

**SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
Special Board Meeting  
July 27, 2020**

*Members Present:*

*Bruce Lord, President  
Jennifer Lofland, Vice President  
Joseph Sillo, Secretary  
Frank Agovino, Treasurer (absent)  
Domenic Bentivegna, Director (absent)  
Jennifer Flynn, Director  
Jacqueline Guy, Director  
Kevin Keenan, Director (via telephone)  
Margaret Rovinski, Director*

*Anthony Barber, Superintendent of Schools  
Don Mooney, Executive Director of Operations  
Cynthia Mattei, DOTL Elementary (absent from boardroom)  
Jeffery Zweiback, DOTL Secondary (absent from boardroom)  
Linda Bellace, Director, Human Resources (absent)  
Lisanne Mikula, Solicitor*

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**MEETING MINUTES**

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*Mr. Lord led the pledge to the flag.*

- ❖ ***Mr. Lord asked Ms. Mikula to address a couple of items at the start of the meeting.  
Ms. Mikula stated that while Pennsylvania is in the Green Phase, the Governor instituted rollbacks of the number of attendees at an indoor event (25). This is consistent with the desire to reopen schools; the rollbacks hopefully would ultimately lead to schools being fully reopened. Also, the non-use of a mask viewed at the meeting is in compliance with the Governor's mandates.***

**A. ITEMS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION**

- ❖ *Presentation of Health and Safety Plans – Dr. Barber  
The Health and Safety Plans, as detailed on the school district website, were reviewed and explained. Some highlights included:*
  - *Approving three plans to match the Governor's color green/red/yellow phase.*
  - *As of today, we are selecting the hybrid model which may change due to the fluidness of the pandemic.*
  - *Details regarding the Springfield Virtual Academy (SVA)*
  - *Busing – maximum of 48 students per bus, 2 per seat, 24 students per bus. A survey is going out this week to families to determine intended usage.*

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- ❖ ***Due to the number of Public Comments, they are included as an attachment to the minutes. Some were delivered in person and the rest were submitted as emails prior to the board meeting.***

**C. CONSENT AGENDA**

*Although Board action is required, it is generally unnecessary to hold discussion on these items. With the consent of all members, they are therefore grouped and approval is given in one motion. In the event a Board member wants to discuss any item, the Board President will move it to an appropriate place on the agenda.*

**Motion: Ms. Guy**  
Comments: None

**Second: Ms. Rovinski**

**Vote: 7-0-0**

**1. Payment of Bills**

*General Fund checks for the month of June, 2020  
totaling \$1,370,178.00*

**2. Acknowledgement of Receipt of Financial Reports**

- ❖ *Tax Collector's Reports – January – June, 2020  
Springfield*
- ❖ *District Financial Reports – June, 2020  
General Fund, Investment Schedule, Revenue, Expenditures*
- ❖ *Financial Reports – June, 2020  
Middle School & High School Activity Accounts*

**3. Contracts for Board Approval**

- ❖ *Agreement with Chadds Ford Alternacare Inc. (dba CRITICARE) to provide temporary basic nursing care to students by RN's, LPN's and PCA's effective September 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.  
Rates of Service – RN - \$56 per hour, LPN - \$46 per hour, PCA - \$25 per hour as listed in Appendix A of contract.*

**D. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION**

**1. Plan Con Part F and I - Mr. Mooney**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board approves the filing of Plan Con Parts F and I with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the related materials for the Springfield High School master plan project for the Phase 2 and 3 post bid opening certification and the interim reporting of change orders and supplemental contracts during construction.*

**Motion: Dr. Lofland**

**Second: Ms. Rovinski**

**Vote: 7-0-0**

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*Comments: Mr. Mooney reviewed the Plan Con approval process as we come to an end with Part I and, soon to be, Part J.*

**2. Springfield High School Contractor Bid Awards – Mr. Mooney**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board awards the Base Bids and selected alternates for bids received for the Phase Three construction services for the new Springfield High School maintenance building, athletic facilities and stadium improvements to the following contractors:*

	Contractor	Discipline	Base Bid	Alternates Bid	Total Contract Price
1.	L.J. Paoella	General Construction	\$10,870,000	\$1,936,000	\$12,806,000
2.	Tri County Mechanical	Mechanical	\$340,000	\$38,000	\$378,000
3.	J.R. Metzgar Inc.	Electrical	\$878,700	\$11,500	\$890,200
4.	Vision Mechanical	Plumbing	\$244,950	\$34,500	\$279,450
			Total Contract Awards		\$14,353,650

*The costs for these services will be funded from the capital projects bond proceeds.*

**Motion: Ms. Rovinski      Second: Dr. Lofland      Vote: 7-0-0**

*Comments: Mr. Mooney noted that the bids for Phase III included demolition and a new maintenance building.*

**3. Board Affirmation Statement – Dr. Barber**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board approves the Board Affirmation Statement for the Comprehensive Plan as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and State Board Regulations.*

**Motion: Ms. Rovinski      Second: Dr. Lofland      Vote: 7-0-0**

*Comments: Dr. Barber stated that the Plan is a requirement from the state.*

**4. Pandemic Plan for Athletics and Activities (Updated) - Mr. Mooney**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board approves the updated Pandemic Plan for Athletics and Activities.*

**Motion: Dr. Lofland                      Second: Ms. Rovinski                      Vote: 7-0-0**

*Comments: Mr. Mooney discussed the need to update the mask usage in the Athletics and Activities Plan as new guidelines are defined.*

**5. Health and Safety Plans – Dr. Barber**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board approves the Health and Safety Plans as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.*

**Motion: Ms. Rovinski                      Second: Dr. Lofland                      Vote: 7-0-0**

*Comments: The Health and Safety Plans were reviewed by Dr. Barber at the beginning of the meeting. Dr. Barber thanked the community for their feedback. President Lord thanked Dr. Barber and his team for their huge amount of work in developing these plans.*

**6. Update to 2020-2021 School District Calendar – Dr. Barber**

**RECOMMENDATION:** *that the Board approves the updates to the 2020-2021 School District Calendar due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**Motion: Dr. Lofland                      Second: Ms. Flynn                      Vote: 7-0-0**

*Comments: Dr. Barber explained the need to update the school calendar to reflect the change of the first day of school to September 8, 2020. The additional week allows time to prepare for a better virtual reality.*

**E. FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS - August 27, 2020  
September 24, 2020**

**F. SUPERINTENDENT’S SALUTATIONS – Dr. Barber**

*Comments: Dr. Barber thanked his team for all their hard work and commitment. He thanked the staff for working to put the plan in place and thanked the Board for approving the plan.*

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***Before and after each meeting, the Board meets in Nonpublic Executive Study Session to discuss personnel, legal and labor relations matters.***

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Joseph Sillo  
Director and Board Secretary*

**IN PERSON PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

**Dr. Michael Betts, 133 Broadview Rd., Springfield**

Dr. Betts shared current medical information concerning school re-opening. Focused on mask usage, different policies for people over/under 10 years of age and daily specific questionnaire monitoring.

