

AUGUST 31, 2020

On August 31, 2020 the Special Board Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Spring-Ford Area School District was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Spring-Ford High School with the following in attendance:

Region I: Wendy Earle, Linda C. Fazzini and Dr. Margaret D. Wright
Region II: Clinton L. Jackson and David R. Shafer
Region III: Thomas J. DiBello, Christina F. Melton and Diane C. Sullivan
Presiding Officer: Colleen Zasowski
Superintendent: Dr. David R. Goodin
Chief Financial Officer: James D. Fink
Solicitor: Mark Fitzgerald, Esq.
Student Reps.: Eshika Seth

The following were absent: Diane Fern (Board Secretary)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Eshika welcomed back the teachers saying everyone is excited to start the new school year. She stated that our teachers can do anything virtually and together or apart we are Spring-Ford proud.

Mrs. Zasowski announced that prior to tonight's meeting the board met in an executive session to discuss personnel. She reminded the public of the process for the meeting and for making public comments at the beginning and end of the meeting.

Mr. Jackson made a motion to allow the public to speak for a 3-minute maximum. He said in the past few meetings they have not reached the one-hour maximum timeline and due to the fact that the meetings have a maximum attendance capacity of 25 people he feels the members of the public wishing to speak should be allotted 3 minutes. Mr. DiBello seconded the motion.

Mrs. Zasowski agreed but proposed that they go the 3 minutes tonight but going forward ask the public to register at future meetings to make comments which would allow a determination if it would be wise to allow the full 3 minutes for comments to get to the one hour timeline previously agreed upon.

There was a roll call vote with Mr. Shafer, Dr. Wright, Mr. Jackson, Mr. DiBello, Mrs. Melton, Mrs. Fazzini, Ms. Sullivan voting yes and Mrs. Zasowski, Mrs. Earle voting no. The motion passed 7-2 to allow the public 3 minutes for comments.

I. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Roland Olsen, Collegeville, asked that Mrs. Earle, Ms. Sullivan, Dr. Wright and Mrs. Fazzini each take the time to state for everyone so as to understand why they oppose back in school planning. He stated that the Board President has stated that no one wants their kids back in school more than she does. He added that Mr. Shafer and Mrs. Melton have both taken the initiative to get to work on the obstacles presented by Dr. Goodin. Mr. Olsen continued that

Mr. DiBello and Mr. Jackson have both been outspoken with regards to getting a detailed plan in place for a return to school. He referenced that Dr. Fauci again just stated that breakouts of COVID are caused by symptomatic causes through coughing and sneezing all over everyone not the rest of us. He added that the two CHOP doctors that presented last week both said we should be in hybrid learning already. He stated that everything is open for business for good reasons, data and commonsense. Mr. Olsen stated that the 4 Board Members have steadfastly held to their anti-back in school stance while none of them have taken the smallest step in the direction of returning kids to school and he would like to know why. He asked if each of them could take turns stating their opposition on returning the kids and teachers to the classroom it would help to clear things up for the many people they represent and do not understand their position. Mr. Olsen commented that he has been given two minutes to stand up and state where he stands and more importantly why. He asked that they do the same given an unlimited amount of time to explain why they are a School Board Member with no interest in figuring out how to return the kids to school. He further asked that they please use facts and data in their presentation so he can understand it. He added that he will not accept a statement from them if they cannot support their position. Mr. Olsen addressed Dr. Goodin saying he is a gentleman and as he has always been kind and considerate to Mr. Olsen's children as he knows he is to many others. Mr. Olsen stated that he felt Dr. Goodin was being hung out to dry by the board and would lose his job if he continues down this path with no plan. He felt Dr. Goodin would be their fall guy. He urged Dr. Goodin to do what he knows is right, ask for the needed resources, engage with the public so they can be of service to him and his administration, and work to get a plan in place and getting the kids back in school together because they both know the kids are safer in our schools. Mr. Olsen commented that the fact that two of the board voted against people having an additional sixty seconds to speak is a further indication that they are tone deaf.

Michael Lebieczinski, Royersford, stated that he is the parent of a Spring-Ford senior and commented that the Carlisle Auto Show recently hosted 20,000 people who gathered safely outdoors over four consecutive days earlier this summer with the consent and written approval of the PA Department of Health and there was not a single COVID-19 transmission attributed. He added that private sports clubs have safely held many outdoor tournaments, such as the West Mont Soccer Team hosting their Annual Battle at Hilltop over the course of two weekends last month with hundreds of students gathering outdoors and there were no COVID-19 cases attributed to these events. Mr. Lebieczinski stated that everyday sports team's practice and safely play games at Manderach Park, Spring-Ford Band practices. Spring-Ford Soccer works out, Spring-Ford Football, Spring-Ford laptop distribution, outdoor protests, outdoor riots, and looting are all occurring with the tacit approval of government and police, however, the Spring-Ford Senior Class multi-year tradition of gathering outdoors before the last first day of school is cancelled. He asked why, could it be conducted safely, were any attempts made to investigate a safe way to conduct this important and symbolic class tradition? Mr. Lebieczinski stated that Spring-Ford Area School District is comprised of 4 municipalities: Limerick Township, Upper Providence Township, Royersford Borough and Spring City with a total of 50,336 residents according to 2018 data. He advised that in the last 14 days there have been a total of 32 cases with 2 in Royersford and 0 in Spring City. He added that half of the cases according to Montgomery County Department of Health were asymptomatic cases. He asked that in a district of 50,000 people with only 32 cases in the last 14 days, what does this tell them and does it substantiate the cancelling of an important outdoor event where guidelines would be followed and if it does then how do they sit there and reconcile this with all of the other outdoor events that have occurred safely and without virus transmission? Mr. Lebieczinski asked the board tonight to pass a motion to direct the administration to conduct the senior tailgate as scheduled on September 8th.

