, state and local regulations.
Teresa Schindler	I see that the district is planning for mostly, if not all remote learning for the upcoming school year. My questions relate to that plan: -How is the district going to engage parents in the daily/weekly oversight to ensure students are making progress? -Who is going to be monitoring classes to confirm the quality of learning is meeting district standards? -What efforts will be made to educate parents to the learning platforms being used by the district? -How frequently will the district re-evaluate the possibility of returning to in-person learning? -What recourse do parents have if they feel a class/teacher is not benefiting their child's learning? Especially with classes that are difficult to teach without hands on learning?
Stephan Upshaw	In person education is vitally important, but agree we need to do so safely. We trust you to do the right thing, but please keep in mind the importance of in person learning.

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Tiffany Myers	<p>As a parent and community member, I appreciate the time and energy you have and continue to spend as we prepare for the upcoming school year. I imagine that you have been immersed in much information, received many questions, and fielded quite a bit of feedback recently regarding the best approach to learning this year.</p> <p>When Covid-19 hit Illinois in March, our state and local government, as well as CSD99, responded to the new pandemic quickly and with reverence for the health and safety of our students, teachers, and school staff and administration, sending students home and settling in for remote learning for the rest of the school year.</p> <p>While we had all hoped this pandemic would be behind us by the start of the 2020-21 school year, the reality is the virus is here for the foreseeable future. Realizing this, a push for in-person, or even hybrid learning is untenable at this point. We don't have the capability to provide a safe experience for the students, the teachers, the staff and their extended communities, and so far nothing points to the possibility that there will be impending scientific or medical breakthroughs that will change this before the end of the semester. It's evident we have an extremely capable team of educators, counselors, and administrators who can be counted on to engineer a sophisticated and rigorous remote plan for our students. As much as we all want to return to a life of normalcy, including sending our kids to traditional in-person learning so they can get the most comprehensive educational experience we know how to present at this point, it is simply not the best, safest, or most viable option during a continuing pandemic. Remote learning remains the safest course of action until risks to students, faculty, and staff abate.</p> <p>For some, a bout with Covid-19 appears to be mild, or asymptomatic altogether. For others, the initial sickness means months of hospitalization, an attack on multiple systems in the body, and the potential for lifelong health conditions and impairment.</p> <p>Recent articles have revised the previously thought notion that children simply aren't affected by this virus, or if they get it, they're asymptomatic. We're seeing higher levels of virus in nasal swabs of children. We're finding that as teens and young adults work and socialize, they are bringing the virus home to older, more medically vulnerable family members. And we are even seeing evidence of the virus taking a toll on children, teens, and young adults in devastating ways we didn't know possible (inflammation disorders, hospitalizations, strokes, etc).</p> <p>As we all know, our students don't exist in a vacuum. They interact with parents, teachers, co-workers, siblings, extended family, and more. To downplay or completely dismiss their risk to COVID-19 without taking into consideration the impact of their exposure on the surrounding community is negligent.</p> <p>The fact is, this is a novel virus and as such, there is so much we just don't know. Medicine and science are researching, tracking, and collecting data as quickly as possible and as such, are continually revising our understanding of how this virus works and how it affects all people — adults and children alike.</p>
Maggie Camporese	<p>The District 99 community and Board of Education should know that no high risk staff member has any idea the status of their accommodation requests that were submitted in Mid-July. For example, I submitted an accommodation request on July 15th and was told I would hear back no later than the end of the month. When I contacted HR Friday 7/31 to find out why I haven't heard back, I was told that the district was finally meeting today, 8/3, to determine if "they can honor" the accommodation requests of their most vulnerable staff members. In the same email, I was told, with less than a week until we are to report to school, that "somebody will contact you next week." It's completely unclear who is a part of the decision process and why it has taken so long to determine something so important. However, one thing is clear: our most vulnerable staff members seem to be an afterthought in our district's reopening plans.</p>

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Tyler Pappas	<p>Dear Board and Dr. Thiele,</p> <p>Thank you for the hard work and dedication to our students. I am a parent of a rising sophomore at North.</p> <p>My question is this: Has there been any consideration to having teachers report alone, without students, to their respective classrooms for the purposes of teaching a full schedule five days per week? I've not seen/read about this on any of the outlets the board has posted on. This would create an infinitely safer environment, allow the teachers access to all the tools they need and keep our students on a rigorous schedule.</p> <p>Not unlike in-person instruction, each student would have only a few minutes between each class thus keeping them engaged for a full school day. As a parent of a student who thrives when challenged, my fear is without 5 day per week full days, my student and many others will fall behind.</p> <p>I have family/friends in other parts of the country who have used the above model back in March of this year when the stay at home order was enacted. They report that the outcomes were terrific and their children excelled. Their respective schools are preparing this model for the fall as well.</p> <p>As Zoom seems to be the platform of choice, is free and easily accessible, it's the obvious option here. If Zoom is not secure enough for the district there are dozens of other platforms available that can be utilized simply and implemented with little effort.</p> <p>Keeping our students safe, engaged and motivated can be tricky during the best of scenarios. With remote 5 day per week full days, they'd have a better chance of grasping the information being taught and retaining it. It also creates a more consistent schedule for families and students to work around.</p> <p>I urge the board to consider this option. Thanks again for your time and consideration, Tyler Pappas</p>
Natasa Bogdanovic	<p>With the possibility of returning to school with the hybrid learning plan I have a few questions. What are the number of students per class? Are the students with a new group of kids for each class? With having 8 periods I would like to know how many students my daughter will come in contact with. I have sent this same question prior in the other forms for the board meetings and have never gotten a reply.</p>
Georgia Kaempf	<p>I support hybrid and I know my son is looking forward to in person classes with his instructors. Some kids need direct instructions from their teachers and my son is one of them. I know this is not a good fit for all children but I do support the schools original option of hybrid for nine weeks.</p>
Holly Kaczmarek	<p>Hello, speaking towards alphabetical learning again I do think that the activities of students outside of school should be taken into consideration also. Me, being a senior, I have not been in contact with anyone going into younger years since the closing. So I don't think it would be wise to now expose me to students that I haven't seen. I can speak for a lot of my friends also claiming that we have not been in contact with anyone younger and that is what has kept us safe and able to continue to see each other during this pandemic. Also, since there is a possibility of sports continuing that will also be a separation of older ages with the younger ages. However, if we were to do hybrid alphabetical then that separation would be no longer safe. I do think that all students activities should be taken into consideration and something should be thought of that keeps students of the same ages together.</p>

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Debbie Jensen	If the board decides we are going fully remote for an extended period of time, I would like some assurance that my son, who is an incoming freshman, will receive a proper education by all of his teachers. Our experience at Herrick last year was unacceptable. Simply giving students homework, without any lessons and 1 or 2 25minute time periods per week for questions is shameful.
Julie Wheaton	I prefer the remote learning. It's too much of a risk sending students back at this time. If given the opportunity one of my boys wants to do the hybrid the other one does not.
Alicia Cecconi	It's imperative these kids get back in school, to have the support and normalcy only in person teaching and socializing provides. Remote learning only works for very short terms and has already run its course.
Dawn Molina	<p>I am in support of a hybrid option for my student. The benefit of my student to returning to the classroom and making a personal connection with her teacher and classmates will result in a stronger foundation should we need to go to fully remote learning for a period of time.</p> <p>Everything we do carries a risk in life. With the well thought out plan and precautions that Admin laid out a couple of weeks ago, I feel that risk is greatly lowered. High School students can understand the risk and the reward for making this choice to attend school in person during this time. Our student has expressed a strong desire to attend and make those connections in person.</p> <p>This semester she will be taking on more difficult classes. The stress of having to do this type of learning from home can be overwhelming. It's not new news to say that the spring remote learning was far from adequate, while some teachers did handle their material much better than others. We are told this remote session will look different...how different? What's the plan? When will a return to school be assessed and what criteria have to be met for that to happen?</p> <p>While we deeply empathize with the teachers and staff who are concerned about returning to school, I still feel a hybrid option is our best bet for OUR student. The revised plan sent out on Friday 7/31 is not adequate. What's the point of meeting in person for 1 week (of a hybrid plan) if the kids are going to be meeting substitute teachers? I feel that will only cause more confusion and anxiety.</p> <p>Can we consider moving the start date back until adequate staffing is in place? While I understand that this would impact next years end of school date, we'd rather have that than start this year with more uncertainty than is necessary.</p> <p>Please, we urge you to reconsider.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration, Dawn Molina</p>
Katherine Urban	I am saddened to read Dr. Thiele's opening comments. Our community must come together now more than ever to respect differences and give each other some grace. I sincerely want to thank Dr. Thiele, the board members, and everyone who touches our students. These are unprecedented times and as a parent I have thought to myself more times than I can count that there just isn't a "right" answer. I am grateful for the work you have all done to give those of us who wish to send our students to school on a modified plan the opportunity to do so. I support the hybrid model, and I hope and believe in the ability of our community to unite and support each other in our individual wishes to study in person or remotely.
Mary Spano	Dear Board Members, please understand in person learning in a Hybrid setting will benefit many of the students. They need this. So much has changed for the kids over the last several months that moving to fully remote from the start would be devastating. If the numbers increase and we need to move to fully remote at least the kids will know their teachers and be more comfortable in being placed in remote learning. Please also consider allowing practices to happen for sports. This is needed as well. The kids understand social distancing and mask wearing so please consider Hybrid and allowing practices. I hope we can stay in Hybrid until in person fully can return. Remote learning is not the way to go. Thank you for your time. Mary Spano parent of incoming freshman and varsity dance team.