**Ms. Brenda McLaughlin, 292 Valley View Rd., Springfield**

Ms. McLaughlin thanked the measured approach taken in the Spring. She did not feel fully opening the school would be a success; favored initial remote learning. Expressed concerns regarding: (1) full in person reopening and that there was no successful reopening plan in other countries with high infection rates, (2) discussed different reopening by age, specific needs, etc., (3) the lack of teacher or teacher union representatives on reopening planning team, (4) a lack of presence on reopening planning team by PTA, YMCA and families, and (5) that there is still no good information on the district's virtual learning option.

**Mr. Steve Corp, 100 Brookside Rd., Springfield**

Mr. Corp stated he worries about the emotional well-being for the children. He hoped they will be provided with more than just learning in the coming school year. Kids need to get back in school in person and that there is so much more than just learning such as engagement, community, etc.

**Ms. Alexandra Donato, 940 Stewart Ave., Springfield**

Ms. Donato shared her concerns for her at-risk child. She has a special needs child who needs to be in school physically. Expressed sentiment that we cannot hide from this virus and that every child has different learning needs.

**Ms. Meredith Mann, 140 Colonial Park Dr., Springfield**

Ms. Mann appreciated the transparency and updates from the District. She raised concerns about virtual options. Commented that there was not much information available regarding the SVA but understands that more will come as per tonight's presentation. Also wanted to be sure that in a hybrid model that home days would be a quality virtual experience. Was also interested in knowing what the SVA enrollment looked like and that if it increased would the district be able to offer full time in person to those who wanted such an experience and keep with social distancing. Also mentioned that the virtual experience going forward needs to be better than what was offered in the Spring. Lastly, she complimented the amazing teachers that we have and expressed concern as to whether we will retain enough of them that they might retire early or decide not to return to a COVID teaching environment.

**Ms. Amy Spaccarelli, 433 Briarhill Rd., Springfield**

Advocated for full time in-person learning. Does not want online learning. She said the virtual education was a disaster in the Spring and should not be the only option.

**Mr. Michael Lee, 123 Sylvania Ave., Morton**

Mr. Lee said he thought the Board has done a good job trying to make the situation as bearable as possible for everyone.

**Ms. Mia Stevens, 260 N. Rolling Rd.**

Ms. Stevens asked for a survey to find out what students want to learn virtually and who wants to go to school. She was not happy with the virtual learning in the Spring and that a Fall online experience must be great compared to what it was previously.

**Mr. Dave Caramanico, 337 Prospect Rd., Springfield**

Mr. Caramanico asked what the plan was if someone in one of the schools were to test positive for COVID-19.

**EMAILED PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

**Patrice Weber Gannon, 100 E. Springfield Rd., Springfield**

Dear School Board Members,

I am writing as an SSD parent after being denied in-person attendance to this meeting due to “maximum indoor capacity” being reached at 25.

How ironic, it seems, that it is unsafe for 25 people to attend a meeting to discuss putting hundreds of our children under one roof. I wonder why, if sufficient safety measures exist, could they not be applied to this meeting as they are being suggested for our schools? I am disappointed to learn that no effort was made to hold this meeting via Zoom or in a larger or outdoor venue so that the people most affected - Springfield families - could be represented in attendance.

Regardless, it is my intention with this letter to communicate what I feel are valid concerns as a mother, a public educator’s wife, and a member of the community.

First, I would like to express my support and gratitude for my children’s educators. We have truly never had one interaction, since my oldest child started school, that was anything but positive, and I am thankful to them for that.

The novel coronavirus is a challenging and unprecedented issue to navigate, and I appreciate that the school board has a difficult task in balancing the quality of education with the safety of the students and staff. Despite the obvious effort expended by my children’s teachers, I think we can all agree that virtual learning does not replace in-person learning. In addition to the quality that comes with hands-on instruction, my children also miss the social aspect of school. One of my children also received physical therapy through the district, the absence of which is evident.

However, despite these setbacks, our children’s physical safety (and that of the staff) has to remain in primary focus. Physical safety is the very base of the “needs” pyramid, if you will, for socialization, physical therapy, and so forth are not applicable if the children are not healthy enough to receive them.

I realize that full virtual learning and homeschooling are available options. Some proponents of the reopening of schools may wonder why I do not just keep my children home while accepting that others have the choice to send their children to school. My husband is a public school educator and, as I have stated, I like and admire the public educators in this district. They will not have a choice whether or not to return to an environment we already know is



not safe. My husband and I have a daughter with muscular dystrophy. If we keep her home to avoid exposure, that becomes null and void if my husband is exposed. This decision is literally life or death for parents like me. The teachers in this district have myriad personal and medical reasons to deserve safety from forced exposure. I could not help but notice that a large number of workers in this district are young women, many of whom have been pregnant during the last school year and even more who have infants and small children at home who worry about exposing their families. In addition, older workers are in a high risk category themselves. It is irresponsible to risk exposure not only to the students but to the staff who cannot choose a virtual option.

I know there are a multitude of concerns that need to be addressed, and that there is no easy solution. However, I implore you to consider the safest option for our children. There is no doubt that the reopening of schools will encourage the spread of this virus. Please keep our children and teachers' safety at the forefront of your decision-making. We can recover from being behind academically along with the rest of the nation, I cannot recover the loss of my child.

Sincerely,

Patrice Weber Gannon

**Jennifer Wren, 128 Greenhill Rd., Springfield**

Please stop using the slow and steady approach. Our students deserve to have teacher instruction daily. Our students should be engaged and learning for the entire school day. Students lost out on instruction and learning new material last year, they need everyday of learning to try to catch up on all that was lost.

**Debra Morton, 500 Scenic Road, Springfield**

What training has been given to staff to provide a viable and equivalent level of instruction, using online resources, as would normally be received with full-time in person teaching?

How does the online component of Springfields plan compete with pre-existing cyber school programs offering full-time virtual learning?

What measures are being implemented to ensure that our students will not be at a disadvantage academically?