Dan Mayo, Limerick, commented that last week the Ad-Hoc Committee was activated by the board to engage the community in dialogue to provide insights, direction and support to address the challenges that exist for returning to full in-person teaching across the district in a collabora-

tive manner. He stated that he looks forward to hearing exactly how that will occur so that we are not having the same conversations two, three or four weeks from now. Mr. Mayo added that while one week may not be sufficient time to have worked out all of the details, he hoped to hear at a minimum the following; the construction and selection criteria for the committee members, specific outcomes expected from the committee, and the board's commitment to act on the recommendations of the committee. He next spoke about the survey for staff and students saying a sample survey from a neighboring district was shared with the board over the past week and said he is eager to see what our survey will look like and when it will be sent out. Mr. Mayo expressed hope that the results of the surveys will be shared with the committee so that they are all aware of the challenges we are facing with returning to full in-person teaching as soon as possible. He stated that school starts in one week and as of last week there was no cohesive plan to move forward from virtual to hybrid let alone in-person teaching. He said he hoped that he will hear that addressed and this will not be the groundhog's day episode.

Hope Bodenschatz, Royersford, stated that she hoped tonight to hear about a developed survey that will go out to the parents in the next couple of days. She commented that she sees no benefit in why we would wait until the third week of school to send a survey out and asked how the district can develop a plan to bring the kids back into the buildings if they have no idea how many kids they will be working with. She stated that it would be like designing a plane without knowing how many passengers it is intended to transport. She asked if they are talking about a puddle jumper or an overseas airliner? She expressed that she similarly hoped that a survey would go to the teachers soon because you can design the most elegant plane ever created but without pilots they will not ever do us a lot of good. Ms. Bodenschatz said the more time you let go by without sending these surveys out the less likely it will be for an effective plan to be developed. She stated that if there is a solid reason for why you are choosing to delay sending the survey then she would hope to hear the reason given here tonight otherwise the community is left with no other choice than to assume there is no reason and you are not working towards a goal of returning students to the classroom. She commented that she looked forward to hearing tonight's updates.

Erica Hermans, Royersford, recalled that in the last meeting the board agreed to send a survey to staff and families on September 28th which would allow families the opportunity to experience virtual learning and IEP families the opportunity to experience special education opportunities. She stated that there was also discussion on a possible teacher survey on September 14th although there was debate on the appropriateness and the approach. Ms. Hermans commented that although there were some Board Members who were reluctant to agree, they did ultimately give Dr. Goodin direction on the surveying of families. She encouraged the board to move forward with surveying the students and families in the timeline provided at the last meeting, which was September 28th. Ms. Hermans felt that if the board decided to move forward with surveying teachers she would encourage them to do so under the timeline suggested in the last meeting as well. Ms. Hermans stated that she realizes there is a self-appointed group/council which has posted the desire to do asap surveys "as they do not cost anything" but she wanted to be clear that felt there was a cost to surveying which is called survey fatigue. She commented that there is a likelihood of not getting good data from over-surveying saying she like many others has been surveyed multiple times in the past month and she asked what data the council has to deduce that now is the appropriate time to survey. Ms. Hermans said there has been no substantive change in the recommendations of public health officials or the experiences of teachers, staff, parents and students. She felt the right decision was to survey all parties when these groups have had a change to their experience, experienced new protocols and experienced new approaches to learning in order to provide meaningful feedback. She stated that anything sooner than that would only be formed by speculation and this would be terrible decision making.

Kristin Norwood, Collegeville, commented that she is disappointed that the surveys have not been sent out to families to determine how many students would return to in-person instruction. She stated that seeing that this is the first step to try any sort of plan for being back in school, she would have thought that the board and administration would work quickly to push this out to families. She questioned if it was safe to assume that a similar survey was not yet sent out to teachers and felt that this was another piece of vital information needed for the reopening plan. Ms. Norwood said she wanted to address the attention grabbing headlines that have come out now that many colleges are back in session and implored the board not to let any of these articles derail the progress towards reopening our schools. She stated that the headline regarding Temple reads Temple University suspends in-person classes due to COVID-19 outbreak which seems very daunting if you just read the headline but if you actually read the article you will find that there was around 100 cases out of 5000 tested which equates to only 2% and most of the cases are asymptomatic. Ms. Norwood advised that there have been documented studies indicating that asymptomatic sick people are not good carriers of the virus and she questioned whether the suspension of classes was the appropriate course of action for the few students that exhibited mild or moderate flu-like symptoms as stated in the article. Ms. Norwood felt that discussions such as this were very important to the reopening plan as situations like this can quickly disrupt continuity of in-person instruction for our students. She stated that with the Governor mandating that everyone wear masks all day, the risk of transmission of the virus is exceedingly low especially when coupled with proper social distancing. Ms. Norwood felt that these were the types of discussions that should be at the forefront of the Ad-Hoc Committee mentioned at the last meeting. She added that unfortunately she has not heard any additional information about that endeavor. She stated that although she was encouraged by the direction some of the Board Members were going in last week regarding more community involvement, discussing topics at weekly meetings with no follow-up will get us nowhere. She asked the board to please follow through on their commitments to the district to get the students back in school as the students are counting on them.