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Kathy Johnston	<p>Dr. Thiele and Board of Education - First, thank you for your continued efforts in navigating through all of the details. We all know how many hours you have dedicated to finding the solution to every issue that has been faced from last Spring, then through honoring the seniors and providing the virtual graduation, to now the reopening of school this fall. I would like to only emphasize tonight that Dr. Thiele and the administration have continued to revamp the recommendations as new things arise and they continue to find answers when there are none that exists. Please use the administration's recommendations and vote for what those are as we tackle these next steps. We trust that they have the expertise and the backing of the ISBE and the health department to do what make sense academically, socially and from a health standpoint to provide our kids with the best solution in a bad situation. Again, thank you all for your time.</p>
Dave Zajack	<p>District 99 Board Members,</p> <p>With our daughter entering her Senior year, we feel it is in her best interest to have as much in-person time with teachers as possible. We understand that there are risks involved with bringing students and faculty back together, but we feel the benefits outweigh the risks especially after assessing the disappointing experience she had with remote learning last spring.</p> <p>The hybrid plan proposed by Dr. Thiele seems to balance the risk/reward concerns and properly supports in-person teaching with strong safety guidelines. This option also allows families a fully remote option should they not feel comfortable with in-person training.</p> <p>Why would we go to a fully remote option when the hybrid plan supports both?</p> <p>Lastly, if the full hybrid plan cannot be supported, we would hope other options can be explored that include some in-person learning opportunities. The children cannot afford to risk any further impact to their educational needs.</p> <p>Thank you, Laura & Dave Zajack</p>
Amy Cervantes	<p>I greatly support remote learning and all the teachers working so hard to be able to provide our high school students an educational semester. I would have greatly wanted for my son to attend in person class but we are in the middle of this horrible pandemic and everyone's health safety is and should be a priority. Thank you again for pushing for remote learning!</p>
JENNIFER BLACK	<p>I'd like to know how you plan to address remote learning with both kids that need to be at TCD to do their vocational training as well as kids with 504 plans. Remote learning was HORRIBLE for my child with a 504 and it needs to be addressed. Only one of his teachers made sure he received the accommodations he was supposed to have during the previous remote learning session. TCD is open for in-person learning and my child needs to be there as do all the other kids learning vocational skills</p>
Keri Konopiots	<p>I would like to know #1 - if there was a qualifying process for Teachers to opt out of in person learning. I find it hard to believe that there are so many teachers with medical issues that would prevent them from teaching in person. So many that there are not enough teachers to teach in district 99?</p> <p>#2- I would like to know if the board has considered all of the other issues that these students and children are going to experience due to these decisions. The youth deserves better. I felt that the plan was fair, safe and well thought through. I appreciate the time and efforts put behind the options. It is a shame the majority of teachers and now the board are not willing to follow through. Our children need to be in school and not in front of computers five days a week. It is unfair and they will be behind nationally. These years are very important to the students. Please help them excel and not leave them behind.</p>

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Kris Stevenson	<p>I would like to commend the administrators, staff, teachers and school board members for trying to discern the best path forward in these uncertain and unsettling times, one which takes into account the best interests of both educators, staff and students as well as the wide range of community input. This is a near-Herculean task and regardless of where different members of our community stand on the return to school, I would hope that we can all appreciate the hard work which has been poured into this decision. Our family supports the hybrid model, recognizing that what seems to be the best option for us certainly may not be for another student or staff member. We are grateful for the valiant attempts by the committee to provide educational equity in the options and look forward to the day when it will be safe for all of our students and staff to be back at school, face to face, without masks and learning with and from one another. Until then, let's try to remember that we are a community and we are at our very best when we are kind and support each other in our educational choices, working for the best outcome for all involved.</p>
R	<p>I absolutely agree that in-person learning is superior to e-learning. However, there is a PANDEMIC, these are not normal times and sacrifices need to be made. The risk simply does not outweigh the reward in this case. This is my daughter's senior year and it is heartbreaking that she would be missing out on so many milestones and things that she has looked forward to for so long. With that being said, it would be selfish and extremely irresponsible as well as sort sighted to put things like "senior milestones" such as prom ahead of containing a pandemic. We should not be willing to sacrifice the lives of those in our community. It is also unfair to ask teachers to risk their lives/health and those of their families when there is an option that will keep everyone safe. E-learning, while not preferred, is a way to keep us all safe. There will definitely be missed experiences, and it is definitely not fair to our kids who have worked so hard, but it is the right thing to do. There is no doubt, we will be giving this virus the oxygen needed to spread if we pack our children into school buildings. Our response to this pandemic has been full of half measures and those not willing to do what needs to be done. Now is the time that we need to come together and do the hard things and to make sacrifices to protect the most vulnerable.</p>
Finley Family	<p>Our family favors the hybrid plan of action..</p> <p>Given the fact that you are providing an opt out in person learning why take away the hybrid option. It is so important for our kids to attend in person learning socially, mentally physically and emotionally just to give them a sense of stability. I do understand the concern of teachers and staff but I believe they can be safe guarded with proper measures.</p> <p>I respect the many essential workers that have put themselves out there for our well being; medical staff, grocery workers, auto workers etc... the list goes on and on. I just feel that it's our teachers turn. Our children need them to continue to grow!</p> <p>Please let our kids get back into the classroom!</p>
Sylvia Marten	<p>I would like to extend my support for the hybrid plan, with a portion of the school week conducted in person. The safety precautions that have been outlined give me much comfort. As long as we can do it safely, I feel some structured in-person social interaction with teachers, staff and other students will be very helpful for our students as we all continue on this COVID journey together.</p> <p>A few additional suggestions to set the students and teachers up for success during the remote learning time might include as much structure/routine as possible around "in class" and outside of class time. For example, facilitating (or helping students/parents facilitate) the formation of study groups and project groups who need to work together on group assignments. Maybe that is done through Zoom breakout rooms during a set time of the day, or a set time that the students must be accountable for on their own. Perhaps a student team member is assigned to "own" the meeting on each day - e.g., they send out the invite, they summarize the key takeaways, etc. Also, perhaps some groups can meet in-person, with an adult chaperone and following safety guidelines.</p> <p>Another idea is helping the students find or develop club/athletic options that they can do remotely together to replace the in-person ones that aren't feasible right now.</p> <p>Thank you for all that you do and continue to do for our students!</p>

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Lisa Martello	<p>With the increasing number of positive Covid 19 tests as well as the number of people traveling to and from Illinois from hot spots such as Florida, I feel remote learning only is the safest choice. My son Tim who will be a junior at DGN will be learning remotely. My husband has a history of heart issues and blood clots and I help take care of my 82 year old mother with COPD. The hybrid plan is not worth the risk to my family. Thank you.</p>
Josie R Carparelli	<p>I have 3 teenage students that attend DGN and I would like to support hybrid learning for my kids. In addition, I asked my kids what they would prefer and all 3 of them said they would want to have to hybrid schedule because it would be more beneficial based on their experience with Covid e-learning. Thank you for the opportunity to voice myself and my kids/students opinions.</p>
Bob Kearney	<p>In my opinion, our school board and others around the country are way too optimistic about the prospects for a vaccine. We cannot afford to wait for help that may not be coming at all. It is a very realistic possibility that there may never be a vaccine for Covid-19.</p> <p>If it is not coming, are we prepared to dispense with in-person high school on a permanent basis in Downers Grove?</p> <p>I feel our students are very unfortunate to have chromebooks and other technology available to them that allows many people, including the school board, to delude themselves into thinking that our children will be receiving an adequate education under remote learning. Even if the teachers all do a fantastic job of improving the remote learning curriculum, it will still fall well short of what DGN/DGS students and parents have come to expect.</p> <p>At the straw poll on 7/27, one of the board members mentioned that she did not want the responsibility of voting for the hybrid plan knowing that someone could die. I sympathize, but her unwillingness to bear that responsibility comes at a very large cost to the students of this district. I don't mean to be disrespectful, but if you don't want the responsibility of making a non-zero risk decision, perhaps you should consider opting out by abstaining or resigning.</p> <p>I was very pleased to hear last week that a majority of the teachers were in favor of the hybrid plan. Does the board think they know better than the parents, the teachers, the administrators and the students? Why?</p>
Robert Benton	<p>Most teachers, parents, and students supported the hybrid plan over the 100% remote plan. In order to support a full remote learning plan, during the 2 weeks (or longer) of full remote learning, I believe many parents would support the following:</p> <p>Teachers teach their classes at their regular times and from the rooms they would normally teach them were students in school and students attend each remote class via the districts web conferencing solution.</p> <p>This maximizes student / teacher interaction (5 days per week, 50 minutes per class), limits work from home distractions that might occur at a teacher's home while they are leading a class, and keeps students engaged daily on a basis that closely approximates the engagement level they would have if they were attending classes 100% in person.</p> <p>Other school districts are taking this approach and anything less than this level of student / teacher engagement feels inadequate.</p> <p>As a parent of a Special Needs teenager at Transitions 99, I do hope the previously proposed hybrid plan of 4 1/2 days per week of in person learning is still the plan going forward. This population DESPERATELY needs in person learning over remote learning.</p>

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Zachary Goodman	<p>To the Board members of D99, my name is Zachary Goodman I my child is a senior at DGN. I am wring to express my view that school should start remotely, without any in-person even for 1 week. I feel this is the best option that will protect our students and teachers. In recent days, I have read about many instances where schools reopened and case and exposure occurred very quickly. Examples of this can be found in Indiana and Georgia. The simple fact that enough teacher are opting out for medical or other reasons, which will leave D99 critically short of teachers is the 2nd reason. Cases and positivity rate are also increasing in Illinois, including DuPage County. I do not believe the potential impacts to the health of our students, staff and community warrant in-person teaching until the spread of the virus is contained. I truly believe the health of our students and staff should be the only consideration in this decision. Thank you for allowing me to express my views on this matter and I hope everyone stays healthy and safe. Please make the best decision you can for our schools and community.</p>
Laura M Smith	<p>I cannot begin to tell you how stressful the last week has been watching our student's education be treated with such disregard. The flippant remarks made by board members regarding issues such as mental health, the equity of online learning and parental concerns do not belong at any school board meeting and if you do not understand why, then you have no business being on any school board. I would like to remind everyone when the district needed the community's support to pass the referendum for school improvements the community stepped up to make sure those improvements would be possible because we understood it would help the community as a whole. Two years later the school community finds itself asking the school district, teachers and Board of Education to step up and support hybrid learning because that is what the SCIENCE supports and the district, teachers and Board of Education decide that its student's education is not worthy of such support. To make matters worse we are than presented with a "new proposal" that does not lay out a clear path for our students for the fall. I have reread the proposal several times and am still trying to understand what exactly is the point of 1 week of hybrid classes if our teachers will not be present and our students will be meeting with substitutes? Why even bother? Dr. Thiele, I realize that you were probably as caught off guard by the straw poll as the rest of the community but why not take notice of what other districts are doing and push back the start of the school year so a quality learning plan can be formulated because what has been presented is far from that. The community and more importantly our students deserve better.</p>
Paula Duellman	<p>I support the District 99 Hybrid plan for in person learning</p>
Kristina Paschall	<p>Dear Board of Directors and Dr. Thiele,</p> <p>Although I planned on writing a note today regardless, I am glad I had an opportunity to read Dr Thiele's letter that he will read this evening.</p> <p>I am not sure I have read a more heartfelt, thoughtful and eloquent letter than this one I read today. I certainly haven't come close to writing one half as eloquent, as evidenced by my inability to help my son with his challenging English courses...forgive my attempt to add just a little levity or humor (we all need it).</p> <p>I support Dr. Thiele in his plan 100%, including the first week of hybrid, the 2 weeks of remote work and then a hope pending staffing issue resolution, a plan to go back to hybrid. I applaud the commitment to equity for others who choose to be remote. I am a strong proponent of the hybrid model, but I submit here a call to unified action of our entire community to do whatever we can to ensure this equity and success of both options. You have many people that are willing to assist either from a financial or service perspective. When asked, this community delivers. I encourage you to ask us, however creative an ask it may be over the course of this school year.</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts!</p> <p>Kristina Paschall, mom of DGS junior</p>