At what point would the measures be changed to full-time in person learning?

**Jennifer Pavone, 410 Thatcher Rd., Springfield, PA**

I am not familiar with the hybrid plan but there are rumors that this would mean a different schedule each week. This is outrageous and completely unmanageable for those of us that have to work full time. If I must miss work 2 days a week, it has to be consistent. Employers will not tolerate alternating weeks. I am already extremely nervous I will face furlough at the very least if I have to stay home with my kindergartener.

I implore the district to have a full time option and a virtual for those that choose it.

We are a family with both parents working full-time. Our daughter is scheduled to begin kindergarten. I am unable to work from home. I work for the county and am required to go into the office like many others.

I understand the health concerns, and feel that those with health issues, and those with the desire to, should be offered an option to homeschool. But those of us that feel comfortable with our children returning full-time should be given that option as well. I trust that it can be done safely. I don't understand why the rest of the community has to go back to work but teachers are exempt.

Thank you for your time.

**Laura Cattie, 641 Barry Drive, Springfield**

What will the proposed A/B schedule look like? We have been told to prepare for an A/B schedule without being given any actual idea of what that schedule looks like. Originally I had assumed that it would look something like A's reporting two days and B's reporting two days, and virtual learning for all children three days, with the two in school days remaining consistent. However, there are some rumors going around that the schedule will alternate each week - Week 1 all A's will report on MWF and B's will report TuTh; Week 2 A's report TuTh and B's MWF. Can the Board and the District please offer parents some clarification on this before making a final decision? While both scenarios pose difficulties for working parents, we can't be expected to plan ahead with our employers without having an idea of what a schedule will look like.

I am going to have two children in two different schools. Will children in the same family be put on the same A or B grouping? I would assume yes, but I also know never to assume anything.

**Jonathan Regino, 19 Alfa Terrace, Morton**

I would like to voice concerns over the proposed AB schedule. My Wife and I are both teachers in Delaware County. My 3 children are enrolled at the SLC and Sabold. We currently use Step-by-Step Daycare for before and after school care. If the proposed plan is to be approved, I have a few logistical questions. On the day's when my children are working from home, will a device be given to each of the 3? If not, how will I decide who has priority to watch their teachers teach? In my current situation, Step-by-Step does not provide device or internet access to children on their premises. Is the expectation that my children spend the 5 or 6 hours after I pick them up watching recorded videos and then completing work? I pick up my children at 4:30 we eat dinner at 5:30, so if that is the case my children would be working on schoolwork from about 6pm until they finish. If the timing of the videos matches the school day you are asking them to work until at least 11pm or midnight, keep in mind that all 3 of my children are under 10 years old and typically go to bed between 8 and 8:30.

Has the teacher union approved videotaping teachers in their classroom? Are you going to seek permission from every students' family to be recorded? What if my child walks by the camera or asks a question? I do not want my children to be recorded and shared online whether it is their voice or an accidental walk by. What if a parent has a vendetta against a teacher and creates a compilation of parts of a lesson and posts those recordings online or shares them in their social group? The video could be manipulated in a way that makes any teacher look bad. With low cost and ease of obtaining software to create deep fakes, what is to stop a parent or even a student from using the teacher's videos in an inappropriate way? With 4 or 5 hours of unedited content (video) there is too much data being shared publicly without any ability to monitor what is being shared.

I believe every elementary student whose family wants them to return to school should do so using a 5-day schedule. The A/B schedule leads to a childcare nightmare especially for families who have both parents working and not from home. The local daycares in Springfield will not be able to meet the demands of all those students who need care on the off days. The logistics of having different days off and on each week leads to problems finding care. If the majority of students at the daycare I use, Step-by-Step happen to have the same day off, they won't be able to support all of those students and may ask parents to find alternative care for their children.

Thank you!

**Jen Ruskowski, 739 Barry Drive, Springfield**

We are wondering what the in school COVID screenings would look like, more so the protocol to send a student to the nurse or the isolation station, and then what happens. Our soon to be 5th grader has severe seasonal allergies, and his reactions/ symptoms would appear to present themselves as COVID symptoms. Will he be removed from the room and sent to the nurse each time his allergies flare up, or will he be sent to where students with COVID symptoms are being isolated? If he is required to go home, what is the protocol on him returning to school? Will he need to have a negative COVID test before he returns to school? If so, will this be required each time he is dismissed from school due to these symptoms?

**Jennifer Vona, 941 West Ave, Springfield**

How lenient will the district be with deadlines for school work? I have no idea how I am going to manage working outside of the home every day and trying to keep up the school work on the days he is home, when I am not there to assist. I will try to keep up as best as possible, but I'm sure things will get lost in the process. I would like to know how grading will be done, if that is possible at this point. I realize things are changing daily.

**Tamara Bean, 329 Kennerly Rd., Springfield**

We would first like to thank everyone for all of their hard work and commitment to serving the families of the Springfield School District. We both grew up in the district and are thrilled to be raising our two sons who are going into 11th grade and 9th grade at SHS.

This pandemic has brought about some tough situations for us and many others including "homeschooling", unemployment, and overall anxiety and mental health challenges. We have no doubt that it has also been a tough situation for educators and administrators in this and all school districts nationwide and appreciate everyone's hard work and dedication to keeping our community safe while working on how to best serve the education needs of our children.

With all that being said, we would like to voice our opinion and concerns about the upcoming school year. We feel that it is important for the children to be in school, in person, with their peers and their teachers as much as possible. We realize safety precautions need to be considered and feel our community can adhere to whatever guidelines are in place in order to make this work. Our children need to be in school face to face with their teachers as much as

**Tamara Bean (cont'd)**

possible in order to properly learn the curriculum in order to progress and succeed. They need to be around their peers for social interaction and to learn life lessons including compromise and collaboration.

Again, we appreciate all your hard work and commitment as always, especially during this difficult time.

**Kim and Mike Craddock, 604 Cheyney Rd, Springfield**

We are strongly in favor of the kids going back to school in September. Our students need structure, discipline and the social skills that are learned in a classroom environment. In our opinion, the benefits outweigh the risks.

We know that Springfield School District is doing the best they can for our children. Please offer in person learning in September. The mental health of our children is at stake and they need to be in school .

**Sandra Maddox, 110 N. Morton Ave., Morton**

Is there someone we contact directly at <https://www.edmentum.com>?

Is Springfield really expecting parents to pay for enrollment during a pandemic to ensure the safety of our children? Why not choose a program that we could have all enrolled in free or put into place your own virtual learning that Students and parents could choose to enroll so that kids can still interact and learn with their fellow classmates in SSD?