Rachel Kerchner, Phoenixville, commented that the discussion items on the start of school and the survey for staff and students were written very excessively vaguely. She felt the lack of specificity had proven itself to deliver unfocused, inefficient and unproductive board meetings. She felt the agenda needed to be written with explicit intentions in order to make forward progress in planning for the reopening of schools. She stated that with regards to the start of school discussion, it need sub-topics including; have there been any updates to CDC recommendations relevant to reopening schools and whether any current Spring-Ford policies have been affected, addressing the most current health data numbers and how they line up with the metrics that Spring-Ford is planning to use in determining the viability of in-person learning, update the existing list of hurdles to be overcome in order for our schools to be safely reopened including solutions that have been found, creation of an action plan and/or task force to specifically problem solve each outstanding hurdle along with a timeline for potential solutions to be presented, and an update on PPE procurement and if any additional PPE needed to be purchased in order for schools to reopen. Ms. Kerchner next addressed the discussion item on the survey of staff and students saying the following needed to be added as subtopics; setting a specific date for surveys to be sent out along with a set date for a follow-up survey if needed, determining what specific questions should be on the survey, addressing the viability of a virtual option being offered, and defining how the survey will be executed to ensure valid results. She added that without first committing to addressing specific action items on the agenda lacks focus and accountability. She stated that the children need and deserve all of them taking action and not just talking about it.

Joy Crowle, Collegeville, stated that she found it sad that on this week's agenda it starts with an update on the start of school as school should have started today but did not because Spring-Ford could not even get it together for virtual online learning due to poor planning which seems to be the theme week after week. She asked if they could see how the parents have no faith that anything will get accomplished at tonight's board meeting or any future meetings. Ms. Crowle

commented that a survey was sent out and 54% wanted to send their kids back to school in person. She felt that these are the numbers that should have been used for planning. She added that she could not understand how a school district could send out a survey and then claim that they do not know how valid or accurate the voting was. Ms. Crowle felt if this was the case then another survey should have been sent out ASAP. She stated that surveys should be as simple as this; parents want to send their kids back in-person vote yes or no, no hybrid or what-if scenarios as it is cut and dry. She added that parents that do not want their child to attend in-person sign up for cyber school. She asked that everyone stop trying to make this harder than it needs to be. Ms. Crowle stated that first we could not open because of PPE, then it was that it was not just PPE so parents never get the full story. She stated that parents need full disclosure on what is going on with school and opening in person. She asked if anyone had even looked at desk shields that could be put at every desk and in the cafeteria. She advised that Daniel Boone is doing this and she asked that Spring-Ford reach out to them. She added that when they said they did not need a team for every action item, she would beg to differ and suggested that they take help if help is given. Ms. Crowle commented that Spring-Ford always asks parents to be involved with everything else so let them participate with the opening of our schools for those that want to attend in person. She added that she supported Mr. DiBello's suggestion to hire a project planner and this needed to occur ASAP as time is of the essence and kids needed to be back in school in-person ASAP.

Kate Doyle, Collegeville, commented that she is speaking on the discussion item on the start of school. She stated that as we start the school year she would like to remind the administration and school board to be flexible and open to modifying the initial schedules at all of the grades will start off with next week. She asked that they be sure to listen to all of the feedback from the teachers, parents and students if following or closely following the bell schedule is not conducive to effective learning. Ms. Doyle added that virtual school cannot replicate in-person school and we should avoid trying to force a square peg of normalcy into a round hole of this pandemic. She reminded the board to be sure to allow teachers the flexibility to work from home and not pressure them into the building. She added that teachers may be at high risk themselves or live with or be close to some-one they need to care for at high risk and they wish to do all they can to reduce the risk of contracting COVID. Ms. Doyle encouraged the board and administration to consider starting grade 7-12 at 8:30 or later as mentioned previously it is recommended by the AAP, CDC and AMA. She urged that with no bussing challenges the children please be allowed the opportunity to get the sleep they need for optimum mental and physical health.

Tara Grotto, Royersford, stated that she wanted to talk about the discussion item on the survey. She commented that several of her friends had children start school today in other school districts virtually and it had been a disaster with many emails going to the superintendents of those schools. Ms. Grotto felt that in light of this the current survey date may be too late but thought that possibly families should be given at least the first week to get their feet wet. She encouraged the board to move the survey date up a little bit for the teacher survey in order to allow the administration to have accurate data to use for planning.

Kim Huston, Royersford, commented that she wanted to talk about the discussion item on the survey. She stated that back in June Spring-Ford administration sent out a transportation survey due to COVID to determine how many busses they would need. She advised that the email communication for the survey specifically indicated that by selecting declining district bussing you were authorizing the district to not reserve a seat to transport your student and the student would not be permitted to use district transportation. She stated her reason for bringing this up was due to the discussion last week at the board meeting regarding sending out another survey to determine how many students would attend in person and she felt that when this survey went out it could indicate that by not choosing in-person instruction you are authorizing the district not to reserve a seat in school for in-person learning. Ms. Huston said once the surveys are submitted then no changes should be allowed to be made just like what was communicated along with the transportation survey back in June. She felt that if families do not respond then they should be considered

for Spring-Ford Cyber because Spring-Ford will not be able to plan for them in buildings during COVID. She relayed that this was done by Souderton High School in order to firm up their exact number of students that would be returning in person. She asked that, in addition, the attendance survey be sent out sooner than September 28th in order to ensure the district can get definitive numbers sooner rather than later of the number of students that will be attending in person versus online. Ms. Huston stated that this was the only way, at this point, the board and the administration will have any idea as to how many students they are talking about and would need to plan for in-person instruction. She added that no one wants to be in this situation but we are and decisions need to be made. She commented that this is critical for the mental well-being of all of our kids and to include “what-if” scenarios in a survey will only prolong the students getting back into school. Ms. Huston stated that last week Dr. Goodin expressed his concerns with the cafeteria seating and not being able to accommodate all Spring-Ford students. She felt that if the survey was sent out and parents were held accountable for their decisions at the time the survey is submitted then there would be a lot less undecided responses. She felt the decisions on spacing would be much easier since the student numbers could be a lot less.