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Erin Kohlsaot	<p>Thank you to the board for all that you have done during this very stressful time. I am a Health and Physical Education teacher. I would ask that you please continue to consider the health and safety of our students, teachers and staff by voting for the remote option. Unfortunately, going back to school this year is not the way we usually think about it. Yes, students need emotional support and socialization, but this is not what the classroom will look like during a pandemic. The students will be far apart from each other, wearing masks and will not be able to work collaboratively with each other. These are things that teachers can do through synchronous online teaching and as a bonus the students will be able to see their teacher's and their peers' faces. We have so many great technology tools available to us that would allow for that collaborative environment online and teachers are able to do this in small groups or as a whole class. We do not have a lot of time left before the school year begins and I know it would be very beneficial for teachers to be able to prepare as soon as possible for their new teaching environment. Please vote for the remote option to promote learning and health and to minimize the anxiety and fears that many people have about being in contact with so many different individuals during this unprecedented time.</p>
Jennifer Peckenpaugh	<p>We are hoping that our kids can attend the shortened hybrid in-school option if the board decides to allow this. Most importantly, we wanted to express our sincere appreciation for all of the board members, educators and staff involved in this very difficult decision making process. There is no perfect solution, and so many factors to be considered. We do not take for granted the access to top rate education our family is blessed to receive and will trust that the administrators and teachers will deliver the best education possible in any given situation. Whatever is decided, our family will fully support. Thank you all for your dedication to the students and community of D99.</p>
Jennifer Johnson	<p>I don't feel the board is listening at all to the parents or students. We want our students in school. Remote learning is not acceptable! You say you don't have the staff. Why is that? How is it all other people have gone back to work but teachers don't have to? What makes them different? It is the schools responsibility to provide our kids with a good education and remote isn't it. How do you expect kids to want to learn and do school work when their own teachers won't go back to work? Really? You are setting the kids up to fail. Your school relays on community support. You do remote and you will lose that support. Hybrid!!! Kids need to get back in school. These kids need to feel hope and a sense of normalcy.</p>
Amy Kaczmarek	<p>I work in a dental office so I am very familiar with PPE and covid precaution. In addition to the kids being in the classroom, they could each carry their own spray bottle of hydrochlorous acid. spray their area and themselves. it's an all natural antibacterial agent and very safe, even on human skin. The products to make this is readily available and fairly inexpensive. We need to trust the students will do what needs to be done and certainly the teachers. somehow, i feel the students need some interaction and take this responsibility to protect themselves. I hope the board chooses to let the senior class interact and learn in person, to some extent. Thank you.</p>

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<p>Jennifer Sickel, DVM</p>	<p>1. "the available evidence provides reason to believe that in-person schooling is in the best interest of students, particularly in the context of appropriate mitigation measures similar to those implemented at essential workplaces." This is a quote directly from the CDC statement dated July 23, 2020 in reference to the importance of students returning to school. The statement goes on to highlight why in person learning is so important and why it should not be feared. Why then has District 99 decided that a total of 8 hours and 40 minutes (split between 2 days) per week is sufficient for our students when normally there are 32.5 hours on campus per week. This accounts for only 26% of the time they would normally be in school.</p> <p>2. The hybrid model proposed at the last meeting only has students with each of their teachers for 1 class period a week since it is only a half day and periods 1-4 are Tuesday and periods 5-8 are Thursday. The barrier to having 2 full days of in person learning is lunch. Why is it not possible to consider alternate locations on campus for lunch in order to accommodate for social distancing as much as possible, such as in classrooms, large gym or field house. The state document outlining the requirements for school reopening states "Require social distancing be observed, as much as possible" recognizing the difficulties during particular instances. This would then allow for students to at least be in person with their teachers 2 days per week. Many other large suburban schools have proposed hybrid learning with students on campus for a full day.</p> <p>3. There is no way to replicate hands on lab experiences for students with remote learning for required core curriculum science classes. These experiences provide students with an invaluable learning experience.</p> <p>4. The State Superintendent has determined that Remote and Blended Remote Learning Days must ensure at least 5 clock hours of instruction or school work for each student. Evaluating the hybrid model proposed, remote learning on 2 of the week days only accounts for 2 hours. Knowing teenage mental development and mindset, how can the district recommend and expect that students will be successful with independent learning as well as include this as part of the state requirements for the 5 clock hours of instruction. This is proposed for 5 half days during the week - a total of 2 1/2 FULL SCHOOL DAYS! That is half of the school week!! This seems to be a completely unreasonable option for student growth and does not seem to be a valid learning activity to be counted toward the state requirements.</p>
<p>Kathy McGuire</p>	<p>I understand the teachers fears but they are unwarranted. I have been working as an essential worker since March and the fear is overblown. With proper PPE and cleanliness procedures it is really very safe. Safer than before actually. If Laboratories and offices are safe, then teachers will be safe as well.</p> <p>Going back only online will not be fair as wealthy parents are securing tutors to help their kids succeed and some kids can't afford this assistance. Unless the school districts make this in person on one-on-one help available, this will further increase the learning gap between poor and wealthy students.</p> <p>Some local private colleges and private highschoools have a full working staff and are opening fully in person. This will further disadvantage public highschool students who cannot afford a private education.</p> <p>I would hope that our Teachers lead by example and teach the kids outside the classroom how to live life fearlessly and meet difficult challenges head on. The kids are unnecessarily suffering mentally and physically sitting at home in isolation. This is the DG community's time of need as essential workers for our kids.</p> <p>I hope they can get over their personal challenges and fears and rejoin the other heros in our society and be the educational heros that our kids need.</p>

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Ellen Kowara	<p>Dear District 99 School Board,</p> <p>I am writing to you to beg you to approve in-person learning, the so-called "hybrid" model, for high school this year. I understand that there is a teacher shortage but I am assuming it can be solved. I have heard it said, "Why take the risk if there is a chance even one person will get sick?" That should not be a rhetorical question! There is a reason to take the risk. There are risks to not going back to school and, according to the CDC, they outweigh the risk of going back. Our children's' mental health, their academic and social development, and their prospects in the world, are all affected by keeping them out of school. I know you have received many very articulate letters with supporting data, so I will keep mine short and simple. I believe it is your duty to vote for a return to in-person learning and to fail to do so is to betray the children and families you were elected to serve.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Ellen Kowara</p>
Sharyn Serafin	<p>I have been following the Board meetings to see what the plan is for the start of school. I have a physician's letter recommending I work from home. Whoever I spoke to last Friday seemed to indicate that I should be fine if the students are not in the building. For clarification purposes, I have been social distancing. Upon returning to the building today, while there aren't many people here. There are construction people in and out of our office. I am extremely hesitant to be in the building. I am very uncomfortable being in this setting. I can perform all of my duties from home, as I did in the spring. When will I know if I will be able to work from home?</p>
Jennessa Morrison	<p>I'm a senior at DGS. I'm an Ap and honor student. This is my education not the board members. Doesn't anyone care what the students want? My junior year was greatly impacted as college planning. This year you are saying I get no in person instruction, no school activities, no dances, no anything but sit home and stare at my computer. Some teachers don't want to come back. Then why should we want to care about school? They don't. Shouldn't it go both ways? We want to be at school, learning, seeing people!!! Living! We should have a say! .</p>
Jeff Gaspar	<p>I would like to voice my opinion in favor of FULL REMOTE to begin the year and continuing through the first semester, Re-evaluated at that point based upon the COVID-19 positivity rate, testing availability, test result time and PPE availability and pricing.</p> <p>We have the most community spread of this virus in the world, due t many factors not germane to this discussion. The best way to minimize it is to limit in-person meeting and gatherings.</p> <p>It appears to me that the majority of the community members have no idea what the actual duties and responsibilities of the school board are. The board is not here to be the voice of the public, they're here to adopt polices and curriculum as proposed by the administration, driven by facts. They're also to look out for the health and welfare of students and staff. To ensure our kids get the best education within the parameters of the district budget.</p> <p>I understand people are upset and stressed and tired of the pandemic, but many seem to want kids in school "because we both work" which is the wrong reason; education as a de facto babysitter just because we have a 100+ year history in this country of 8-4 M-F school is not going to help stop virus spread nor help educate kids if several of the great teachers we have won't be there in person.</p> <p>Thanks for your time in dealing with this difficult decision!</p>

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Cinda Lester	<p>I am writing to request that you rework any current or future in-person reopening plan to provide EQUITY for all students.</p> <p>The current plan, as highlighted on the Dist99 website (https://www.csd99.org/updates/2020-21), under the FAQ, Academic Plan section includes the following text:</p> <p>How will instruction be offered to students who cannot return to school for in-person classes due to documented medical reasons?</p> <p>Students will participate in Remote Learning and will receive instructional supports based on individual student needs. What about for those who choose not to return unrelated to a documented medical reason?</p> <p>Students will participate in a Remote Learning experience. Those who opt-out of In-Person Learning will not receive the full experience of the class and will require students to be disciplined enough to stay on top of their studies independently.</p> <p>These two answers are at the root of my ENTIRE disagreement of the Hybrid plan. I'm fairly certain this is the case for MOST of the families who oppose the Hybrid plan. I have zero problem with anyone choosing to go to the Hybrid plan (with teacher support and input) - I support it for those who want it - as long as it's fair and equitable for those who choose to opt out. That is currently not the case.</p> <p>There are really THREE options in the Hybrid Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hybrid plan, attend in-person.2. Opt out of hybrid plan, attend 100% remote WITH a "documented medical reason".3. Opt out of hybrid plan, attend 100% remote WITHOUT a "documented medical reason". <p>The fact that 2 and 3 exist as separate options (instead of just "opt out") is what I find troubling.</p> <p>"Without medical reason" presumably includes ALL other excuses, like "my kids don't feel safe going to school", or "my mom has medical conditions and can't risk me bringing home COVID", etc. However, there has been no direction, or response to my prior questions, about WHAT constitutes a "medical reason", WHO will be making the determination of a valid reason, and WHO the reason is for (student only, or family within household?).</p> <p>The plan as written, with the 2 distinct opt-out categories, is discriminatory to children and families who don't want to return for any non-medical reason. This is effectively punishing students and families who aren't comfortable returning to school due to the global pandemic's rising numbers in Illinois and</p>
Rylan Gaspar	<p>I'm a senior, three sport varsity athlete, and honor roll member. I am for a full remote to start to the year. I don't want to miss out on cross country season, but I think it's best to stay remote until the healthcare crisis is under control</p>
Asa Gaspar	<p>I would choose full remote for the first quarter. Help stop the spread by keeping people apart and at home as much as possible. Sophomore, two sport athlete and 4.0 honor roll member.</p>
Marge Chesney	<p>Full remote, I live with my high school aged grandchildren and do not think it safe for them to attend school and then come home - at least without me moving out of their home.</p>
Nicole Gaspar	<p>Choose remote to begin the year, at least the first 9 weeks. Helping to stop the spread as best we, as a community can.</p>