Is the edmentum enrollment the only virtual school Springfield is accepting or can we choose other programs and just change our child/ childrens enrollment to Homeschool in general?

**Stephanie Sciecinski, 241 Welsh Drive, Springfield**

My name is Stephanie Sciecinski and I have two daughters in the Springfield School District. My husband and I are both teachers in nearby districts. We want nothing more than a return to normalcy, but right now we are pleading with you to consider going 100% virtual at least for the first trimester of school.

Just like many of you, we are mourning the loss of what could have been. But as teachers we know that returning to the school building will not be a return to the school experience that we want so badly for our daughters. With the necessary guidelines, students will be isolated at their desks. The teachers will teach them from the front of the room all day while they wear a mask. The things that make school special- the collaboration between peers, the class meetings on the carpet, the lessons at the guided reading table- these things will not be happening. Everything teachers know about best practice and engaging students will have to take a back seat to safety.

If the argument for returning to school is that kids learn better in person than online, I'm not sure we are making an accurate comparison. I honestly do not believe that students will learn better sitting in one spot, wearing a mask and listening to the teacher lecture from the front of the room. The district has already stated that if they went entirely virtual, their approach would be different than it was in the spring when they had a matter of days to prepare. They have committed to a more interactive and engaging program should the district decide to go fully virtual.

However, if the district sticks with the hybrid plan, teachers will be spread very thin. They will be teaching in person five days a week. I can only imagine that on the two or three days that your child will be learning online, they will either be passively watching a livestream of the classroom or doing busy work. So what hybrid looks like is half of the week in school in a restrictive environment with minimal opportunities for socialization and individualized instruction. For the other half of the week they will be at home doing something online that is most likely not interactive or engaging.

So if we are looking at risk/reward, the reward really isn't what we imagine when we think of school. And what about the risk? Children seem to be less likely to develop severe symptoms of COVID-19, but children have also become very sick and died. Everyday doctors and scientists are learning more about the effects on the body's organs even in cases where people were asymptomatic. Is this a risk we are willing to take? Children can spread COVID. Children ages 10-19 are just as likely as adults to spread the virus. They can bring it home to your family. And let's not forget that schools do not only house kids. What about the bus drivers, cafeteria workers, teachers, and custodians? Reduced class sizes and mandated masks certainly help, but there is growing evidence that the virus is not only spread through droplets,

**Stephanie Sciecinski (cont'd)**

but also through aerosols. Masks help with droplets but if the virus is airborne, masks are less effective. It is also believed that the amount of exposure you have to the virus can determine the severity of your illness. Are masks effective if you share a room with an infected person for six hours a day? I don't want my kids to be the guinea pigs in that experiment. No other nation has returned to school with such high rates of infection. Camps and daycares around the country have had outbreaks. One COVID death in the Springfield school district would be unacceptable when we have a safer option. Please consider the option with the least risk and the greatest opportunity for stability and academic excellence. Please consider 100% virtual instruction for the first trimester of the year.

**Kathleen Forrest, 631 Prospect Rd., Springfield**

Dear Dr Barber,

I am writing to voice my support to the district, school board and administration to open classrooms this fall to in person instruction. As a healthcare provider I am very aware of the precautions that need to be taken to keep our community safe in the midst of this pandemic. I also realize this virus isn't going away anytime soon.

I have 3 children in the district attending Sabold, ETR and SHS. Their safety is my number one priority. I have always felt it is the number one priority of our district as well. I have full confidence that the school administrators have taken all the proper precautions to allow students to come back in the fall to a classroom setting. Although it is my preference to have my children attend a regular 5 day schedule, I believe they must at the very least participate in the A/ B schedule. I recognize all the challenges these modifications involve but our children need teacher instruction in a classroom in order to grow academically and develop socially as adolescents and teenagers. I believe the isolation of virtual learning is detrimental to our children's emotional wellbeing.

I strongly urge the school board to move forward with opening our district to in person classroom instruction.

Thank you to everyone in our district making these hard decisions and spending countless hours to ensure we provide excellent education in a safe environment. I give my permission for this letter to be shared at the school board meeting.

**Traci Mina, 269 Beechwood Rd., Springfield**

Is there a reason the school district did not ask parents for input upcoming school year? Why didn't the school District ask parents if they would want virtual learning or in school learning? If you asked if could have helped with social distancing. Also how can the school district not have School opening when football team was practicing on School property? If we do some virtual learning will teachers be teaching or will the parents again be teaching? I have very young kids they need interaction with a teacher when learning. A video showing how to do math is not teaching. Why are school counselors not contacting every student at least once by phone? Will the teachers be monitored to make sure they are working and not shopping. I know there were teachers in the spring that were shopping during school hours. Thank you

**Doug and Kate Ferguson, 123 Beech Terrace, Springfield**

I have 4 students in the district - an 8th and 6th grader at ETR, a 5th grader at Scenic and a 1st grader at the SLC.

Consideration needs to be given to a 1/2 day schedule for Elementary school students. Elementary aged students need the everyday in person instruction. A half day approach will put students and teachers in the best position to succeed.

- a 1/2 day allows the students to have instruction in Math and Reading everyday
- specials could rotate based on the day - if a special is suited to be run totally online it should and that would be the hybrid part of the day
- a 1/2 day eliminates lunch
- 1/2 day reduces the time students need to wear a mask and therefore they are more likely to keep them on
- students can remain in the same class as last year and the teachers should split them - alphabetically although easy, may not be best in this age group
- busing in the middle of the day would need to be figured out - but I think it can be done

This situation is not ideal, however there is opportunity to put our students and teachers in the best possible position to succeed - and though a whole day every other day might work well for High school and even middle school , a half day approach makes much more sense for Elementary aged students. There is no reason we can't do both effectively.



**Tina Aitala Engbloom, 517 Lawrence Dr., Springfield**

First, thank you for all that you are doing. To say it is a difficult endeavor is an understatement. Second, about opening schools: Health and safety of the students and school community are topmost priority. If numbers had continued to flatten, I'd support in-person education this Fall. Now that we are on an upswing again, it would be prudent to start the school year virtually and reassess conditions throughout the Fall for a January opening in-person if data proves it is safer.

**Dawn Halquist, 36 Worrell Dr., Springfield**

> I have a few questions/comments about your plan to re-open, after reading the FAQ.

> 1. How will hand washing be facilitated at the high school by teachers when very few classrooms have sinks at the MS and HS levels?