Sarah Daunoras, Royersford, stated that she was calling about the discussion item on the survey. She commented that as many are aware there is a parent group led by Mr. Olsen which calls itself a council and sees itself as an official contributor to the decision making of the school board. She asked that the Board of Directors please disengage from this private Facebook group which is not an accepted method of communication with the school board. She added that this is a very vocal minority that is becoming a distraction and the school board does not need to take direction from this group. Ms. Daunoras stated that everyone wants to get their children back to school in person but it needs to be done safely and at the appropriate time. She added that it is not helpful to set an arbitrary date and said that what is needed is a clear metric based on cases in our area such as cases per 100,000 population for the past 14 days which, according to the presenters last week, needs to be at 10 per 100,000. She asked that the board and the administration continue their work developing the necessary protocols for returning to in-person learning. Ms. Daunoras felt it was important that the teachers and administrators have the support they need to make the virtual model work for as long as is necessary. She expressed her thanks to the teachers for all of the work they have already done in preparing virtual lessons and learning how to use Canvas over the past few weeks. She stated that she is looking forward to her kids starting next week although she is disappointed that they were not able to start today.

II. **PERSONNEL**

Mrs. Melton made a motion to approve Items A-C and Mrs. Fazzini seconded it. The motion passed 9-0.

A. **Temporary Professional Staff**

1. **Hope K. Davis**; Special Education Teacher, 7th Grade Center replacing Kathryn M. Shortall who had a change of assignment. Compensation has been set at B, Step 1, \$50,000.00 with benefits per the professional agreement. Effective: To be determined.
2. **Allie M. Pribula**; Elementary Teacher, Oaks Elementary School replacing Christine N. Wike who had a change of assignment. Compensation has been set at B, Step 1, \$50,000.00 with benefits per the professional agreement. Effective: September 1, 2020.

B. **Professional Staff**

1. **Jaclyn B. Pearson**; Special Education Teacher, Senior High School replacing Lindsay N. Miller who resigned. Compensation has been set at B, Step 4, \$52,021.00 with benefits per the professional agreement. Effective: To be determined.

C. Support Staff

1. **Aniqua G. Coleman**; Instructional Assistant, Senior High School replacing Renee A. Byrne who retired. Compensation has been set at \$17.36/hour with benefits per the Instructional Assistants' Benefit Summary. Effective: September 14, 2020.

III. FINANCE

Mr. DiBello made a motion to approve Item A and Mrs. Melton seconded it. Mr. Jackson asked if this would be done virtually and Mr. Rizzo replied yes, that it will be done virtually with an in-person option if participants wanted to have some hands-on training. The motion passed 9-0.

A. The Board approved the following independent contract:

1. **Friendship HLH&A, Inc. – Royersford, PA.** Provide adult and pediatric first aid, CPR, and AED training for up to 80 Spring-Ford instructional assistants. Funding shall be paid from the Special Education Budget and shall not exceed \$3,000.00.

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Dr. Goodin provided an update on Canvas and reminded parents if they had not done so to complete their first day online verification information. He advised that the students attending WMCTC had started school today in-person as that facility is able to provide ample social distancing space for the students although all students are still required to wear masks. Dr. Goodin provided an update on the following: material distribution dates for students, in-service dates for staff, student's and parent's ability to access to Passport to Canvas Training video and a How to Start Your School Day video. Dr. Goodin reminded everyone that September 8th is the first school day for students and attendance will be taken through Canvas. He added that September 14th is the date for beginning to bring into school, for in-person instruction, the low incidence students and that 107 students are planning to come in. Dr. Goodin advised that all other special needs students will receive instruction virtually through Canvas and Zoom and that related services will be provided virtually in accordance with the student's IEP. He stated that plans are being made to bring in all students with special needs. Dr. Goodin next advised that official practices will start September 7th and competitions will begin on September 25th.

Board discussion took place on the distribution of materials and whether anything might delay the start of school on September 8th. Dr. Goodin indicated that everything was on track and barring any unforeseen issues such as a system-wide network failure then students will start school on September 8th. Plans for bringing those students with IEPs, GIEPs and 504s were questioned and Mr. Rizzo advised that the Special Education Supervisors were meeting 2-3 times per week to work out a plan in conjunction with the Human Resource Department on staffing. He provided the details available with regards to the plans for a phased in return for those groups mentioned. It was felt that better communication with parents needed to be provided on this. The board discussed the senior tailgate that normally takes place on the first day of school prior to classes beginning with regards to the high school administration's decision to hold off on this event until such time that the students actually return to school in person. Concerns were raised over the fact that parents of seniors were organizing this event off-site and the potential lack of social distancing which could lead to COVID outbreaks. The board determined that this was a decision of the high school administration, the students and the families and not something the board should not be involved with. Discussion took place on the devices being distributed to students and if there were enough on-hand. Mr. Catalano advised that 1,500 had been ordered but delivery was delayed until January or February due to warehouses being shut down. He reported that the district repurposed older devices so that everyone who had requested a device would receive one but that the preference is to still receive the ones that were ordered so that the older devices could be

swapped out and that the technology refresh schedule and budgeting would be kept in line. The board expressed frustration with this information not being relayed to them sooner. Mr. Rizzo was asked to provide a cyber-school enrollment update and he advised that currently there were approximately 518 enrolled but that the numbers change daily as some parents are still changing their minds. Mr. Rizzo also provided an explanation of the difference between cyber-school and virtual learning. Dr. Goodin was asked about athletics and if the district has seen any positive COVID test results since kids have been practicing and he advised that the district has many precautions put in place and the plans are to move forward with the athletic and band competition season. He added that the extracurricular activities will be starting up virtually the last week of September/first week of October. The board next discussed the planning for how to bring students back to school with regards to a possible phased in approach, the need for a target date, the need for survey results in order to properly plan, what the property and curriculum committees would tackle, the need for a project planner to assist with the planning and coordination of everything, and the need for the plan once determined to be communicated clearly to parents.