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Gayle Wilson	<p>I was already concerned that our students are not receiving a full education this school year (or at least until such time as the kids can be in school full time again) as I believe that these kids deserve every advantage to prepare for their futures and not offering them a full day of classes five days a week (whether remote or in person) is absolutely going to find our kids falling way behind their peers. This is unacceptable to me in Downers Grove at what has always been a great high school. Now, with the looming idea of full remote learning, I am even more concerned. If the District does indeed end up full-remote, than our kids deserve a full education. Teachers should zoom their classes at the appropriate times every single day and students should be expected to attend every single day from their normal 8:00 a.m. start time until 3:20. These kids deserve to have their teachers in front of them teaching classes and answering questions so that they have every opportunity to learn and master what is being taught. Asking our kids to "learn independently" is not acceptable. What if they are not understanding a concept? What if they miss one of the concepts being taught because they are spending more than half their school days trying to figure things out for themselves. I hope you are all considering the impact this will have on our kids long term and not just in this moment when making plans for their education. Please do not allow District 99 to find itself falling to the bottom of schools for their academic reputation. We are all concerned about this virus and most of us take it seriously but I also take my child's education seriously and these are the toughest years these kids face academically and they hold the most impact for their futures and where they can go to college and then start their careers. Offering them anything less than what they deserve is unacceptable.</p>
Susan Kerr	<p>First of all let me say that I am horrified at the level of anger that has been directed towards the members of the board regarding the issue of hybrid vs. remote learning. While I too would like nothing better than to have my son experience his entire senior year at DGN "in person" - I'd rather than he and all those he comes in contact with remain safe and virus free. If that can be done in a hybrid model - terrific! If not, then so be it - we'll play the hand we're dealt. Knowing more about the availability of staff, helps me understand the difficulty you're facing about executing a hybrid vs. remote schedule. Given that as a reason why you would recommend a move from hybrid to remote, I fail to see how the staffing will change if we are able to move back to a hybrid schedule. If the missing teachers make staffing a hybrid schedule almost impossible now, what will need to change for them to comfortably return to work so that when the environment allows, we can be back in school in some way? I am also most anxious to see what a remote school week will look like for our students, acknowledging that last spring was a poor execution (through no fault of the administrators) and this fall remote learning must look very different. Thank you for your continued dedication to the education and well being of our children.</p>
Paul Grane	<p>What is the School Board's position for the children in the Special Needs Program? My son has an IEP to support a minimal amount of weekly hours for Occupational, Developmental, and Speech Therapies per week. He is not capable of handling on-line services.</p>

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Julie Rutkowski	<p>I am very saddened to learn that some adults in our community have resorted to anger and threats in response to the last Board meeting and straw vote. I absolutely do not support that behavior.</p> <p>However, I hope the Board realizes the last meeting was a HUGE disappointment to parents of the district. One Board member was drinking wine, one was falling asleep and one made extremely insensitive comments about students with mental health issues. At least one member struggled with the technology. If Board members struggle to pay attention to a short online meeting, I'm wondering how HIGH SCHOOLERS are expected to pay attention to online learning? That is just one very troubling issue.</p> <p>Also, the response to concerns about mental health were extremely insensitive. Adolescent depression, anxiety and suicide is at record highs, even before COVID caused uncertainty and isolation. Developmentally, teens are going through extreme changes in their brains. These changes cause teens to have lack of focus, problems with organization and a great need for interaction with peers. Please read Brainstorm by D. Siegel. If you understand the adolescent brain, you will understand the ESSENTIAL NEED to have in person learning. When you combine the current stress and lack of clarity regarding high school, our adolescents are at great risk for an increase in mental health issues. A flippant response to this ("go see a psychologist") is alarming. Please, please take the development of adolescent brains into consideration. And give serious consideration to the fact that social isolation is DETRIMENTAL to most teenagers.</p> <p>I stated in my previous comment to the Board how impressed I am with the hybrid model. It seems like a great plan, considering safety and the need to have some level of in person education. I obviously still think this is the best option. I understand some teachers and staff have anxiety about being in person and may have medical issues. However, our district needs to figure out a way to staff the building. There are plenty of people who are laid off and willing to work.</p> <p>I have thoughts about helping teachers and staff feel more safe in person and provide more protection. Can we provide plexiglass cubicles for the offices and classrooms (for staff)? Can we provide hospital grade air filters in as many spaces as possible? I believe our community would come together to make this happen.</p> <p>Another option I thought of: what if parent volunteers sit in the classrooms of teachers who cannot be in the building while the teacher zooms from home to the class? This would at least provide the group learning experience and an adult present to help facilitate. I know I would volunteer weekly to help make this happen! And I know many many other parents would as well.</p> <p>I hope the teachers, staff and Board can come together to do what is in the best interest of our students. High school is a tumultuous time for most teens and our students NEED you to provide the most educationally effective and developmentally appropriate plan. I believe this is the hybrid option. I also believe that if our district can provide this option, the parents will come together to provide whatever is necessary.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
Amy Devitt	<p>My question relates to the hybrid plan. What will happen when someone, teachers, staff, or students test positive with the virus. Will the school remain in hybrid stage, or shut down? How many people will need to be infected before a remote plan is implemented?</p>
Kiley Fields	<p>I want to thank the superintendent, board members and all the others at district 99 who are in the background doing the digging, asking the thought provoking questions, and looking at every possible scenario and best way forward for our kids. It may seem like a thankless job, but, appreciate you always having the best for our kids as your motivation and decision making.</p>
PJ Dufur	<p>With our 2020/2021 school year opening next week for faculty, is there any consideration of delaying the opening for students in order for teachers to collaborate and modify curriculum to best align with the decided upon reopening plan? I feel that only having 3 days to work on this, along with completion of other district professional development, there will not be sufficient time to address and modify our curriculum as it stands. Thank you.</p>

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Beth Fields	<p>I have lived and worked in District 99 for the past 20 years and have loved every minute of it. I want to return to school and teach my students in person; I miss the students and am so excited to work with the new freshman students. However, until there is a consistent decrease in numbers and positivity rates for an extended period of time, I am not comfortable returning to school. My mother has 3 serious autoimmune diseases and going back in the building means I will not be able to see my mom for the foreseeable future. A current D99 student tragically passed away this summer and it was devastating and continues to be for the entire community. Why are we purposely inviting the risk for this to happen again? Why do we have to be a test school, when many schools in the area are going remote? My message to all my students as a teacher has always been that learning is a process and can occur anywhere. Yes, it's more difficult, but it can occur. While I respect everyone's opinions on the issue, it just doesn't make sense to risk any lives at all when we can be safe and healthy and learn from home. This isn't forever, but it would ensure a safe return to school for everyone.</p>
Tina Michaels	<p>After reading Dr. Thiele's opening statement, I'm appalled that anyone would wish harm on the board, administrators, or their families. Whether a person agrees or disagrees with the decisions made by the board, there is absolutely no reason to wish anyone harm. That is unacceptable, and I apologize on behalf of the community for the behavior of these people, and thank you all for doing your jobs the best you can.</p>

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Cinda Lester	<p>Dr. Thiele and the Board of Education,</p> <p>Please see below our list of specific questions to be answered before we are able to make an informed decision about our children returning to in-person instruction (for any length of time).</p> <p>I understand that the BoE meeting and vote is tonight and some of this may be covered at that time.</p> <p>Many of these questions I've sent to you a number of times but have had no response. Some are mentioned in FAQs, but not answered specifically or completely.</p> <p>Medical vs. Non-medical</p> <p>Will there be a difference between the supports and materials provided to children opting out WITH a medical reason and those WITHOUT? Who is the medical reason for? Just the student? Those who live in the same household as the student? Others? Who will determine the validity of the medical reason? When must the medical reason be provided, and when must it be renewed? Is it "good" for the entire semester? School year?</p> <p>Absences</p> <p>Are students who are sent home (or choose to stay home) on a specific day, due to self-certification or random temperature checks, absent? Or able to be "present" from home? How will students doing 100% remote learning attendance be counted, if they are not in the classroom, and not allowed to watch the live in-person courses?</p> <p>Schedules / curriculum</p> <p>When will student schedules be released? Are there any courses that will ONLY be offered with in-person instruction? Do you anticipate losing any courses due to the inability to teach them remotely? If courses are removed / unavailable, when will students be able to select an alternate class? When will decisions be made about Drivers Ed, band, choir, dual credit, etc.?</p>
Jeff Gaspar	<p>Second comment:</p> <p>If going to a hybrid plan in September after the modified hybrid start, I would suggest waiting until September 22. That would allow 2 weeks after the Labor Day holiday weekend, where we know gatherings will occur, to identify anybody that tests positive from those gatherings.</p>
Courtney Grant	<p>I'd like to thank the superintendent, board, teachers and staff for navigating their way through this difficult process. I know that no decisions are easy and there is a downside to every option. Thank you for meeting and listening to the comments from the staff and community.</p> <p>My children have had wonderful experiences in this district since we transferred in. I am a parent of a 2018 graduate and have a senior who will be learning remotely. Though my senior's experience will be like nothing that we've been through before, I'm confident that her teachers will do all they can to make it meaningful.</p> <p>I'm proud to have been a member of the DGS community and again, thank you to the district for all that you do.</p>

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Cassandra OConnor	<p>Dear Board Members, I know that this is an exceptionally difficult task that you face in trying to figure out the best and safest course of action in determining the educational learning plan to implement for District 99. I encourage you to please revise your current proposed hybrid/remote plan options to be as equitable as possible for those that chose to opt out. You've indicated in your plan that students who themselves do not have a medical excuse to opt out, will NOT receive the same teacher support as those who are medically excused. The plan itself states "Students will participate in Remote Learning and will receive instructional supports based on individual student needs." However students who aren't medically excused "will require students to be disciplined enough to stay on top of their studies independently." Please do not permit any sort of penalty, preference or less equitable teacher support for those students who may desire to opt for remote learning; because why they do not have a personal medical concern for themselves, they may have a family member that has medical issues that they are concerned about. There should be NO difference in support to ANY student that choose remote learning, no matter their personal reason for choosing a remote plan. You've acknowledge that parents need to be able to make best decision for their family. Please change the verbiage and understanding regarding the remote plan that all students will receive equal teacher support and access to the same education as possible outside of physical attendance. No student should bear the weight of having to choose between their education and a family member's compromised health and exposure. Thank you for listening to my concern and allow me to express it to the board.</p>
Angela Stafford	<p>Please consider doing full remote for the students of district 99 for the first quarter, and reevaluate at that time. The numbers in DuPage county are rising and it is not safe for our students, teachers and faculty. I do support hybrid learning, when it is safe to do so. I know my child will benefit from being in school to learn rather than learning at home, but if they cannot safely be at school, they should not be. We all want what is best for our families, including our family at school. Please choose remote learning for all.</p>
Kristen Jeschke	<p>Sending the kids back to school in person even in a hybrid model may actually help to promote social distancing and mask wearing. Too much perceived free time for the students has potential to increase kids' congregating for lack of in person social interaction.</p>
Sarah Curran	<p>Hello all, I am in incoming freshman and would like as much time in school as possible. Going into a new school, I would like the chance to make new friends in person, meet my teachers, and get to know the building. During remote and Elearning last year, I know me and my fellow classmates did not learn nearly as much as we did in school. It was harder without being in the classroom and it feels like we have all fallen behind already in our education. If there is some way we could possibly go every other day, and watch live streams of our classes the days we are not in school, that would be amazing! I know you guys have a lot to consider, but please let us go back to school so we can learn properly. Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
Julia Tamasi	<p>I am the parent of an incoming sophomore at DGN. I am concerned about the proposed remote learning. I feel that students learn in different ways and need to have in person or synchronous interaction with the teacher. This will provide the opportunity for the student to ask questions as the concept is being taught and not afterwards. We believe even in a remote setting classes should be the same length and structure as in person. I am hoping the plan presented tonight will include the synchronous classes in live time and following the students schedule. We are hoping the plan will provide sufficient evidence that will offer a robust education to all students for this academic year. I appreciate all the work and effort the administration has put into finding a safe solution to the beginning of a new school year.</p>
Ma Rosario Vlencio	<p>How will be the transportation to and from the school during the modified hybrid plan? School bus? My son is an incoming senior and is able to drive to school, are you going to issue parking stickers? parking fee?</p>
Joan Buxton	<p>I respectfully and forcefully support the approval of the District 99 Hybrid plan.</p>