> 2. How will shared lab equipment and calculators be facilitated?

> 3. If a student has a medical issue and cannot wear a mask- There is an option for them- why are they not required to do virtual learning?

>

> 4. How do we guard against mass obtaining of "medical issue" notes from physicians?

>

> 5. Trusting students and parents to Adhere to guidelines before entering school, such as taking temperature, etc. is not securing my child's safety at school.

>

> 5. After reading your FAQ I don't see how this is workable on a practical level.

>

> There is no good answer here but going virtual is the safest option.

## **Jeremy Willard, 185 South Highland Rd., Springfield**

- Are there enough teachers whom are willing to come back to restart school on and A/B schedule?
- Given that it is likely that schools will be repeatedly closing/opening due to possible exposure, symptoms, confirmed cases or even other families violating restricted states' what is the back up plan when that is not active?
- Why can we not continue the online instruction through the school district if we do not feel safe with your in person plan?
- What are thresholds (per classroom and per school as a whole) for temporary or longer closures due to risks in first bullet?
- Do families have to sign a document stating that they understand the risks/consequences of not following social restrictions? If in person classes begin they are no longer making decisions for just their own families.

## **Maria Bouikidis, 112 Providence Rd., Morton**

Hello. As a parent of two students in the Springfield School District, I am for schools reopening in the fall. Schools shutting down to Coronavirus has taken a dramatic toll on our children's education. It has affected them in more ways than one. Schools should reopen on time with certain requirements put into place and only wearing masks if that student and his/her parents choose to have them wear one. Our kids have been out of school for way to long. They are not going receive the proper learning experience by sitting on a computer and merely doing assignments. I believe that they have not truly learned much since virtual learning came into place. Not every teacher has given adequate education, supervision and support to their students. Kids are not learning when they don't receive in-person instruction and have difficulty or questions concerning their material. The entire virtual process has not been efficient in giving the necessary tools to learn. I also pay my school taxes like everyone else. Why should I have to pay school taxes if my child does not attend school and doesn't receive a proper education. Who will stand up for our children and look out for their best interests? Our children need to progress and be prepared for their future goals and aspirations. Our children will regress and continue not to effectively learn; they will not be prepared for their future endeavors. Parents need to not be ignorant and keep their children home when they display any sign/symptoms of being sick. Collaboration needs to exist between parents, students, teachers and all school administration. There is no reason kids shouldn't be practicing healthy hygiene on a daily basis. They learn by what we teach them and through example. Also, kids need social interaction for their own physical and mental health and development. Being

**Maria Bouikidis (cont'd)**

completely isolated from others is not healthy for their wellbeing. They need to be around others and have some type of normalcy. I truly hope that even though everyone may not agree with my opinions that that they do take into consideration all the pros and cons in reopening schools. We, as parents, are responsible for making sure what is best for our children. This isn't an easy decision for anyone to make and we all want our kids to be healthy and safe.

Thank you for your time.

**Brian & Laura Wisely, 215 S. Norwinden Ave., Springfield**

Dear Dr. Barber and members of the Springfield School District Board of Directors:

As the parents of a rising junior and rising seventh grader in the Springfield School District, we are writing to express our hope that you will open district schools on a full-time, in-person basis in September.

When we moved to Springfield nearly 20 years ago, we did so knowing that our children would be able to attend schools in a district with a reputation for rigorous academics, dedicated teachers and staff, and their choice of extracurricular activities. In the spring of 2020, we learned that there is simply no substitute for this. We deeply appreciate the efforts made by the district, administrators, teachers and staff to provide a robust virtual learning experience in the face of an unexpected and unprecedented pandemic. However, it was clear that there was no comparison to the benefits of in-person learning. Our children missed interacting with their teachers and learning alongside their friends, and the lack of a standard grading system meant they were completing assignments for the sake of an "SC," not striving for an A on a project or studying diligently for an upcoming test. Without their teachers to guide them and their classmates to challenge them, their motivation was simply not there.

Our oldest child will be headed to college in less than two years, and our youngest will enter high school at the same time. We are hoping both will do so with the benefit of a strong academic foundation, and we know that an in-person learning experience is the best way to build it. We know adjustments will be necessary to ensure a safe environment, and we will be happy to accept these and help implement them in any way we can.

Again, we commend the board, the administration, the teachers and the staff on their efforts to provide virtual learning during the pandemic shutdown, but we hope the district will decide to move forward with in-person learning this fall.

Please feel free to read this at the Board of Directors meeting on July 27, 2020.

**Catrina Brosko, 1149 Providence Rd., Springfield**

1.) My daughter (rising 4th grader at Scenic) is a type 1 diabetic. If a type 1 diabetic has well controlled sugars (which she does) her type 1 does not put her at higher risk to CATCH the virus. It does however put her at higher risk of complications if she should catch the virus (including a possibly fatal condition known as diabetic ketoacidosis or DKA). Due to her type 1 she visits the nurses office frequently during a regular school day. Some of these visits are life sustaining, like when her blood sugar starts to drop and she needs immediate intervention. We as a family are trying to brainstorm ways to keep her out of the nurses office as much as possible BUT I would like to know what the district has planned for their students with medical conditions that require visits to the nurse even tho they are not sick?

2.) How will you handle a teacher being diagnosed with the virus? Specifically, will you notify all parents of the students in the class? Who would be required to quarantine in that situation, the teacher only? How will you handle a child testing positive for the virus? Will you notify parents of a child in the class being positive?

3.) I am having a difficult time envisioning what a recess time will look like for our children. My other daughter is a rising 1st grader at the SLC. In the most recent communication from the district it stated "we will encourage activities that allow for social distancing during playground time". Can you go more in depth as to what these activities will be and what recess will look like?

4.) Also in the latest communication it states under hygiene that one of your experts is quoted as saying you will "have a really rigorous vaccination campaigns". Can you go more into detail about this? Will it be more than being caught up on the standard vaccination schedule? Does this include the possibility of a Covid vaccine and will you require that all students get the covid vaccine to attend school? Does this include a flu vaccine? Will students be required to get a flu shot every season?

5.) Are there any days planned for rising 1st graders to get acclimated to their new schedule? They were on half days for half of last year, then virtual learning, and now they are expected to return to school with all their new restrictions and attend full days?

6.) How will you enforce social distancing and mask wearing? Will there be consequences to not abiding by these new restrictions? If so, what will that look like?

