

**Minutes of a Special Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education of
Community Consolidated School District 15
Palatine, Cook County, Illinois 60067
Held on Tuesday, July 7, 2020, 6:30 p.m.**

A Special Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 15, Palatine, Cook County, Illinois, was held virtually through a Zoom platform, on July 7, 2020. Board members were notified by bulletin sent electronically on July 1, 2020.

Roll Call

President Szczupaj called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Board members present virtually via Zoom:

Samantha Bray Ader, Frank Annerino, Wenda Hunt, Zubair Khan, Michael Smolka, Lisa Beth Szczupaj, and Anthony Wang

Board members absent virtually via Zoom: None

Also present virtually were Laurie Heinz, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Claire Kowalczyk, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent; Diana McCluskey, Chief School Business Official; Meg Schnoor, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning; Lisa Nuss, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Morgan Delack, Chief Communication Officer; Thomas Edgar, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent for District Improvement and Data; Renee Urbanski, Executive Director, Second Language Programs; Ann Scully, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Mary Graff, Recording Secretary and others.

Mission Statement

Mrs. Szczupaj recited the District's Mission Statement.

Pledge of Allegiance

Those present via the online platform recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Public comments were gathered through an online Google survey and read aloud to the Board by Mrs. Delack. It was noted that 90 comments, some duplicate, forms were received. The following citizens requested to address the board:

- Bill Maier, resident of Hoffman Estates, requested there be live stream, online learning due to high risk health factors at home.
- Sonia, resident of Palatine, requested on line learning at least to start the school year due to safety and social distancing concerns.
- Valerie Salgado, resident of Palatine, requested online learning due to concern over parents who may have high risk factors to COVID-19.
- Naveen Janapareddy, resident of Palatine, comment was blank.
- Jill McEnery, resident of Palatine, pleaded for a cohort model where the same small group of kids could opt out of in-person learning and e-learn together.
- Michele Banks, resident of Rolling Meadows, asked if those students who choose e-learning in the Fall could participate with their in-person learning class via live streaming.
- Selma Sarkic, resident of Rolling Meadows, begged for schools to reopen on time. It is too hard financially for families, where both parents work, to have their kids home. Children are the victims as they crave socialization and being with their teachers.
- Brandy R Morgan, resident of Palatine, understands the need for students to get back to school but is not yet 100% sure it is safe and health wise.

- Joan Sherrill, resident of Palatine, thinks that it is impossible for the school districts to solve the problems of COVID-19, and that the communities should help.
- Stella Abuah, resident of Palatine, prefers to have her children stay home and do online learning until COVID-19 is completely under control.
- Snejana Condrea, resident of Palatine, simply said, OK.
- Theresa Greinig, resident of Palatine, first said thank you to the District for their time and dedication. 2nd, she would like to know the level of commitment by the District and the teachers to e-learning.
- Jill McEnery-repeat comment from above.
- Charise Jennings, resident of Palatine, asked what measures would be taken for kids with parents who are high risk for COVID-19.
- Michelle Kerley, resident of Palatine, asked if the water fountains would be on in schools.
- Lakshmi Srivalli Kristam, resident of Hoffman Estates, requested online classes until there is a vaccination for COVID-19.
- Kim Merrill, resident of Palatine, would like blended learning.
- Joan Sherrill-repeat comment from above.
- Karen Pawlak, resident of Palatine, wants teachers/planners to know she loves the dual language program, but they need direction.
- Nataly Ibarra, resident of Palatine, comment area was blank.
- Mariam Tanios, resident of Palatine, wonders what the procedure would be if a student tested positive for COVID-19 and how the other classmates' families would be contacted.
- Jason Hanrahan, resident of Palatine, asked if District 15 will commiserate with neighboring districts to coordinate in person attendance in order to account for the impact of child care.
- Valerie Salgado-repeat comment from above
- Jimmy Antonopoulos, resident of Hoffman Estates, asked if the main focus will be to re-open in the Fall, I and what technology would be added.
- Lisa Wood, resident of Rolling Meadows, asked what the policy would be if a child should travel to a high risk state. Would they have to quarantine, and for how long, before returning to school.
- Ramadevi, resident of Hoffman Estates, comment was blank.
- Leena Chiang, resident of Hoffman Estates, believes a full time distance learning option should be available to those who live with family members who are at high risk for COVID-19.
- Alicia, resident of Palatine, feels parents should be given the choice of virtual OR in-person learning with added cleaning measures for safety.
- Erin Christos, resident of Palatine, asked if this meeting must be held virtually, how is it safe for children to return to school.
- Preetha Prabhakaran, resident of Palatine, asked if there could be an option to do virtual classes part time until the COVID-19 situation improves.
- Doreen Hebert, resident of Palatine, asked for the Board's definition of mask wearing. Her definition is for face and mouth to be covered at all times.
- Jill McEnery- repeat comment from above.
- Christy Brim, resident of Inverness, had 8 questions regarding the policies for students who become sick with COVID-19, locker use and mask wearing.
- Mark Stoner, resident of Palatine, expects recess to be discontinued but wonders how the need for social interaction will be dealt with.
- Jennifer Dahl, resident of Inverness, asked what will happen to children who have anxiety over wearing masks. Will they be sent home if they don't wear one?
- Steve Trotter, resident of Palatine, stated that he does not think Governor Pritzker's plan to return to school is necessarily in the best interest of kids.