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Amy Anderson	<p>Thank you for your time and service. I am a parent of a sophomore, and I would like you to vote for the hybrid schedule. I feel that the administration and principals have all been working very hard to get the students back in school. They have put together a comprehensive plan and I feel that my child would benefit from being in school, if only a couple days a week. I feel they have looked at all aspects and have a safe plan that will keep both students and staff safe. She is a straight A student and one of those that doesn't need extra help, but I believe in school learning will be beneficial for her to be able to learn better from her teachers. I understand that it is a risk for both teachers and students to be in school, but the virus is not going away and I would love to see students in school as much as they can, to get the best education possible. If parents, students, or teachers feel that the plan is not safe, they have been given an opportunity that has been extended this week to accommodate those feeling concerned or who have extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>As a parent of student I would love to have the opportunity to chose for my child and not have the decision made for me. I will respect what ever choice is made tonight. I am grateful that I can express my opinion, I understand that everyone will have different opinions and that is okay. We all want what is best for our students and staff. Thank you for your time.</p>
Tondra Arenz	<p>What is the full remote schedule if opting for this? Will there be the three days of online learning and attendance or will it be five days of online learning and attendance?</p>
Yvonne Busdeker	<p>What proof do we have that hybrid learning is better than the spring? What is different? What has been implemented? What are the checks and balances? How do we know our children will not continue to suffer under remote learning?</p>

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Diana Boukal	<p>I am a teacher at South and I understand that this is a difficult time for everyone, I ask that we be compassionate and gentle with each other as we try to figure out the best back to school scenario during this pandemic. That being said I am feeling very overwhelmed. Not knowing what I need to plan for or how to prepare for the beginning of the year is causing extreme anxiety. Anxiety that grows everyday and could affect me even more if this new modified hybrid plan is implemented. Going hybrid for one week, then remote for two and back to hybrid is a lot of chaos for both students and staff. Why supplement with internal substitutes and administrators the first week? How does that help students connect with their actual teachers? Wouldn't it be safer, add better consistency for students and more cost effective overall if students met and worked with their actual teachers remotely?</p> <p>The board asked for a return to remote (for most) plan. Instead, we got a flip-flop of beginning hybrid, remote, then back to hybrid with no actual resolve for mitigating risk and consistently reaching students who need us. I do appreciate all of the work the administration has done, as I know this has not been easy for anyone. We do however need a long-term plan. Why are we not helping teachers prepare for remote? Why aren't we taking the remote likelihood seriously and helping our district do it right? With so many districts realizing all of the risks the hybrid plan has as numbers increase they are moving to a remote start until October or for the semester for consistency and the safety of ALL -students and staff, why are we not doing this?</p> <p>I know and understand that parents and students want a sense of normalcy, trust me, so do I, every teacher does. But how do we create normalcy when we have to wear masks & face shields? When students have to sit 6 feet apart from each other in the classroom and only half of the class is there at a time. When everything that is touched needs to be cleaned, when there needs to be social distancing in the hallways, when the bathroom cannot be used during passing periods or students cannot eat lunch in the cafeteria with friends. What happens when a student gets Covid-19? A teacher? This will not help the social emotional well-being of anyone.</p> <p>Another culprit of anxiety is the lack of time teachers have to plan. We need time to collaborate with our teams so we can put together lessons/activities that will help our students. We will only have about a week before the start of school. Since the emergency meeting most have been working on remote plans but there is so much work to be done. More time to plan would be extremely helpful. The modified hybrid plan has too many planning components with the different schedules and the separation of A/B students meeting on different days/times. There is so much to plan then add PPE, cleaning protocols, social distancing protocols in class and in the hallways, department office & classroom spaces set up to ensure proper spacing. The worst is the potential of students/staff getting COVID -19 or bringing it home to their families. In the end I would feel safer, emotionally calmer and more prepared teaching remotely because why should I or anyone have to be prepared to get infected?</p>
Mary Ann and Paul Travers	<p>We respectfully request that the Board approve a hybrid (blended) learning plan put forth by Dr. Thiele, Principal Schwarze and our amazing CSD99 team. As parents (and people) we, too, have concerns about everyone's health and safety; we also know that our children need the learning support daily as provided by direct contact learning. If that learning has to be a blend of in-school and eLearning to ensure everyone's safety we are fully on board. However, our expectation as parents (and taxpayers) is that synchronous learning happen for the eLearning portion of our children's education. We fully understand that heroic measures were enacted to map an eLearning plan in March. Many teachers did a wonderful job, some did not at all. Thirty minutes of "office hours" is simply unacceptable for the 2020-2021 school year under remote learning. We respect teachers' concerns for their own health/safety; however, our kids need to be taught via Zoom (or other technology platform) "as if" they are attending classes in-person. The students cannot be left on their own to remote learn challenging subjects via a presentation/document, with no opportunity for Q&A with teachers, no option to interact and learn from peers via virtual discussions, no ability to hear from their teachers experiences/knowledge base or no ability to manage SEL skills virtually. If we need to eLearn, then teachers need to work their normal work day (just as we parents have to do with our jobs) so that our children can benefit from their vast knowledge and interactions with peers. We thank the Board for their service during these challenging times and respectfully request strong consideration of the requirement to "teach" eLearning virtually. Thank you! The Travers</p>

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John Curran	<p>I would first like to thank Dr. Thiele for his tireless work during this very difficult time. As the State Senator for a good portion of this school district, I can speak to Dr. Thiele's advocacy for more thorough and timely guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education.</p> <p>As a parent in District 99, I want to voice my support for your Hybrid Plan and request you continue to pursue "in-person" learning in a safe environment for all. As you work toward an early September return to an "in-person" learning option while monitoring our current health metrics, I encourage you to continue with frequent updates on the progress toward a return to "in-person" learning. Thank you for your time and consideration and your service to our community.</p>
Donna Krapf	<p>My child is in the ED Program with Mr. Kud and group -- I believe the only way remote learning will be successful is if the kids are on a zoom class meeting the entire period -- check in at beginning and attendance at the end to keep these kids engaged. Thank you</p>
W.C.L.	<p>To the District 99 School Board,</p> <p>it is our opinion that remote learning does not adequately fulfill the expected learning that each student requires to be successful in their grade. Kids for the most part require both the school environment and the parents to set proper expectation to maximize their learning potential. Teachers are greatly hampered in this current state of readiness to teach kids remotely (eg not every classroom is equipped for remote live teaching etc). One board member mentioned that she was able to teach her graduate students remotely. However, her situation is not an apples to apples comparison. Kids do not have a foundation of knowledge that the school provides to be successful in their future lives and in college. However college/graduate students ALREADY have a solid foundation and have the motivation to learn whether remotely or non-remotely. Without this foundation and face to face interaction with our teachers, our children will be short changed to the detriment of their formative years. Also consider this, in my opinion, the spring shutdown was possible only because the kids had a great foundation of ¾ of the year with their teachers. Starting a new school year in remote will have a catastrophic effect on the foundational learning these kids need as the high school students will not be able to develop their relationship with the subject matter and the teacher. Look at the sciences as an example: My daughter will be taking chemistry at Downers South this year. Half of learning about chemistry requires being the laboratory portion of class. Seeing the chemical reaction is just as important as reading and drawing out the chemical structure. Exothermic and endothermic chemical reactions are better observed in person than on a TV (video) or on a book. There is simply no substitute for in person teaching. This is what will be missing when students go full remote. A decision against the hybrid plan is in my opinion a decision against providing a firm educational foundation for the kids.</p> <p>I believe that Dr. Thiele and administration has done a thorough job in risk assessing and planning for this situation. It is important to realize no risk in anything is impossible. But a plan that minimizes risk like the hybrid plan goes a long way towards providing the education with the safety that the kids, teachers, and staff need. We can hide behind the wall and wait for the virus to die down only to realize a year down the road that we've literally lost a year of schooling for the kids. If this happens, I would liken this to the lost education generation of kids. Without figuring out and implementing how to get students to school safely, you will always have those fears and question next time you try to consider starting up the hybrid plan. Until you try this plan, you will never know if you need to pull back to remote or if you see good success, further open up the school.</p> <p>Please make the right choice and consider the hybrid plan as a starting point for the good of our kid's education in their formative years during this pandemic. The hybrid plan is a good middle of the road strategy that will allow the administrators to react and evaluate the situation appropriately (shut down if situation get worse or open up more if the plan works well). A strong educational foundation is needed for our kids to have a chance to be successful in their future.</p>
Donna Krapf	<p>My daughter is accepted to Criminal Justice program at TCD that is supposed to be live in person -- are the buses going to still transport or will that responsibility now turn to the parents to get child to TCD and back from TCD --</p>

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Barbara A
Chang

Thank you for allowing public comment on the issue of school reopenings. I am a DG resident and parent of three successful District 99 South Alums, as well as a retired RN. This district has done a wonderful job at providing a solid education and I'd like to encourage the Board to continue your sensible decision-making by having District 99 go all remote for at least until the end of September or October and then reevaluate the situation if necessary. Teacher's, student's and staff's safety from this virus should not be an experiment or politicized. Covid19 does not know or care about inconvenience, about quarantine or mask fatigue. It's only aim is finding a warm body-host in which to replicate and spread..To place our students, teachers, and staff, and their families in the path of this just to see what happens is irresponsible. Our community will be safer with remote, not creating a superspreader event of school reopening, for the community of families as well as those who would be in the buildings every day. I do sympathize and empathize with parents who must work and find childcare options but this is not the way to do that. It is almost impossible to logistically follow the recommendations of the CDC. This is not because they are inappropriately strict, as I have heard some say. It is because reopening now with rising case numbers and positivity in DuPage County is a bad idea, necessitating more room in buildings than we have to comply with actual distancing requirements and more sanitizing than can be realistically done on a reliable basis. . We all wish things were back to normal but this time is not normal, and we need to find other solutions to the problems than to place our students, teachers and staff in harm's way. I urge you to vote to go all remote this fall for the safety of everyone in Downers Grove.

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Sandi Boll
Freebery

up a book since March. She cries that she has no purpose. She is lost. My junior has no interest in college. Do I want her back in school? Yes. Hell yes. Not because I want daycare or her to hang out with friends. But because I am terrified that she won't recover from the loss of all those goals she set for herself. That she will never love learning again. And while I am disappointed in all options D99 has proposed to date, the plan to deliver remote learning at this time seems like our reality. I'm disappointed that we have not shown any real creativity in how to return to in person learning that would have made more parents and staff see that we could do it safely. The opportunity to take advantage of space, the weather, the use of fields, tents, etc. could have been part of the plan. I was/am extremely disappointed to see a hybrid model that has teacher collaborative learning happen only ONE hour a week. And now we are flipping again. One week hybrid, 2 weeks remote, back to hybrid. That feels too disruptive. What are the actual measurements we will use to go back to in person? It is proposed that we will return to hybrid in Sept. The governor will shut that down. So then we anticipate moving to hybrid in winter? When it's cold AND cold/flu season? I have already prepared my family that we will likely be remote for the full year and I can't begin to tell you how upsetting that prospect is.