Mr. DiBello made a motion that by November 12th all kids are back in school and Mrs. Zasowski seconded it.

Mrs. Melton questioned how a motion could be made that all kids will be back in school on November 12th and stated that she thought this was irresponsible. She suggested that this be a target date.

Mr. DiBello amended his motion to say that a target date be set for November 12th for all kids to be back in school although this can change based on data received for within the district and within the CDC and the County Health. Mrs. Zasowski seconded it.

The floor was opened up for public comment.

Dan Mayo, Limerick, stated that this is a very basic, simple skill that should be contained within someone within administration or the board. He added that this is not rocket science and something that is done every day in the private sector on much more complex situations than this. He commented that he is not minimizing this but felt project management was a basic tenet of running a school and a school board and it escaped him how someone in administration or on the board did not have the skillset to actually put a plan together. Mr. Mayo stated that you set a date, you set target dates, you set milestone events and all of those change but the fact that there was struggling going he found very disheartening as a community member.

Rachel Kerchner, Phoenixville, asked that the board and administration specifically determine what data will need to be set and interpreted for the November 12th date to be a go for in-person learning or that will hinder this. She felt that this is what was missing and that they needed to set parameters that will dictate whether school will open or not. Ms. Kerchner asked that they stop discussing and start doing.

Mary Jo Mcnamara, Royersford, she asked the board to consider including wording for the motion to cover all bases to say "November 12th or sooner if at all possible" especially if we are going to define the metrics. She added that project planning is to give an incentive for delivering early.

Roland Olsen, Collegeville, commented that we have reached an interesting and important point in all of this. He stated that he agreed with Mr. Shafer with his comment on what needs to be done at this point. He endorsed getting this in place with the date and the incentive plan to get students in earlier. Mr. Olsen felt that there needed a team to be in place to drive this to

the finish line. He added that this is the first time we have gotten this close to a plan and we do not want to lose momentum now.

Dr. Wright commented that she wanted to make sure the board was aware that every administrator in Pennsylvania is required to take classes in project management. She stated that what is new is that no one has experience this with a pandemic. She added that administration did come up with an effective plan for opening our schools and that should be successful. Dr. Wright stated that she believed that administration should be tasked with the next step and the next plan. She agreed since we are dealing with a pandemic that we should bring in resources to help but just wanted to make sure that the board was aware that administrators do have experience in project management.

The motion passed 9-0.

A. Update on the Start of School

Mrs. Melton stated that there are a number of folks that due to virtual learning do not have sufficient, meaningful work to perform. She stated that staff members need to know and that no one wants to have to furlough anyone.

Dr. Goodin provided a recap of the proposals for furloughs that had appeared on last week's agenda. He advised that the majority of staff worked in the Food Service Department. The cost savings to the district to enact the furloughs would be around \$83,000.00. Mrs. Leiss reminded the board that food service funding does not come from the General Fund but rather from revenue collected as a result of lunch sales and government subsidy. She confirmed that the furloughs in large part were simply because no meaningful work was available due to students learning virtually. It was asked if other categories of staff, other than food service, were looked at and Mrs. Leiss confirmed that all building administrators were contacted to determine which staff in their building had sufficient, meaningful work and in addition to food service, one security staff member and one attendance secretary at the high school were included in the list of furloughs. Conversation took place on insurance coverage timelines and cobra timelines. The board was reminded that as students are brought back and if brought back early then the furloughed staff can also be brought back as the workload increases and earlier than originally anticipated. There was some confusion on the benefits of furloughing staff that would not be paid if they were not working anyways since the staff were hourly employees and it was advised that this is being done so that the staff members can collect unemployment and be able to have a paycheck coming in.

Mrs. Zasowski made the following motion:

Board approval is needed to authorize the administration to take any and all necessary steps to furlough and/or reduce hours of support staff employees listed below due to a lack of work for these employees in their positions as the result of the ongoing COVID-19 Crisis and the District's determination to utilize online/virtual learning to begin the school year to maximize the health and safety of the school community. In addition, the Administration is so authorized to recall employees on this list to the extent work becomes available during the course of the 2020-2021 school year:

Furloughs

Food Services – Effective September 3, 2020

1. Martina Benedict-Gring
2. Susan L. Bing
3. Theresa A Carfagno
4. Juliet Christman
5. Colleen M. Deschamp
6. Christine A. Dixon

7. Deanna N. Dunn
8. Trudy Durante
9. Benjamin E. Eubanks
10. Carol A. Findley
11. Annette Freed
12. Sarah L. Fusco
13. Joan Gerretz
14. Allyson Bonnie Hansell
15. Elizabeth A. Hayes
16. Charlotte T. Hettrick
17. Lisa Huttinger
18. Christine M. Klag
19. Jacqueline Knerr
20. Tonia Leonard
21. Laraine L. Livergood
22. Karen Lyons
23. Christine Mallozzi
24. Johanna McLaughlin
25. Kathleen L. Mills

26. Theresa Morris
27. Cheryl M. Nave
28. Jayne W. Oyler
29. Patricia Peterson
30. Michael R. Poteete
31. Tina Reppert
32. Elizabeth Robillard
33. Maria G. Romano
34. Cheryl L. Santiago
35. Megan L. Shaeffer
36. Vincenzo Selli
37. Andrea M. Smith
38. Denise L. Smith
39. Marie Angela Smith
40. Mary Timbario
41. Kathleen M. Walker
42. Christine Wheeler

Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness – Effective September 1, 2020

1. Jason R. Corropolese – Security Guard

Office Staff – Effective August 28, 2020

1. Brittany L. Harrington – Attendance Secretary SHS

Reduction in Hours

Food Services – Effective September 3, 2020

1. Rose A. Ames
2. Maureen P. Adams – Manager
3. Lisa A. Davis – Manager
4. Dawn Dechant – Manager
5. Jacqueline Feldman – Manager
6. Maryjo Galen – Manager
7. Raelene M. Jeffers – Manager
8. Marlene McClintock
9. Dawn L. Peiffer – Manager
10. Linda B. Rega – Manager
11. Nancy J. Ruoff – Manager
12. Debra L. Santangelo
13. Gail M. Wolf

Katie Muth, Royersford, stated that Dr. Goodin mentioned that food service as well as several other areas were being considered for furlough or layoff and she asked what the other areas were. Mrs. Melton commented that Mrs. Leiss had already shared the information that would be in response to Ms. Muth's question.