## **Catrina Brosko (cont'd)**

7.) If we choose to start the year going the virtual route, will the SVA students have any instruction from a teacher in the SSD or will it all be the teachers from the program you are using? How will they be integrated back into SSD if they choose to return later in the year?

8.) If we a shutdown happens again, will everyone be directed to the SVA or will the SSD teachers take over the virtual learning?

9.) What will a typical day look like for a SVA student? How much time will be spent on learning daily?

10.) Will K-1 and 2-5 students be in the same class, same desk, all day long? When will they be allowed to get up and move.

I appreciate everything the board is doing to organize a safe, efficient, entrance back into school. Very hard decisions are to be made for the board, the teachers and staff, and the parents.

## **Kelly Clark, 133 Morton Rd., Springfield**

I would like to voice my opinion and concerns about the up coming school year. As a full time working mother of 3 school age children (7, 12, and 14), not letting the kids go back to school full time with not work for my household. I work at a dental office and don't have the opportunity to work from home. My husband and I both work and need the kids to be in school in order for us to go to work. If the kids do not go back I will lose my job, I will have to quit work in order stay home and help my children adjust to this stay at home school life. I need my income in order to provide for my family. I know the school district is working hard in order to keep everyone socially distant and safe. I hope that they can find the way to get these kids back in school in September so I can continue to work and provide for my family. Thank you to all the administration in the district for all you hard work.

**Janet O'Connor, 1313 Kendall Rd., Swarthmore**

Good evening, Dr. Barber.

I understand that the board will be voting on whether or not the students should return to school in September.

I would like to quote a fellow parent from the Penn State Parent Facebook.

“ HI all. I am a general surgeon and frontline caregiver. In April, at the height of the pandemic here in NYC, I was deployed forward to help fight the virus with my colleagues. I am seeing patients daily that are either COVID + or have been COVID +. I am still COVID neg, thank goodness, and take all the same precautions that all of you are (hopefully still doing).

I am looking forward to my son returning to classes in the fall. So is he. I look forward to my daughter returning to classes in the fall at her HS as well. They have my full support. None of us are afraid.

Having been in the middle of this, fighting it, seeing pt's in critical condition on vents and, as a physician and scientist having to make decisions for my family, I will share some thoughts. Now, this is not anything political nor am I making suggestions on what you should do for your family. I am sharing what both my children and I have discussed in our 'family town hall meetings' based on the available science that we have today.

It is most probable that we are NOT going to eradicate the coronavirus. Similar to influenza, it is probably here to stay. Like terrorism, you have a choice to make, live in fear, negatively impact your life, hide, barricade, or, figure a way through this. There is NO antiviral medication to date (no antibiotic like we have for bacteria). A vaccine is in the works but no one knows yet how effective it will be. No one knows if the virus will mutate each year similar to the influenza virus. No one knows if any antibodies we generate will provide a longterm resistance.

The facts we know so far:

-nearly all young healthy adults who contract the virus have minimal to no significant morbidity or mortality -European schools that are open have done well -leading pediatricians support the return to school of children -people at greatest risk have underlying medical issues we are all familiar with by now

## Janet O'Connor (cont'd)

Are their outliers and rare situations when a young person can get ill, absolutely, but, this is the minority. Perhaps, if your child has risk factors, then, returning to school may be a more difficult choice for you.

In making decisions for your family, try and stick with the facts vs much media hype. Eg, the media talks about increasing COVID-19 cases, but, they do not tell you:

- how many are asymptomatic converted positive, no symptoms -hospital admissions?
- placed in ICU?
- vented?

Where I am, we are in normal mode, using precautions, no increase in any of the above.

Most of the country is going to convert or contract at some point. Remember, this is an invisible viral particle. In addition, we may improve with herd immunity over time.

So, my children have my full support to go back to school. I have no fear for them. I HAVE counseled both of them to continue their PPE as needed and what situations should be mandatory PPE and things they can do in a classroom to keep precautions, when to decide it may not be safe, etc, constant handwashing, etc.

I contacted the PSU's president's office to make one suggestion. It may benefit many of our PSU families to have our student's COVID tested around the week of finals, prior to coming home. This may provide some comfort to families to know if there is any risk to any family members that DO have risk factors. If positive, the family can discuss quarantine. If negative, a big welcome home.

In my entire surgical career, I have never seen anything like this except for one brief Ebola case a few years ago. I wish you all good health and safety. WE ARE!!! (using facts, not fear-mongering like burning dumpsters)"-Frank Ross

This parent wrote the above so eloquently that I certainly could not have written my thoughts on returning to school any better.

I fully, 100%, support any decision to send the kids back to school!!!  
Thank you for your time.

**Kristina Williams, 437 Maplewood Rd., Springfield**

I wanted to provide some feedback about the proposed plan before it goes before the Board. I understand these are strange times and it's impossible to make everyone happy but I hope you'll take my opinion, and the opinion of other community members seriously.

I am the mother of an incoming first grader. I am a teacher who has been home with my daughter since she was born. I have decided to return to teaching - gradually - by becoming a head teacher at a nearby preschool. I'm thrilled to be back in a classroom, even during these trying times. Once it became obvious that the neighborhood schools were going to a hybrid model, my boss was amazing. She immediately came up with a plan so that we could teach in teams, on the two days our children were in school, and be home with them for virtual school on the other three days. Amazing. Such a relief. Most of my coworkers have children in other districts in the area - with the majority in WSSD. I am the only one with a child in Springfield.

Then I find out about this rotating schedule. MWF one week, TR the next. It's a logistical nightmare for me, for my husband, for my boss and I'm sure for many other working parents. How can we arrange childcare - childcare that can help be our child's teacher for those days we can't be home when the schedule isn't consistent? My boss can't create a teaching team if my child's schedule changes each week. I can't work if my boss can't use me as part of a teaching team.

Why does Springfield feel like they need to do something different than other area districts? I was 100% on board with the hybrid - 2 day model. 100%. Now I feel like Springfield isn't taking the impact on the community into consideration.

I hope you will express my thoughts to the board and I hope the board will remain open minded and take community opinions into consideration.



**Debbie Hart, 127 Morton Rd., Springfield**

I need to voice opinion on the next school year plan. I feel they should be back in school following the pre cautions that are put in place. I am a Grandmom of three grandsons which I have during the day while their moms can work. If the district goes with keeping the kids home for virtual schooling, their will be a lot of parents out of work once again. It will make it very hard for these kids to be taught. I will have a tough time since I'm not great with the computer stuff and for those kids that have IEP's and need that extra help will certainly make it harder. I know you have a tough job ahead and I appreciate everything you have done for the district and I pray the right decision is made in the end. I know there will be angry people no matter what decision is made, but the responsibility will be on them on what they are going to do.