I am equally disappointed to find that D99 staff didn't see how an innovative hybrid model would keep them safe. Millions of people are going to work every day. At stores. Restaurants. Airlines. Plants. Offices. Doctors. Dentists. I work for a company that has more than 50,000 people a day on our shop floors with no cases of COVID. Our company holds a large STEM event every year and we reworked it to have teams in small groups – learning about virus safety with science. And teachers. With masks, outside, in small groups, taking time to separate from each other. A model our schools could have used. We could have used innovations that aren't rooted in the old ways. And if we end up, as I expect, to be full remote, I expect teachers are still in the classrooms even if the kids are remote. With tools and technology to support rigor. We had very little learning happen in our house since early March. Half of my kids teachers never spoke to her after March 13th. With a teacher in a classroom alone, in a clean building, wearing mask to and from the room, there is little risk. The science community is fairly clear that the transmission is not by surface. I both expect and demand a remote model that has every class period, every day, with every teacher teaching every day. Not sending them to an online site. Not recording a video that doesn't allow interactions. Not a model that requires my child to teach themselves. Or for me to teach them. I expect and demand that we are provided with metrics every day. On the virus of course. But also did the kids attend class? Did the teachers? How much learning is being delivered? Being achieved? And I fully expect the District to be transparent this time in sharing how the model is working. To work harder to understand the issues. And if it isn't – to quickly respond and remold it.

I have read the statements that D99 is shooting for an 80% curriculum delivery. And maybe 50% for AP classes. This makes me furious. With the plan for teachers to meet with students ONE HOUR a week – how can you expect anything more than 30% of the curriculum? Next week I am delivering a new learning system to 140,000 employees. Virtually. We have provided training on standards and templates and process and we have provided training guides and support tools. And we will have in person learning for 50,000 - safely. Again - we responded like so many other businesses with innovation and thought. Small groups by reservation, virtual hand offs, online tests, prework, etc. There is no reason that a remote delivery model should be shooting for 50% of what in person learning is. Especially since you already have kids who got 60% of their curriculum last year. You need to provide teachers and students extra time to fix what they broke in March, April, May and June. I expect the District and Board to support standard tools, training, delivery, and

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Kimberly Hennager	<p>Dear Board Members, I do not envy you the decision you have before you tonight. I'm 100% for remote learning for the following reasons:</p> <p>My 3.5 year old son has a speech and developmental delay. He does not retain information such as "keep your hands out of your mouth", which is why I'm happy that Woodridge 68 will be remote learning. Even if they weren't, I'd still be keeping him home because he doesn't have much of an immune system. He was only in the preschool program for 2 months before the shutdown and he was sick for over a week in February. There's no way his little body could fight this illness and that's not a chance I'm willing to take with him. So why would I send my daughter to school if there's a chance she could bring this home?</p> <p>My mother will be moving in with us soon. She's had lung cancer, with 2/3 of her right lung removed and 1/3 of her left lung removed. If she contracts COVID, she will die. I lost my father two years ago and I'm not ready to lose my mother yet.</p> <p>I implore you to make the decision to go full remote, or, even if you choose hybrid, please give the remote kids the same educational experience as those in school.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Kimberly Hennager</p>
Jennifer Stephens	<p>Sending this again to show my support for a hybrid moving to in person plan. Covid-19 is not going away anytime soon. We have to figure a way to live with it.</p> <p>My name is Jennifer Stephens. I have an incoming freshman and a senior. I support a hybrid model moving towards a full day, in person plan. I am a registered nurse in a busy academic medical center. I know these pandemic times have been incredibly challenging. I have seen it first hand. The way that I do my job has changed several times over the last four months. It has required flexibility and creativity.</p> <p>I appreciate the work put forth to devise a hybrid plan. It too required flexibility and creativity.</p> <p>I feel it is incredibly important for the academic, social and most importantly mental well being of all the students for them to return to school.</p> <p>If there are concerns that Covid-19 will spread like wildfire or that teachers will be at risk, there are now numerous studies that prove this to be untrue. In fact, with proper PPE and safety protocols, teachers can be protected and students can too. If both the education experts and the child health care experts are all saying in person learning is best. We should listen to them.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Jennifer Stephens</p>
Amy Balicki	<p>Please give me the option of sending my children back to school. Their education and mental health are top priorities for me. I am concerned about the unknown long-term repercussions of keeping them out of school any longer.</p> <p>I have read the hybrid plan and am very comfortable with the thorough safety measures in place. If the teachers are unable to come back immediately, please approve the hybrid plan so administrators can get children back in school as soon as staffing is available. We should follow the recommendations of our public health authorities such as the Dupage County Health Department.</p> <p>Also, please continue to allow extracurriculars such as clubs and sports to take place as allowed by public health authorities. These groups are meeting in small numbers and following social distancing guidelines. They are so important for the morale and happiness of our students.</p>

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Jessica Syring	<p>Dear District 99 Board of Education,</p> <p>We shouldn't be returning to school in a hybrid format for the first week, then hybrid for 2 and reevaluate after that. The best option is to set a full remote schedule from beginning. The schedule that has been proposed is short term solution that still puts students and staff at risk. Students are still able to opt in or out of the first week, which does not give the students or teachers a full picture of their class. The switching between hybrid and remote from one week to the next will not be effective or a sufficient use of time for students or staff. It is said that the one hybrid week would also be allowed for students to get materials. I don't see how this is logistically possible for staff to get the duplicates/materials needed for a few weeks or months in such a short period of time. In addition, teachers will most likely not have all students in class to hand out materials . If teachers need to hand out materials, we are better off being remote from the start and create a schedule for staff to submit copies for duplication and a system for students/ families to pick up hard copies of materials if necessary.</p> <p>Using this format doesn't give long-term structure for the students and could create bad habits for students at the start of the year because it is not a set routine. Many students look forward to a set schedule/ structure to their day. Many classrooms have transfer students or student schedule changes in the first few weeks of school so having only one week in person does not alleviate these issues. We are better off setting a robust remote learning model from August 17th and beyond. This would give students the structure they are looking for and allow teachers to appropriately plan their lessons to ensure they learn and engage with their students in a full remote setting.</p> <p>Thank you for taking these points into consideration.</p>
Julia Fisher	<p>After September 8th hits, Will students, parents and staff members of District 99 know more about wether or not Us As Students are able to come back to school and figure out some safe solutions to staying 6ft apart and socially distancing ourselves from everyone?!</p>
Sean Reynolds	<p>Of the 9% of staff that has declined to return to in classroom, what percentage of the 57 staff members requested a non medical leave?</p>
Kimberly Hennager	<p>Dear Board Members,</p> <p>I do not envy you the decision you have before you tonight. I'm 100% for remote learning for the following reasons:</p> <p>My 3.5 year old son has a speech and developmental delay. He does not retain information such as "keep your hands out of your mouth", which is why I'm happy that Woodridge 68 will be remote learning. Even if they weren't, I'd still be keeping him home because he doesn't have much of an immune system. He was only in the preschool program for 2 months before the shutdown and he was sick for over a week in February. There's no way his little body could fight this illness and that's not a chance I'm willing to take with him. So why would I send my daughter to school if there's a chance she could bring this home?</p> <p>My mother will be moving in with us soon. She's had lung cancer, with 2/3 of her right lung removed and 1/3 of her left lung removed. If she contracts COVID, she will die. I lost my father two years ago and I'm not ready to lose my mother yet.</p> <p>I implore you to make the decision to go full remote, or, even if you choose hybrid, please give the remote kids the same educational experience as those in school.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Kimberly Hennager</p>

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Melissa
Theisen

Despite the change in Dr. Thiele's recommendation to start with one week of hybrid learning and then move to remote learning until staffing needs can be met, I want to emphasize my continued support for a hybrid learning plan for the students of District 99. At this time, educational, medical, and public health organizations are still recommending that students engage in some in person learning. The fear of the unknown with the pandemic does not undermine what we already know to be true regarding the lack of teacher-student in person instruction; we will see an increase in mental health concerns for our students, an increase in unreported abuse, an increase in students not having nutritional needs met, and reduced growth of academic skills. We are trading one public health emergency for another at the expense of a generation of children if District 99 does not return to in person instruction at least via a hybrid model.

In terms of remote learning, the BOE referenced in two of the July 2020 meetings that the remote learning in the Spring of 2020 did not work well for students learning. If we are to continue or use a remote learning platform within the 2020-2021 school year, what guarantees do the students of District 99 have that this "new" remote learning will be organized and implemented in a structure that better aligns with the learning needs of students? How will student growth be measured? What learning standards will be determined to be essential standards for students? Who determines when there may be a transition from remote learning to hybrid learning? Will students be allowed to participate in activities that create and maintain the community and culture of the school, especially if structured in groups less than 50? These are all questions that require a response and consideration for all of our students.

Barbara
Pearcy

I feel strongly that our students NEED to be back in school, with in person instruction, peer interaction, structure, accountability and for their benefit academically. The hybrid plan does not give these students the daily in school learning, but it at least is a stepping stone to five days a week.

If it is still decided to do the remote learning after a week of hybrid, I am suggesting that the teachers teach, from the school building itself, or at home, requiring the students to log in on time, attendance will be taken and the students and teacher will remain logged in together, on zoom or google, with video on, for the entire class period. This can be done for the entire school day, all class periods, all five days. These students need the structure, accountability and instruction daily. If the teacher does not have lessons to teach the entire time, they can allow the students to work during this time, still online with video, while the teacher is also online and available for questions and concerns.

The majority of teachers last spring gave their email and/or phone numbers for students to contact them with questions. The majority of students this age do not have the confidence to reach out to a teacher, or even school counselor, themselves in this manner. Another reason for in person instruction, even the minimal amount offered in the hybrid plan, allows for interaction between student and teacher; My suggestion above would also address this problem.

I strongly suggest that District 99 adopt a plan, now, as to when the school will reopen to daily in person instruction. Our students desperately need this as per the CDC, Academy of Pediatrics and the Illinois Board of Education.

As I am sure you are aware, District 58 has developed a plan to have five days of in person instruction, 8:00-2:00, beginning October 26.

I have always had the greatest respect and appreciation for our district teachers. I have to say though that I have lost respect for many of them. The students need to be in school; the CDC, Academy of Pediatrics and the Illinois Board of Education all agree that it is more detrimental to these students to be out of school, they warn of the dangers of depression, suicides, drug use and overdose.