The board discussed the reasoning and purpose for the furloughs which was stated to be so that the staff could collect unemployment as they will not be collecting a paycheck due to there not being any work for them. It was also suggested that possibly administration should be looking at other positions for furlough or layoff as there may be others throughout the district

that due to opening with virtual learning may not be able to provide meaningful work. The board expressed that they were bothered to have to consider this.

There was a roll call vote with Mr. Shafer, Dr. Wright, Mr. Jackson and Mr. DiBello voting no. Mrs. Zasowski, Mrs. Melton, Mrs. Fazzini, Ms. Sullivan and Mrs. Earle voting yes. The motion passed 5-4.

Mrs. Melton asked administration to access staffing and look at other areas for furlough or reduction in hours once we see what the need is after the special education program starts running with some in-person learning. Mrs. Zasowski asked if it was the board's directive for administration to go back and take another look at other areas for furloughs and the majority said yes. Dr. Goodin was asked to take another look at this.

B. Possible Furloughs

Dr. Goodin stated that last week he was directed to start working on a survey to put out to teachers on September 14th and one to families on September 28th. He stated that after discussion he understands that these dates may change. He advised that he did start to draft those surveys and would prefer not to wordsmith it in the public forum. He indicated that the survey for staff does ask that if the district returns to in-person learning the second quarter under a hybrid model did they plan to return to the classroom, exercise their option to remain at home due to one of the qualifying reasons under the Family First Corona Response Act, or other which he explained would be retirement. He advised that the second question would be if the district returns to a full opening or green model did they plan to return to the classroom, exercise their option to remain at home due to one of the qualifying reasons under the Family First Corona Response Act, or other which he explained would be retirement. Dr. Goodin also spoke about the family survey saying it would consist of questions asking they provide the student ID, building they attend, whether if the district returns to in-person learning under a hybrid model did they plan on sending their child in-person or to cyber school, and if the district returns to full in-person learning or the green model did they plan on sending their child in-person or to cyber school.

Mrs. Zasowski asked if this had been discussed with the union representative and Dr. Goodin indicated that this had not happened as of yet that his conversation with them was regarding virtual possibilities and meeting the needs of students who may have to quarantine.

Mrs. Melton stressed the importance of an ability to implement virtual learning as an option as she felt this was an important element for the survey results.

The board discussed the timeline for sending the surveys out and whether the options chosen could be considered binding. Mr. Fitzgerald provided the opinion that the board passed an emergency resolution and in his opinion the decision selected on the survey could be binding. He advised that there are other districts who are telling their families that once they choose then they must stay in that program until the end of the quarter. The board felt that straight-forward questions were best and that the virtual option needed to be looked into in order to determine if it can work and if not be able to provide the reason why. The board was all in favor of sending the survey sooner and the end result was that the staff survey would go out on September 8th and remain live for 3 days followed by the family survey on September 11th which will remain live for 3 days.

C. Survey for Staff and Students

V. BOARD COMMENT

Mrs. Earle stated that she serves on the Upper Providence Board of Parks and Recreation and the Director, Sue Hoffman, reached out to her to present to the board that they are looking into offering a school camp. She commented that this camp would provide an option for parents and caregivers while school is virtual. Mrs. Earle added that there would be space to let the kids be online without interruption. She stated that there would be counselors there to make sure they are staying on task and coordinating pick up and drop off. She commented that they are still working out the logistics but wanted to know if Spring-Ford was considering any such thing. She added that they are reaching out to us to work with YMCA's and daycares so if we are looking for additional space to spread out the kids then this is being offered to Spring-Ford employees and township employees as well. Mrs. Earle stated that if anyone in administration would want to reach out to Sue Hoffman to determine if there is any potential for using this space then she can provide the contact information. Concerns were expressed with what the cost was, whether transportation would be provided and exactly what they were looking for from the district.

Mrs. Zasowski reported that she has been working other districts board leadership and they will be getting together periodically on Zoom to have discussions on what is working, what the challenges are, where can we go from here, how can we spread the word and not reinvent the wheel over and over again since everyone is facing these challenges. Mrs. Zasowski advised that one thing that came out of this collaboration was that in an effort to avoid limiting public comment to two minutes or even putting the cap of one hour on it she would like to propose that we ask the audience to preregister if they decide that they might want to make a comment that evening. She stated that this way when we have that number of people to comment the board can decide if they want to limit comments to three minutes or one hour. Mr. Jackson stated that some of the parent's comments are based on the conversation that takes place at the meeting. Mrs. Zasowski replied that this would be fine for the public comment at the end of the meeting but she was referring to the public comment on agenda items only at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Shafer stated that he appreciates what Mrs. Zasowski was trying to do with getting together with other district leadership but felt that stifling public comment to him does more harm than good. He felt that it was important to allow everyone to speak their mind. Mrs. Zasowski advised that one of the complaints that came out last week following the meeting was that the public comment period did not go the full hour but yet those that spoke were still limited to two minutes. She advised that this would provide a better gauge. Mr. DiBello said he was not in favor of this as they have too many other complicated things going on to take time to collect comments and gauge the number of people. He suggested that they just see how it goes and look at the number of people waiting to make comments at the beginning and adjust accordingly.