**Kristin Schoffler, 608 Beatty Rd., Springfield**

I know yourself and the Board of Directors have been receiving many emails and calls regarding what is best option for the kids.

I have a freshman and 3 step kids in the Springfield School District. Our family supports the Springfield School district's/Governors decision to send the kids back to school this fall using the hybrid model.

My senior who just graduated lost out on several crucial months of her high school because of COVID-19. I don't want my other daughter or step children to miss out on those same crucial months by not being in school.

I'm sure like most kids our kids were bored and did not love virtual schooling but beyond that we dealt with two of our kids starting with depression because they weren't in school with their friends and learning in a classroom.

My step son has an IEP and the 100% virtual learning was extremely difficult for him and caused a great deal of unneeded stress for a 16 year old boy. My high-school freshman plays soccer. Beyond her love for the game and her excitement of being able to represent her high school team, it's an emotional outlet we do not want her to lose.

Our family gives our full trust to both you and the school board members to do what is best and keep our children safe so they can return to school in the fall.

Thank you again for all your hard work.

**Barb Dalgish Solt, 217 Parkview Dr., Springfield**

**1<sup>st</sup> email:**

Dear Members and Directors of the School Board and Principals of Schools in our District,

I would like to thank you for your efforts to provide a safe learning environment for our children. Especially, during these unprecedented times of a global pandemic. I sympathize with those of us whose lives have been thrown into chaos. I recognize the struggle for working parents who must support their families and may not have childcare options. However, given the contagious nature of COVID-19, I have very strong reservations about sending our children to in-person instruction in the fall.

As a parent of three children in the Springfield School District, I was very concerned with the publication of the most recent Guiding Principles document sent out via email on 7/9/2020 from the School District. As I am sure most residents of Springfield will agree, we would love for COVID-19 to disappear so the students can return to in-person schooling in the Fall of 2020. Since COVID-19 is very unlikely to simply disappear, we must figure out a way to instruct the children for this upcoming school-year. However, I feel that the Guiding Principles for which the District has published, particularly the “Philosophical Foundations” and basis of re-opening, are deeply troubling and flawed.

I understand that there is no way to remove all risk of contracting the coronavirus, but that does not mean that I am willing to send my children into an environment where they will more than likely be exposed to the virus and carry it home with them to parents, caretakers, and other family members inside and outside of this community. In a previous School District communication (June 17, 2020), the option was presented to allow students to complete either 1 semester or 1 year of virtual learning. I sincerely hope that this is still an option. Not only would this 1) reduce the number of children and potential pathways of exposure for children that do not have the ability to do virtual learning, but 2) it would relieve some of the pressure on the schools in the District to follow CDC guidelines about distancing and reducing or mitigating the risk of coronavirus spreading to students in-person, and 3) it would also reduce the number of students that teachers would be forced to come into contact with, thereby further reducing the risk of transmission.

With regards to the Guiding Principles and Philosophical Foundations that the School District has elected and published to the community on 7/9/2020, the testimonials selected seem to be cherry-picked to lean in one direction without considering other mounting evidence. It appears that the District is only considering re-opening schools for in-person learning in the Fall. The first sentence in the body of the email accompanying the Guiding Principles states that “The health and welfare of our students and staff are paramount in everything we do in

## **Barb Dalgish Solt (cont'd)**

the Springfield School district.” Giving students the options to practice distance learning achieves this goal and greatly reduces risk to students and staff.

The first testimonial in the Philosophical Foundations opines that “the coronavirus doesn’t transmit among children like the flu – that it’s a lower risk”. This is a vague comparison to the flu and it is obviously inserted to purposely distract and down-play the risks of COVID-19. To state that the coronavirus is “a lower risk” is a severely inaccurate depiction of the state of affairs in this country and globally. Research is now showing that children’s COVID-19 symptoms are sometimes not as contagious because they are not presenting themselves with respiratory issues accompanied with sneezing or coughing, as much as adults who tend to suffer more of the respiratory effects of the virus. That does not mean that children can not transmit the disease via respiratory droplets from close-contact talking, yelling, singing, exercise, and non-distanced interaction. These are the type of indoor activities that have been shown to spread the coronavirus. Does the District have the capability to filter the air sufficiently in every classroom and workspace? Additionally, younger children are prone to activities such as touching their mouths, each other, and other surfaces with their hands frequently. These hand-to-mouth tendencies present a risk of coronavirus exposure and transmission, which is an obvious vector in these times of global pandemic. I agree that disinfection is a sound measure to prevent transmission via surface contact, but I suspect that children will have the freedom to exchange countless objects that have not been disinfected throughout the school day. If the School District sincerely wants to keep the health and welfare of the students and staff at the utmost of importance, then they need to be concerned for the health of the teachers and staff. If the testimonial from the doctor at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health claims that the risk to children is low, it is blatantly ignoring the risk to teachers and staff.

I am again deeply troubled by the second testimonial in the Philosophical Foundations, which states “The direction of transmission is adult to children, and kids getting sick is on the order of rare.” There are two main points I would like to address. It seems reasonable to question the claim that the direction of transmission is adult to children given children have been home from school since March and presumably not interacting in the community as frequently as adults. Transmission, in this case, would likely come from adults who are becoming exposed and bringing the virus home with them. Additionally, COVID-19 statistics reported in late June showed transmission and detection was higher in younger adults, more so than the higher-risk group above 60. This indicates that the transmission of COVID-19 does not discriminate based on age. The second part of this testimonial which claims that “kids getting sick is on the order of rare” is purposefully downplaying the risk of 1) children being carriers of the virus and transmitting it to other children, 2) the rare but very serious occurrence of Multisystem

## **Barb Dalgish Solt (cont'd)**

Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C), which has been associated with COVID-19 and causes swelling of the heart/blood vessels/kidneys/digestive system/brain/skin/eyes, and 3) the fact that we do not know the LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF COVID-19 on children (or adults).