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Erin Gee	<p>Parent of a junior here. 1000% for in-school learning. I am disturbed by the majority of this board assuming powers not specifically granted them by choosing to vote against the recommendations of every governing public health agency out there, as well as against the overwhelming majority of parents, students, and teachers in the district. The fact that a higher percentage of teachers than expected waited until the eleventh hour to notify the administration they were claiming a medical condition preventing them from in-school learning speaks to politics and maneuvering by certain staff and is a separate, but equally alarming issue. The board was not elected to act as a parent who "knows better" than the governing health agencies that influence the laws and policies that keep citizens safe. What the board members think may happen, or suppose may occur is irrelevant, and not an appropriate reason for ignoring the clear recommendations of all public health agencies. If and when the case load of Covid in our county reaches an unsafe level, these public health agencies will recommend the shutdown of our school, as they did this past Spring. I urge you to act not out of your fears, but within the guidelines of the state and county agencies that ARE tasked with monitoring case loads, death rates, hospital beds, and ventilators. All students have been offered a fair option for e-learning when their families determine that the best place for them is at home. I have determined that the best place for all of my kids is IN school. You are an elected school board, not an autocracy.</p> <p>I'm sure it is no surprise to this board either that I am in full support of allowing school sports to resume according to the guidelines set forth last week by state agencies. Again, it is not the board's place to vote against these recommendations.</p> <p>I am aware that my comments may fall on deaf ears, if they are read at all. If the board chooses again to deny the recommendations of the health departments and votes for remote-only, I am making my wishes known that the teachers need to absolutely be teaching from their classrooms. Zoom calls from their living room are not appropriate and full of distractions for students and teachers.</p> <p>Again, I am extremely disappointed in the actions of the majority voting block of this board.</p>
Deb Creedon	<p>Dist. 99 should continue with remote learning at the start of the fall semester because it will keep our teachers and students safe and it will help IL make progress on the reopening plan.</p>
Barbara Pearcy	<p>During remote learning , I suggest that the teachers need to hold the students accountable and be there in a zoom meeting, live stream, with cameras on for all students for the full class period. These periods are only 30 minutes long. if the teachers feel that they don't need to be actively teaching the entire time, the students can be working while continuing to livestream and the teacher can be available to the students for questions. When the teachers were in class teaching five days a week the periods were 50 minutes long. I also would like to address the grading policy. I feel it is not fair to expect the same amount of accountability from the students when they are basically teaching themselves a lot of the time , as when they were in class five days a week.</p>

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Matthew
Greaney

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. Earlier today, Gov. Pritzker held a press conference to address the rising incidence of positive testing for Covid 19 in the state of Illinois. During the press conference he said, "This virus isn't going away on its own so we have to take responsibility, we have to take individual and collective action to protect the people we love." I believe he's right.

I understand the importance of school as a physical space. Having a place to congregate and learn simultaneously illustrates the value we place in the act of learning and provides a community of learners with whom we are able to grow. The school acts as an intellectual, emotional, and social incubator for the community. This is a difficult thing to let go, even temporarily. However, there are times when gratification must be delayed. In the proposed hybrid plan, each student will be spending one hour a week with each teacher. In order to do this, the student will need to enter the building on two separate days, for four hours, and switch classes three times. While in class, social distancing will be in place. That means no group work, no handing out of documents, no one to one instruction. Teachers, meanwhile, will be in class each day, maintaining the chain of contact between students. The remainder of their learning time for the week will be remote. Is the benefit of one hour a week worth the potential risk of community spread?

It's difficult for me to quantify all the things I worry about in this situation. I'm worried that students and the adults who work with them will show up to my building and get sick or worse. I worry that students will spread the disease to ones they love. I worry that I will do the same to the people I love. I don't want this to be the case, of course. No one does. But I also know that no one can predict who will get sick, who will spread asymptotically and who will be spared altogether. Likewise, the degree of illness and long-term effects are unknowable. In the face of all this uncertainty and understanding what's at stake, in-person learning is an unnecessary risk. While remote learning has its flaws, hybrid does as well. Remote learning does a far better job of limiting health risks, and given updated ISBE guidance, many of the issues that arose in the spring should be mitigated.

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Andrea Knudsen	<p>When you generously committed to serving our district, I can't imagine you could have anticipated voting on a decision comparable to the one before us tonight.</p> <p>I recognize you intend to ensure our students benefit from the best plan possible for the unpredictable year ahead. I empathize with the feeling of the weight on your shoulders, and I believe all of us—parents, teachers, and administrators—feel that weight right now.</p> <p>I'm commenting tonight to respectfully ask you to take a step back and reassess your role as board. The Illinois Association of School Boards' Foundational Principles of Effective Governance state, "The board delegates authority to the superintendent to manage the district and provide leadership for the staff... A board that does (or re-does) staff work disempowers the staff. High levels of superintendent and staff accountability require high levels of delegation."</p> <p>I also respectfully ask you to remember the role of our superintendent, elected by the board, as defined by our district's board policies: "The superintendent develops plans, programs, and procedures needed to implement the policies and directs the district's operations."</p> <p>We, as a community, elected you not with the expectation that you circumvent plans provided by the administration, but with the confidence you'll allow our administration to use their expertise and the guidance provided by authorities to make the best plans for our students.</p> <p>These are unprecedented times and challenging decisions, and there literally is NO plan that will meet every need and solve every problem. Our superintendent and administration have identified the modified hybrid plan as the BEST plan for CSD99. Please support it.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Andrea Knudsen, DGN parent</p>
Kirk H. Hoffman	<p>I feel there must be some sort of in-person learning in order to establish a rapport with the teachers, strengthen social bonds, and prepare for post high school plans. At least, make a seniors-only option for them to attend in-person classes to have some semblance of a senior year and allow them the in-person help with their college applications and rigorous AP classes. AP and honors coursework requires teacher-student and student-student collaboration and moreover, juniors and seniors are the ones taking the majority of those classes. A block scheduling model (like college lectures) could create a situation where social distancing can be enforced and yet, students are in the classroom for an appropriate amount of time for learning and mental and emotional growth.</p>
Kristine Arlt	<p>My comment is on the concept of opening schools. I believe that the kids should go back to school and do it safely with respect to their fellow students as well as educators. This is important because children need structured, on site, personal interaction with their teachers. While I recognize elearning was put into place last minute, I can personally say that it was very ineffective. If we are going back to some form of remote learning, then rather than checking in "sometime" in the morning and doing minimal work throughout the week, we should have actual remote classrooms where teachers take attendance at the beginning of each period and the student is required to fully participate in the entire class period. And they should do this for every class throughout the day. Their day should be as if they are at school. Anything less is a disservice to the kids. I understand this has been a crazy time for everyone, including our family, but the education of the children needs to be a priority and it needs to be way more than the concept of elearning.</p>

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George
Tomecki

As a family physician on the front lines of the COVID19 outbreak, I want to again inform you of the risks of the hybrid in person plan and encourage you to approve a fully remote learning plan.

The hybrid model attempts to soothe peoples fears by saying only half the students will be at school at any given time and then only for a few hours. Even the plan to come to school for the first week to meet the teachers is an unnecessary risk. Remember, in order to transmit this novel Coronavirus, it only takes minutes and it only takes contact with one person.

Once the temperature cools and everyone is wiping the condensation from their nose, the cold viruses that mimic COVID19 symptoms will spread even easier on inanimate objects (like pencils, door handles, masks, sinks, desks, phones, etc) via everyone's hands. In primary care, we do NOT have the testing capacity to differentiate between the common cold and COVID19. Therefore, we will be forced to advise patients with symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, headache, GI symptoms, etc to self quarantine for 2 weeks.

With COVID19 cases already on the rise as cold and flu season is about to begin, I predict that within weeks we will be forced to do full remote learning anyways.

Let's not wait until we have students, teachers, or staff in the hospital or dead.

I recommend remote learning from the start.

George Tomecki MD
The Family Doctors

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here is a list of schools on our area that are Full remote learning to start;

District 88
Grayslake 127
Bensenville District 2
District 204 - remote with pushed back start date for students
District 203 - remote with pushed back start date for students
Joliet 86
Glenbards -87
Libertyville HS 128
Oak Park River Forest
Plainfield 202 - remote with pushed back start date for students
Evanston 202
Homewood Flossmoor 255
Fenton
Shaumburg 211
Glenbrook 225
Woodridge 68
Oswego 308
Niles Community Schools
CCSD 59
WCCSD 21
Morton - remote with pushed back start date for students
Cicero 99
Lombard 44
Aurora 31
Maywood - 89
Waukegan unit 60
Calumet Public132
District 170
Lake Zurich 95
Barrington 292

Michelle Bodi

Lisa Benco

I understand that a decision regarding Fall sports will be up for a vote tonight and is not dependent on the result of the e-learning direction. Please allow the Girls' Swim and Dive team to begin their season as scheduled on Monday, August 10th. IHSA has deemed this sport as "lower" risk and this tight-knit team is anxious to return to the sport they love.

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Anupam Patel	<p>I found remote learning in the spring to be an abomination. It seemed like my son was on vacation for the whole 2nd semester. He would check in and finish his work in one to two hours, and he still received all A's.</p> <p>There needs to be actual learning. Students should be on Zoom classes, just as if they were in the classroom for all of their classes, with the teacher teaching, and asking students questions and vice versa. There needs to be actual homework that needs to be turned in, and online exams.</p> <p>My son is starting his senior year, and I'm afraid that he is not well prepared to go into collage, nor was he prepared to take the SAT exam, during his most important year of high school. This is not the type of education that my tax dollars should be paying for.</p>
Keith Aikerson	<p>Knowing the health risk associated with Covid 19 why are we forcing teachers, students and parents to make life or death choices by increasing exposure on campus without effective treatments or vaccines available, when the tools for remote learning are available to ensure that both education and health can be protected?</p>
Carrie Drobnik	<p>Board of Education, I am fully aware that you know second hand how the end of the school year went for the majority of students last year. I am sure that you heard of the ups and the many downs of turning to remote learning. However, none of you personally went thought online learning and therefore can not directly relate to a students perspective. E-learning was hard enough after transitioning from in person learning for an entire semester. I know that many of you want to go completely remote to start the 20-21 school year and then "see what happens" after 9 weeks. As students, we value that cautious mindset but to what extent? Many students just got by last year and barely learned at home. We need to be in school to at least meet who will be guiding us through the next school year. We look up to many of our teachers and they are some of our best role models. If we were to be starting the school year at home, how can we build these relationships and get to know our teachers? Looking back, I don't think I would have got to know my teachers personalities through a screen if the year started how it ended. The hybrid plan is in the best interest for the students and their learning. No one knows what will happen after 9 weeks or if things will ever go back to the old "normal." Being adaptable is the best thing to do right now when we are uncertain of the future. This meeting is being held in person, after the last ones were remote. If you can now be in a space together, why can't we?</p>
Dr. and Mrs. Sattar Hadi	<p>We support a remote only learning option at this time. The Covid rates in Illinois are currently increasing and will not be diminished by thousands of students unprepared for hours of masks, shields and sanitizing. A small misstep could affect a very large population to unknown degrees at this time. We know that teenagers can get and transmit the virus just as easily as adults. Furthermore, the revised proposed model creates unnecessary instability to the start of the school year. A hybrid model should only be considered once the area Covid rates have come down and schools are adequately staffed to provide the top notch instruction our students deserve.</p>
Lisa Pocius	<p>I thank you for hard work and concern for our kids and our teachers. I am especially glad to see reassurances that there will be equity between any hybrid and fully remote options offered. I am not seeing that for our middle schooler, and wish that DG58 would do the same. As a physician, I am sure that we are heading for all remote learning at some point this year - better to prepare for that as best we can.</p>