Mr. DiBello asked about desk shields and if administration had any idea on the cost. Mrs. Melton said she had looked into this and the cost was \$144 per shield. Mr. DiBello stated that he was only inquiring since advertisements for this were all over but that he was not necessarily in favor of it. He next reported that US News and World Report has listed its 2020 Best High Schools and in that listing Spring-Ford ranked 896 in the country and 26th in the state. He advised that last year Spring-Ford ranked 939 and the year before 1421 so it was great to see us continuing to move up on the list. He praised administration and the high school for all of their efforts.

Mr. Jackson stated that two word that the majority of the parents who comment use are "plan" and "survey". He asked that this be kept in mind. He expressed concern over the devices Mr. Catalano spoke about that would not be received until January or February. He asked that the Board be kept informed on the status of these devices and questioned what the potential cost is for these devices.

Mrs. Melton questioned if the board was planning on meeting again next week. Mrs. Zasowski made a suggestion to move the board work sessions to the 2nd Monday of the month, move the policy and curriculum/technology committee meetings that normally take place on the 2nd Monday to the 3rd Monday and keep the board voting meeting on the 4th Monday of the month. The board was okay with this new schedule for board and committee meetings. Mrs. Fern was charged with running the legal notice regarding these changes and it was determined that this change would go through the end of this year with new meeting schedules being developed after the board reorganization meeting.

Dr. Wright stated that she was disheartened by the tone of last week's meeting. She commented that she is worried about public education and that she and the board are committed to public education. She added that she had seen a growth in board unity since the beginning of the year but since the pandemic she felt the tone of the board became hateful and angry. She reminded the board that the children are watching and referenced the Social Emotional Learning presentation last week where students were participating via Zoom and stated that she felt the board behaved badly last week and struggled to work together. Dr. Wright urged the board members to be aware of what they say and the manner in which they say it as she felt that some of the comments made were rude and brazen towards each other and the administration. She asked them if they would speak to their own children that way or allow anyone to speak that way to them. She thanked and reference a comment received from a community member that indicated they were tired of the constant bickering and finger pointing instead of collaboration and problem solving. Dr. Wright advised that the board receives many emails and comments that go against the plan but that they are done respectfully. She asked the board to try to govern with grace, kindness, empathy, teamwork and integrity. She urged them to work together and assume the best in one another. She expressed that she has faith that they have what it takes to build a better culture and a better school district. She asked that before they speak or write anything that they ask themselves if they are part of the solution or problem. She questioned what they are teaching the children who are most definitely listening. Mrs. Zasowski thanked Dr. Wright for her comments and stated that they all need to have faith in each other in this process and that they should all try to be humble and try their best.

VI. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Roland Olsen, Collegetown, stated that he was in agreement with the plan put forth by Mrs. Zasowski regarding the public comment section of the meeting. He advised that The Council represents people who want to see a plan for getting back in school. He stated that as of the last survey 54% indicated that they want to get back in school and this was done when the COVID data was not great and the kids had only been home for a short period of time. Mr. Olsen felt that these numbers would change following the next survey. He stated that they do not speak against the people who want to stay virtual and anyone who does not support their efforts is in opposition to having a plan for kids to return to school. He added that the opportunity from a technology standpoint to simulcast classrooms where the teachers are teaching both the virtual students as well as those in-person is necessary for a multitude of reasons. He stated that it is necessary for those families who need a choice and it is necessary for those times when kids are going to need to learn from home after they have been in school in-person. Mr. Olsen commented that we have solutions which require no additional spending as students will be using the current technology and he welcomes the opportunity to discuss those solutions so that we can get the kids back in school and those that want to stay home will have that choice as well.

Abby Dierdorf, Royersford, commented on the surveys saying she agrees that the parents know how they would vote on the survey right now. She stated that there are 518 registered for cyber and she felt that if she would have thought this was a good fit for her child she would have already enrolled him. She stated that she supports looking further into synchronous teaching regardless of what phase we are in. She asked what data would be acceptable for "The Council" or for various board members as some disregarded the doctors from CHOP as not being good enough,

the Montco website is not good enough and the CDC is not good enough. Ms. Dierdorf made reference to Mr. Olsen's comment that those who were not part of his private group, which she is not, then they are not about getting kids back to school. She stressed that she is about getting kids back to school and she asked that Mr. Olsen not misunderstand her as she feels kids need to be in school for all the reasons they all passionately believe but it needs to be done safely. Ms. Dierdorf stated that she looks forward to hearing about the plans. She thanked the board for their privilege and honor to serve all.

Lauren Day, Phoenixville, thanked Dr. Wright for her comments on showing empathy and grace. She stated that she wanted to speak about the survey and would like to see it include the virtual option if the responses will be binding for parents. She that currently cyber and in-person learning was not for her family and if the survey responses were binding then she wants the virtual option in there.

Kim Anderson, Collegeville, advised that she had done a search on Amazon on desk shields and found them ranging from \$36 down to \$16 so there are other options than what was spoken about earlier in the meeting. She asked that the survey include a place for parents to provide comments as some families are dealing with different situations than others. Ms. Anderson stated that she wants her kids back in school but does not want survey responses to be binding as if hybrid is the plan then she is not in but if full in-person instruction is the plan then she is in. She urged that a comment section be included.