The last comment I would like to provide has to do with the Distancing aspect of the Guiding Principles. The testimonial states that "Strict physical distancing should not be emphasized to children in the school setting as it is not practical and could cause significant psychological harm." There is absolutely no reason children should not be encouraged to maintain social distancing (be it 3 feet currently stated in the Guiding Principles, or 6 feet). Social distancing is a proven technique to reduce the number of coronavirus cases, and the only reason the testimonial claims that it is "not practical" is because it is near impossible to enforce. With three young kids (currently ages 4, 8, and 10), please trust me that I know how difficult the concept and application of social distancing can be. However, to ignore a proven and effective method of closing a pathway for the transmission of COVID-19 is simply foolish. The current recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics states that "spacing as close as 3 feet may approach the benefits of 6 feet of space, particularly if students are wearing face coverings and are asymptomatic." The Guiding Principle does not require students to wear face coverings during instruction, so 3 feet does not seem sufficient. The second part of this testimonial that claims that strict physical distancing could "cause significant psychological harm" is baseless as this is only a temporary condition until COVID-19 is no longer a threat.

As of July 9, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state that the "Lowest Risk" for students is a virtual-only learning environment. This presents the lowest risk to students, teachers, and staff. While I understand that this may not be possible for all families in the community, the School District must consider it as an option. The CDC describes a "More Risk" category in which small classes with small groups of students that remain together with the same teacher may perform in-person learning. The last category the CDC describes is the "Highest Risk" category, which includes full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. The Guiding Principles are interpreted to reopen schools in this last Highest Risk category, which conflicts with the statement that "The health and welfare of our students and staff are paramount in everything we do in the Springfield School District."

## **2<sup>nd</sup> email:**

I am writing to provide comments for the upcoming School District meeting on Monday July 27, as I will not be able to attend due to concerns with being in an indoor setting without the

## **Barb Dalgish Solt (cont'd)**

confirmed ability to maintain social distancing during a time when the number of COVID-19 cases are rising again in the state of Pennsylvania.

I have previously sent my comments to you regarding the Guiding Principles that were published earlier this month. They are provided below if you have the opportunity to share them during the school board meeting to the people in attendance.

In addition to these comments provided in my email below (dated July 10), I would also like to ask the School Board some questions regarding the virtual option and hybrid schedule. As of today (July 24), the School Board has provided minimal information about the virtual option they are considering. While I am grateful that the School Board has provided any overview of the virtual option at all, there is no specific information regarding the curriculum that this option will provide. The website linked on the recent District document does not contain a working link to elementary school course work for Pennsylvania (the edmentum course catalog). As my three children will be going into kindergarten, 3rd grade, and 5th grade, this worries me. My questions are as follows:

- 1) Can the School Board guarantee that the virtual option presented (EdOptions Academy, following the edmentum courses) has a curriculum that will be on the same high level that we have received from our own Springfield School District schools?
- 2) If the School Board is unable to guarantee that their virtual option is comparable to the level of schooling students would receive in-person, does the District support students enrolling in other cyber charter schools such as: Chester County's Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School (PALCS), Reach Cyber Charter School, or PA Cyber Charter School?
- 3) As the school plans to open this fall using the hybrid A/B schedule, how will the full curriculum be taught in half the days available for instruction?

Thank you very much for all the hard work you have been doing during this crazy time, and I look forward to hearing your responses.

**Carly Spross, 227 E. Woodland Ave., Springfield**

Thank you all for your continued efforts on establishing the reopening plan for our schools. The attention to detail is appreciated and it is also very clear that you have the best intentions of our students, faculty and community in mind.

Our daughter is registered for Kindergarten at the SLC this Fall. She is our oldest child, so this is our first experience as parents of a SSD student.

As a dual income household with young children, the challenges of accommodating an A/B schedule - Hybrid Instructional model would be easier to manage if the students are in class and out of class the same days each week instead of alternating weekly between M/W/F and T/TH (as was provided as an example in the most recent iteration of the reopening plan).

Would the board consider a different version of the A/B schedule that would allow more regularity week to week so that parents are in a better position to coordinate things like pick-ups, drop-offs, secondary at-home care, before school care, and after school care?

Some examples:

- Scenario 1 -- Group A: In class M/W, Digital learning T/TH/F; Group B: In class, T/TH, Digital learning M/W/F
- Scenario 2 -- Group A: In class M/W and every other Friday, Digital learning T/TH; Group B: In class T/TH and every other Friday, Digital learning M/W

Thank you for your consideration.

**Angelo Colonna, 121 Sycamore Ave., Morton**

I am emailing you with regards to the School Board meeting tonight and questions regarding the return to school plan. I realize there is limited capacity for the meeting and I am hoping I can provide you with a list of concerns or questions I have that can be addressed? My primary concern is with the option for the full time virtual plan, aka Springfield Virtual Academy which will be ran by a third party vendor EdOptions. The EdOptions Academy choice for full time virtual learning does not seem to meet with the standards of SSD nor provide a reasonable solution.

1. The plan states that if we go into a "red phase" then all learning will be done virtually and be performed through the use of the Canvas platform.
  - a. How would students that are on a different platform, i.e. EdOptions Academy, then convert over to the Canvas platform?

## **Angelo Colonna (cont'd)**

- b. If we can do that in the future, why can't we use our own staff now to teach our own students rather than pay for another vendor?
2. The EdOptions Academy is not accredited by any accrediting bodies within the state of Pennsylvania. Their website also states that students will have the opportunity to select their own courses.
  - a. How will this ensure the students will get the education they need and deserve?
  - b. Will the SSD provide students with a list of the courses the students need to sign up for within the EdOptions Academy that correlate with what their peers will be taking in the hybrid plan?
3. It appears that teachers and staff will be present in the school every day but the students will be alternating days in person and at home. This has potential to cross contaminate the exposure of students with staff. If teacher A is with student group A today and then teacher A is with student group B tomorrow, that teacher has just exposed group B students to group A students. This does not make sense.
4. Lastly – why are we rushing and pushing to have our kids back in school so soon? There is a surge beginning to take place and businesses, states and countries that have tried to reopen too soon have seen poor results. Downingtown School District is taking a more measured approach and starting all of their students virtually for the first 6 weeks and then re-evaluating at that point. Can we consider something similar? This would provide staff with getting comfortable with the online platform, get students comfortable with going back to school and most importantly – keep them safe at a time when experts are saying we may see a spike in cases.

I understand that the School Board and the District have been working very hard at trying to find the best option. There is not an easy answer and it is such a fluid situation. I truly appreciate their time and work that they have put in to make the best of a very difficult situation. These are just some observations or questions I have and hope can be addressed and considered.

Thank you for your time,

**Dina Brady, 79 Nield Rd., Springfield**

Had the school district asked families if they are planning to send their kids back? I see many comments online from parents saying they plan on doing 100% virtual. If that cuts enrollment in half then why cant the other families send their kids 5 days a week?