- Brenda Obil, resident of Palatine, asked if schools do not open for the 2020/21 school year, will there be online learning.
- Alicia-Repeat comment from above
- Hanna Kutyna, resident of Palatine, hopes for in-person learning, and if not, asks how 7th graders will be graded.
- Adam Bulfer, resident of Hoffman Estates, requests to please allow dual language students to be able to attend 4/5 days if a hybrid model for learning is chosen.
- Niki Muller, resident of Palatine, asks what creative solutions have been considered to ensure students are challenged at all levels.
- Michael Dekrell, resident of Palatine, is extremely concerned about the safety of returning to school for students and staff.
- Nicole Mills, resident of Palatine, is hoping for in-person learning. Having kids e-learning from home is too difficult for working parents.
- James Fritz, resident of Palatine, needs in-person learning 5 days a week. E-learning was a failure and almost put his family in financial ruin.
- Jill McEnery-repeat comment from above.
- Kim Merrill, resident of Palatine, would like the District to pay for homeschooling.
- Josephine Skiba, resident of Hoffman Estates, had 4 questions. In summary, she requested parents be given a tour prior to schools reopening and would like a data sheet listing disinfectants used for cleaning throughout the school day.
- Nick Tabic, resident of Rolling Meadows, wondered if a remote learning class could be implemented as social distancing will be impossible for students.
- David Russ, resident of Rolling Meadows, wondered what will determine if schools need to shut down again after reopening.
- Jason Smith, resident of Rolling Meadows, would like the start of school to be postponed due to health concerns; still too many new COVID-19 cases.
- Jess Bedsole, resident of Inverness, says we must find a solution to reopen schools.
- Joel Ramirez, resident of Rolling Meadows, commented in Spanish.
- Vitali Shundryk, resident of Palatine, would like every classroom to install plug in wall air sanitizers with UV-C lights.
- Susan Korb, resident of Palatine, would like a hybrid plan with most of learning being in-person.
- Elizabeth, resident of Palatine, says children learning from home is too difficult for working parents.
- Curtis Marquardt, resident of Hoffman Estates, would like to know the District's short and long term plan for distance learning.
- Subrata Roy, resident of Hoffman Estates, feels it would be irresponsible to send children back to school because it is not safe. If they must go back, a hybrid model would be safest.
- Lakshmi Kristam, resident of Hoffman Estates, is pregnant and asks to please give an option for online learning as she is scared to send her child to school without a vaccine.
- Kristin & Chris Cushing, residents of Palatine, thanked the District for their hard work and offered their support. They made 4 points mainly regarding the difficulty of wearing masks for children with anxiety but prefer in person learning with social distancing.
- DonYell Holcomb, resident of Palatine, stated Half Day Kindergarten interferes with work and asked if there were other options.
- Dianna Rushing, resident of Palatine, asked if open teacher positions would be filled this coming school year.
- Brian, resident of Inverness, asked if there was a plan for orientation for incoming 7th graders.