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Ana M Perez	<p>I am here to represent the students that require an in person learning in order to perform well in class, successfully grasp curriculum material, and excel in their academics. Personally, my son Santiago did not have a positive experience during the remote learning at the end of last year. He will now enter South High School as a senior and also attend an automotive technology program TCD. As an interactive learner, the lack thereof was one of the reasons why his grades drastically fell during the first remote learning experience. As a mother that works full time, Santiago is left home alone without supervision- a luxury that parents that are able to work from home may have. I am only able to do so much to encourage and monitor his school work once I return home, as I have and his teachers will confirm- I am an active involved parent. While I recognize that returning to in person learning full time is not possible, I implore the board to find a better solution to include those students that are left behind, that need that in person teaching, as well as keeping the school staff safe when making your decision. Not only that, but to come up with a sustainable, and viable hybrid class schedule that keeps the needs of students that require more support in mind- most especially for those students about to graduate! Next, Santiago is very motivated to attend the TCD program. As TCD will allow in person learning, South must give permission for students to drive to TCD campus themselves. Granting this permission is necessary for him to attend as both parents work during the day. Lastly, I would like for the board to address the registration fees for this school year. Given that students will not be in the classroom full time, this year's fees should reflect that and decrease.</p>
Gregory A Balicki	<p>If the government is claiming that it may be unsafe to vote in person why is there such a push to put everyone back to school in person. It is best to error on the side of caution and keep our students and staff safe by not allowing anyone to enter the schools and remain on remote learning for all students and teachers.</p>
Patrick Kelly	<p>We urge the Board to open schools to open under the Hybrid plan, and continue to push to allow as much in person learning within the confines of a safe environment. The administrators have studied the science and recommendations, and we are comfortable that the model they have designed for our students will allow them to interact with their peers, while also staying as safe as possible.</p>
Katelyn Schaefer	<p>I am concerned that the community does not realize we cannot give new instruction during the in person learning with the hybrid schedule. It is purely meant for review, students to ask questions from remote, and replicate things we cannot do at home (ie- labs, band practice together, etc.). This is an important piece of the puzzle that we need to communicate.</p>
Deborah Andrews	<p>I'm quite surprised that the board is succumbing essentially to what I would deem bullying by the hybrid pu u'arents. I guess they don't watch the news and aren't aware of the continuing danger of the virus. There was school in Indiana that just opened and had to shut the SAME DAY because one student had NO SYMPTOMS but had already taken a Covid 19 test and was found to be POSITIVE for it. https://news.yahoo.com/more-schools-stay-online-one-140501853.html</p> <p>I also find it unconscionable that these hybrid parents have decided to play dirty by: looking into litigation with regards to the "fitness" of the school board, calling the teachers "essential workers", yet also telling them to to quit if they don't like it.</p>
Gregory A Balicki	<p>I thank you for taking the time to review this topic. Not every student needs or wants a hybrid schedule. The students who would like to go back should be able to and students who choose to do remote learning should be able to do that. There are many more people than just the school kids and teachers affected here. We have family and coworkers. Every kid represents a world of people/village behind them. It is up to every person and family to choose what is best. It is not fair to claim anyones needs or fears are unjustified. There is not one right answer and no one knows what the consequences will or could be. Data from today or yesterday is not an indicator of what could happen or should happen. It is clear just from a logistical stand point that moving large groups of people can create more stress than needed. Thank you for giving everyone a voice. While some have claimed to the be the voice of everyone it is important that EVERYONE have a voice.</p>
Katie Luby	<p>My son has an IEP. I'm wondering how the school is helping these students to work toward their goals. His main problem is organization plus he has ADHD. I am a single parent, an ER nurse downtown. There is only so much I can do to help him when I'm not home. He was getting a lot of help from the school but with remote learning he just doesn't get the structure and guidance he needs.</p>

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James R. Hoffman	<p>I cannot emphasize enough the necessity for classroom instruction. There is no way that our children are receiving the education they deserve through online instruction. This is especially true for those taking AP courses and courses that require laboratory time. Since students and parents concerned about any risk have the option to remain at home, it seems the teachers and their union are blocking classroom instruction. If a teacher believes that their health or a family members health is at significant risk working in classroom I suggest they take a leave of absence and we back-fill with willing substitutes. I don't believe they are earning their salary at home with what I've seen from the spring semester's online instruction. My AP student and his friends taught themselves to a great extent. They struggled and they are vocal about not learning and retaining important material. Furthermore, many teachers are not adept at digital online instruction. In fact it's very poor. What about the vast number of students who simply are not motivated to work at home? Add to that the emotional toll and anxieties of remote learning and we are doing this generation a grave disservice. Take away the faculty's income and health insurance as many of us are experiencing and you'll find a motivated workforce. We're kidding ourselves if we think we will be educating our children online. We cannot hide forever! Back to the classroom, now!</p>
Ellen Kowara	<p>Dear District 99 School Board,</p> <p>I am writing to you to beg you to approve in-person learning, the so-called "hybrid" model, for high school this year. I understand that there is a teacher shortage but I am assuming it can be solved. I have heard it said, "Why take the risk if there is a chance even one person will get sick?" That should not be a rhetorical question! There is a reason to take the risk. There are risks to not going back to school and, according to the CDC, they outweigh the risk of going back. Our children's' mental health, their academic and social development, and their prospects in the world, are all affected by keeping them out of school. I know you have received many very articulate letters with supporting data, so I will keep mine short and simple. I believe it is your duty to vote for a return to in-person learning and to fail to do so is to betray the children and families you were elected to serve.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Ellen Kowara</p>
Therese Larkin	<p>Please speak to those of us who are healthcare workers.</p>
Kimberly Somora	<p>I am NOT fighting to get my son to school during a pandemic... this is NOT about the kids safety, we know kids do better with covid but their at risk parents, grandparents, siblings... don't have that same guarantee... I feel for all the children who WANT to be there and I know my child struggled greatly w remote this spring but our LIVES, teachers lives are not worth risking... in the long run this is NOT worth risking lives. I don't know what the answer is. But I am CERTAIN it's not putting SO many lives at risk. This is but a season in our lives. There are MILLIONS of resources out there for all these people who need mental assistance, educational assistance... I personally think the lives of those around us are MUCH more important than the loss of a few months or even a year of school.</p>
Jen johnson	<p>Nancy needs to stop basing things on her opinion. Clearly she is against hybrid but she does not have correct data to back herself. She is stating wrong information and clearly is not open minded!</p>
Anonymous	<p>Please answer how President Nancy has no clue about Illinois phases, metrics, health department information. How do you come to a school board meeting so completely ignorant to the facts at hand that are critical to this decision. She is a failure to this Board. How do you claim to be informative to make this decision when you don't know anything about the phases are, health department. Does she realize how that looks?</p>
Carrie Swenson	<p>During the 2 week remote period in option one, where are teachers teaching? Will they hold a full day of attendance and classes?</p>

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Andrea Gray	The times of classes during hybrid are different Tuesday and Thursday than they are Wednesday and Friday. If I'm understanding correctly, Group A, say, will meet in person on Tuesdays (periods 1-4) and Thursdays (periods 5-8). And I believe the slide that was up showed each class was only 30 minutes long? Yes on Wednesday and Friday, for group B, classes are an hour long. Was the slide types wrong or did I see it wrong? Either way, please explain. Thank you!!
Jill Powers	I am fully in support of the hybrid model and bringing our students back for as much in person instruction as possible. I have two students at DGN, a junior and a freshman. For the first week when freshman are remote after Monday, what happens with the freshmen in advanced classes with sophomores and juniors?
Andrea Rhoads	When finalizing plans whether that be hybrid or remote, Audio Recordings of Class Lectures and Transcription or captions of Classes/lectures should be provided to all students. Whichever model a student learns in will require this accommodation as students—no matter how self motivated a student is whether a student is in the school building or their bedroom or dining room—students will be distracted and need the transcript or recording of each class.
Melissa Theisen	I thank you to Dr. Hank Hiele and your team for all your hard work and efforts. I have all the confidence that the hybrid plan will be safe for our students and provide an excellent education!
Jennifer Padavic	I would like to present my support of the Hybrid learning plan for any high school students who favor in-school learning as well as seek the School Board's approval for student extracurricular activities to be provided for 2020-21. We seek this approval to include all lower risk athletic fall season IHSA approved sports(b/g golf, g tennis, b/g cross country and g swimming & diving) as well as any possible fine arts and musical programs to allow our students the ability to experience as much achievement and success that their high school experience can offer our students.
Andrea Rhoads	Will hybrid students have access to digital resource rooms?
Carrie Swenson	Remote tully question. Are teachers tending to their own children, have their own space to teach? Zero distractions while working from home. Do teachers understand that parents and students expect distraction free learning?
Ana Perez	Question: With TCD students, will they still be able to drive themselves if they have a license ?
Todd Pleune	I here are about 4,894 "at risk" students (give or take). The administration was smart to talk about "Exploring Remote for Most" last. The challenges are insurmountable! Vote Hybrid!
Melissa Ribo Escalona	So in the end what are we gonna do? What's the final decision on how the school year is going to look like?
I sarah	What is protocol for confirmed cases
Karoline Kellam	I thank you to all members of the Board. I know that you are tasked with a difficult decision and it is one that none of you take lightly. I thank you for putting your confidence in your administrative team and moving forward in support of the hybrid model and trusting that they will continue to follow the guidance provided by the IL and Dupage Dept. of Health.
Jeff Gaspar	Second comment: If going to a hybrid plan in September after the modified hybrid start, I would suggest waiting until September 22. That would allow 2 weeks after the Labor Day holiday weekend, where we know gatherings will occur, to identify anybody that tests positive from those gatherings.
Nicole Gaspar	Choose remote to begin the year, at least the first 9 weeks. Helping to stop the spread as best we, as a community can.
Guillermo Palomino	Due to the uncertainty of the course of covid-19, I would prefer remote learning to start and then transition to a hybrid model. I'm a little nervous about the spread of the virus

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Dr. and Mrs. Sattar Hadi	We support a remote only learning option at this time. The Covid rates in Illinois are currently increasing and will not be diminished by thousands of students unprepared for hours of masks, shields and sanitizing. A small misstep could affect a very large population to unknown degrees at this time. We know that teenagers can get and transmit the virus just as easily as adults. Furthermore, the revised proposed model creates unnecessary instability to the start of the school year. A hybrid model should only be considered once the area Covid rates have come down and schools are adequately staffed to provide the top notch instruction our students deserve.
JENNIFER BLACK	I'd like to know how you plan to address remote learning with both kids that need to be at TCD to do their vocational training as well as kids with 504 plans. Remote learning was HORRIBLE for my child with a 504 and it needs to be addressed. Only one of his teachers made sure he received the accommodations he was supposed to have during the previous remote learning session. TCD is open for in-person learning and my child needs to be there as do all the other kids learning vocational skills