- Nicole Zeek, resident of Hoffman Estates, is concerned about her special education children being in class with other children who are not wearing masks, and would therefore like a virtual learning option.
- Edyta Klimaszewska, resident of Rolling Meadows, is shocked by the CDC guidelines for wearing facemasks. She is concerned about the harmful physical, emotional and mental effects of carbon dioxide inhalation.
- Westley Neal and his wife, residents of Inverness, believe schools should be fully reopened in the Fall with proper health and safety precautions in place. E-learning is not the same quality of learning as in-person learning.
- Adam Bauske, resident of Hoffman Estates, stated that the health of his family is most important but supports the education system in offering contingency plans.
- Eva Troy, resident of Palatine, has many concerns about the new protocols being considered, most of which are forced social distancing and facemask wearing.
- Deirdre Landgraf, resident of Palatine, wondered what constitutes an exception to wearing a facemask. Her daughter will be a new Kindergartener and cannot put on/take off a mask by herself.
- Adam Bauske-repeat comment from above.
- Julia Awad, resident of Rolling Meadows, asked for a choice between remote and in-person learning, and to please consider other countries who opened classes that had to close again due to a spike in cases of COVID-19.
- Debbie and Bill Baggesen, residents of Palatine, believe special needs children should be included in all day, in-person learning for their best emotional health.
- Becca Bagget, resident of Rolling Meadows, asked what the plan was for teachers uncomfortable returning to in person learning. If she chose virtual learning for her child, can she change her mind at a later date.
- Christine Smith, resident of Arlington Heights, states that she realizes the back to school plan is important, but also hopes the planning team will think about the importance of redistricting as it pertains to location, access and equity.
- Keith Slaven, resident of Rolling Meadows, is concerned about the health hazards of wearing facemasks and feels that forcing people to wear them is against his constitutional rights.
- Melanie Kenn, resident of Palatine, asked if learning in the Fall is virtual, will there be "live lessons" with teachers daily.
- Ratul Saha, resident of Schaumburg, is a proponent of continuing distance learning due to the safety concerns of teachers, staff, and parents, as well as kids.
- Amanda K, resident of Hoffman Estates, asks how many cases of COVID-19 will there have to be for a school and the entire district to shut down.
- Mariam Tanios, resident of Palatine, states that a remote/virtual learning model must be a choice for families, and that the level of instruction must equal that of in-person learning.
- Tom Schwarz, resident of Palatine, feels there should be a choice of both in-person learning and virtual learning so everyone feels comfortable.
- Karen M. McHale, residency unknown, asked if face shields could be worn in lieu of facemasks for younger children and those with sensory issues. She stated there are so many questions and thanked everyone for their time.
- Jennifer Figurelli, resident of Palatine, asked for an explanation of social distancing and if classroom setups would look the same as they did pre COVID-19.
- TJ, resident of Lincolnshire, wonders, given Black Lives Matter, what the district is doing to ensure a curriculum celebrating diversity is taught for both in-person and online learning.
- Karen, resident of Palatine, asks if the kids will have frequent mask breaks throughout the day, and is there a plan to keep them clean.
- Amy Young, residency not known, wonders if a D15 staff member needs to let the district know if their own child has been exposed to COVID-19, and if so, do they have to use sick days to stay home and quarantine.
- Claudio Paucar, resident of Elmwood Park, wonders what the driving principles are in deciding whether or not to bring the kids back to school and how parents/volunteers can help.

Superintendent Update

Minutes of the July 7, 2020, Committee of the Whole Board of Education Meeting

At 7:30 p.m., Dr. Laurie Heinz presented the draft *Return to Learn* slide presentation to the Board of Education and to the more than 800 virtual participants. She explained district administrators created this plan based on the recommendations of IDPH, CDC, World Health Organization, and the ISBE. The team did extensive research to put together options for the board to consider in this 62- slide presentation.

Dr. Heinz explained that safety is the district's number one priority in having children and staff return to school. She highlighted her commitment to staff and elaborated that she has conducted focus groups to talk with staff to ensure they feel safe returning to school with safety enhancement in place.

She presented the 2020-21 Return to Learn plan in which consists of 5 preliminary scenarios:

1. Remote Learning Continues
2. In-Person Instruction with Health and Safety Modifications
3. In-person instruction Opt Out - Virtual Learning Cohorts Formed
4. Blended/Hybrid Experience, Combining In-Person and Virtual Instruction
5. Schools are Fully Reopened

Dr. Heinz explained the 3 Pathways of Instruction the District is considering.

Pathway 1: In-Person instruction with significant health and safety precautions put in place;

Pathway 2: Opting out of In-Person instruction, students placed in virtual cohort; and

Pathway 3: Blended/Hybrid model, a combination of in-person and virtual learning.

Dr. Heinz created six Task Force Sub-Committees to address critical aspects of reopening schools during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Dr. Heinz spoke about health and safety guidelines as they relate to the Illinois Department of Health and ISBE's requirements for returning to school. The district will implement follow the safety measures:

- All students, staff and visitors in schools will be required to wear a mask. Exceptions will be made for students with a medical condition that prohibits them from wearing a mask. The district will provide a mask to all employees and will have disposable masks to give to students and visitors that do not have a mask.
- The district will adhere to the guidelines of no more than 50 people in one gathering space.
- The district will follow social distancing guidelines as much as possible.
- The district is developing a plan for self-certification of staff and we are working with our legal counsel to develop a plan for students.
- Increased cleaning and disinfecting in all of our schools will take place daily.
- Plexiglass has been installed in school offices that welcome visitors.
- A Protected Health Space has been identified at every school and a health assistant is being hired to monitor children in this space.
- Social distancing and hand washing signs as well as protocols will be put in place
- Students will not share supplies or materials
- The use of lockers will be prohibited.
- Clubs and electives are under review.

This list will continue to be refined over the summer.

Karen Flor, Health Services Coordinator, explained the quarantine procedure that the district will be enforcing. The district will contact trace when notified if a student or staff member tests positive. ISBE does not require an entire school closure if there is a positive case in the school.

Safety protocols were discussed for students with IEPs, and 504 plans. A doctor's note will be required to verify a medical condition that prohibits a child from wearing a mask. Ann Scully, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, reiterated Dr. Heinz's feeling that parents must make their choice for the whole school year for the purpose of classroom size planning. This creates predictability and stability which assists in student learning.

When discussing the safety protocols, Mrs. Wenda Hunt, BOE member, asked a question about what the district was going to do if a student refused to wear a mask. Dr. Heinz explained that masks are required and will be enforced at schools. Students will be taught the importance of wearing a mask for the health and safety of everyone at school. If the child still refuses to wear a mask, parents will be notified and a child may have to move to virtual learning if he or she refuses to wear a mask. She did explain that some children may have a medical condition that prohibits them from wearing a mask and we will address such cases individually.

Dr. Heinz explained the layout of classrooms to promote social distancing. The district will be following, "Students Stay, Teachers Transition" to limit movement of students around the building. Guidance to physically distances to the extent possible will be adhered to. Classrooms will be emptied of any non-essential furniture to allow for greater distancing.

Dr. Heinz explained the impact on transportation and asked families to carpool or let the district know that they will drive their child(ren) to school instead of using district transportation. If we have enough families opt out of transportation, we can remain on a two-tier school start times. At present, the district would need to go to a three-tier start time system to transport 10,000 students with the 50 child maximum on a bus.

A question was asked about the lunch procedure for schools. Dr. Heinz explained that students will eat in their classrooms and shared that lunches will be delivered.

Before and after school clubs are under consideration at this time. We are investigating if we can offer band in a "sectional" manner. We are working with neighboring districts to determine if we can offer interscholastic sports. Dr. Heinz explained that at this time we are focusing our energy on core instruction.

Diana McCluskey, Chief School Business Official, spoke about the financial implications of COVID-19 as it pertains to returning to school and virtual learning.

Morgan Delack, Chief Communication Officer, spoke on how the district will communicate with families if there is a positive COVID case in their child's class.

Mrs. Wenda Hunt asked what the process will be if a teacher feels a student is not well in his/her class. Karen Flor explained that the nurse will come down to the classroom to assess the child and determine what the next steps will be. If necessary, the child will be brought to the isolation area and parents will be called to pick up the child.

Janice Mattheis, Director of Innovation and Instructional Technology, spoke about Pathway 2: Opting out of In-Person learning and participating in Virtual Learning. She explained how the virtual classroom compares to the in-person classroom and the work the instructional

team has been doing to develop social emotional activities for students to participate in, parent education programs and curriculum planning to match what their in-person peers will be doing in school. Every student will have access to a Chromebook and a wifi hotspot (if needed).

Dr. Heinz explained the third pathway, the Hybrid Model. She explained the benefits that it limits the numbers of students in a building at one time, but fears it will cause child care issues for families. Additionally, creating transportation schedules need to be reviewed.

Robyn Cook, Assistant Director of Professional Learning & District Development, discussed the long-term plan to get our students back on track. She shared research that high expectations and academic rigor are essential to helping students grow. The district is providing professional development with staff on responsive instruction using formative assessments to assess what students know and inform their instruction.

Laura Swanlund, PhD, Director of Comprehensive Mental Health, discussed ways the district will address the social emotional learning of our students in virtual and in-person learning scenarios. The SEL team created "Cool Tools" on the expectations of the "new" rules of school such as mask wearing at school, hands washing procedures, and social distancing. The team also developed activities and materials teachers can use to build a positive culture in their class and school. Building a connection in schools and classes is a priority this year to help students feel safe and connected to school.

Lisa Nuss, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, gave a workforce update. She stated that a goal will be to make sure staff are ready to return to school and that all schools are adequately staffed; ie: additional substitutes, lunch personnel, custodial and office staff and that accommodation requests are reviewed and honored when they can be. The district will be using CARES Act dollars to hire additional staff. She shared she is working with the five union leaders to assess workforce needs and safety protocols that will be put in place to keep our workforce safe.

Dr. Meg Schnoor, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, explained how the district will continue training staff in Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Teaching practices. By the end of next year, all of our schools will have participated in CLR training.

Dr. Heinz explained the timeline and next steps for parents to enroll their child(ren) in one of the instructional pathways offered to parents.

At 9:55 p.m. Dr. Heinz asked if the Board had any questions. Mr. Smolka and Mrs. Szczupaj commended Dr. Heinz and her team on their tremendous efforts and hoped that families would see they have put in the required time and have exhausted every option so parents can make the decision that is best for them.

At 10:30 p.m. a final question was taken virtually by President Szczupaj, from a parent, who asked the Board members, for transparency sake, to disclose what choices each one would make for their own children. Their responses were as follows:

- Mrs. Szczupaj would send her children back to school.
- Mr. Smolka said his kids would go back.
- Mrs. Hunt would choose option 3.
- Mr. Khan would choose a combination of options 2 and 3.
- Mrs. Ader has a 3 year old, but would choose a mix of options 2 and 3 if her child was school age.
- Mr. Wang would choose a combination of options 2 and 3.

Adjournment

The Board adjourned the Special Committee of the Whole meeting on a motion made by Mr. Annerino, and seconded by Mrs. Ader.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes: Ader, Annerino, Hunt, Khan, Szczupaj, Wang, Smolka

Nays: None

Motion carried (7-0).

The motion carried unanimously, and the special meeting adjourned at 10:57 p.m.

Lisa Beth Szczupaj, President Board of Education

Samantha Bray Ader, Secretary Board of Education