Dan Mayo, Limerick, expressed his frustration with nothing having been done with the Ad-Hoc Committee and felt it demonstrated the board's lack of commitment to gauge the community and parents in working in communicating problems and working seeking help with issues. He felt the Ad-Hoc was to engage people in the community in more than 2 minutes snippets of time and provide more dialogue. Mr. Mayo stated that there are a lot of people who work in both the public and private sector and have great ideas so not including them was an oversight by the board. He agreed with Mr. Olsen's comments on the survey and stated that it is a way to gather specific data intentionally and with purpose and use it to make decisions. He felt that the comment regarding survey fatigue was an excuse and that an engaged community will never get tired of advocating for their kids for a right solution. Mr. Mayo stated that this is a fluid situation and the data will change from week to week. He felt that this needed to be addressed through multiple surveys at different points in time. He asked that the board focus on the first thing and begin with the end in mind. Mr. Mayo felt that the fact that two board members voted against adding an additional 60 seconds to public commentary was unbelievable and that this is the engagement factor that is missing. He added that to make a decision in a bubble and silence the voice of the people who want to try and help provide solutions was unbelievable. He also felt that the teachers were a silent voice as there was very little commentary about what they want.

Sheri Zawislak, Collegeville, commented that there was no discussion on the limitations as to what was holding the district back from being able to offer both virtual and in-person instruction. She advised that Perkiomen Valley had posted plans offering both virtual and in-person options. She stated that if they can offer both and other districts can offer both then what is holding Spring-Ford back from this. Ms. Zawislak added that Perkiomen Valley had posted a plan with 3 different dates and phases for bringing students back in. She questioned how they could get there this soon when we can't even get a date to start getting a plan together. She suggested that the district reach out to them and other school districts. Ms. Zawislak felt that the teacher's surveys could be sent out so that the district knows what substitutes they may need and can start working on securing substitutes so that we will not be faced with having to go fully virtual again due to staff shortages each quarter this comes up. She encouraged the board to keep moving ahead.

Julie Tighe, Collegeville, stated that she is sure everyone would agree that Spring-Ford is a top school as evidenced today with Mr. DiBello's comment on the high school recognition. Ms. Tighe stated that the high school is one of the best schools in the area and has been for a number of

years before even before some of the current board members were with it. She said the reason she brings this up is because what makes Spring-Ford great is the quality of teachers and the administration. Ms. Tighe expressed that it was frustrating that some members on the board feel the need to micro-manage the administration when we should trust the administration. She added that it was even more frustrating that some parents feel they can micro-manage the board to micro-manage the administration. She stated that a portion of time was used to question the fact that computers were backordered and why the board was not told earlier when in fact the administration found this out and proactively came up with a temporary solution and notified parents of students who were getting devices last week. She stated that the administration had taken care of the issue but yet we continue to micro-manage. Ms. Tighe urged the board to listen to the experts as many board members are not experts in the field of education. She added that last week there were experts who spoke and the amount of parents who posted in social media groups that think they know more than CHOP doctors was extremely upsetting. She commented that it was upsetting to hear Mr. DiBello state how he is looking at the numbers and following the science in one breath and then in the very next breath state the false claim that “the CDC stated that 90 something percent of deaths had a primary or secondary condition”. She advised that the CDC stated 6% of deaths COVID-19 was the only cause mentioned on the death certificate. She stated that death certificates have 4 lines to enter the chain of events that directly caused the death of a person. She added that if you read further down on the CDC website, they provided all of the reasons that have been listed in addition to COVID for the individual’s death and 90% of them included pneumonia, respiratory distress syndrome and respiratory failure; none of which are pre-existing conditions. Ms. Tighe stated that what we do not need in order to open school safely is wasting time quoting stats incorrectly as if they are facts. She urged the board to start listening to the experts and let them do their jobs. She added that if the board has a suggestion then they should present it specifically to the administration and let them run with it and she asked the board to stop micro-managing and recognize that this will keep our school district as one of the best in the area.

Mary Jo Mcnamara, Royersford, stated that she wanted to address Dr. Wright’s comments saying she appreciates her comments regarding everyone acting with decorum. Ms. Mcnamara advised that she watched board meetings for weeks before she started commenting but that the community is tired, frustrated and sometimes the tongue gets lost in these comments. Ms. Mcnamara stated that the public is given 2 minutes to speak and yet the board talks about working together but the two sides are not working together as two steps are taken forward and an unknown number are taken backwards. She felt that last week ended on a high note with an Ad-Hoc Committee conversation which there was not any mention of tonight. She added that they talked about and agreed to all kids back in school on or before November 12th and now the talk is about sending someone off to research how many furloughs we might get. She questioned why and stated that if we are looking towards November 12th then let’s talk about what we can do and not what we can’t do. She added that she can appreciate that we want everyone to act in grace but it took the community to form a community of people in order to get the board to react which did not happen until 2-3 weeks ago. Ms. Mcnamara commented that she tries really hard to speak with grace and hold her tongue but in some of the instances she does not blame the parent’s frustration with the board and administration. She added that she did not think that the administration was micro-managed but rather not managed at all and she believes this is the problem. She asked that someone answer about devices that there was a vote to spend money on and are not getting until February after we are already back in school for four months. She felt this was absurd.

Kristin Norwood, Collegeville, commented that there is a vote happening tomorrow in the PA General Assembly which if passed will allow the school district to make decisions about sports and extracurricular activities including whether spectators are allowed to attend games. She asked that the district’s safety plans be reviewed and figure out a way to allow spectators to attend events. She added that as a parent of a senior athlete she cannot imagine not being

allowed to watch her play her final season as a Spring-Ford Ram. Ms. Norwood expressed appreciation for allowing the kids to play but asked that parents be allowed to watch.

Jill Schadler, Royersford, expressed hope that we will continue as a school district to climb the rank that Mr. DiBello shared tonight and added that after tonight's meeting she does not have a good sense that we will. Ms. Schadler stated that this was not a good meeting and was a step backwards in her opinion. She commented that she continues to lose confidence in the entire board and the school administration. She stated that she did not hear Ms. Sullivan, Mrs. Earle or Mrs. Fazzini respond to Mr. Olsen's request about their previous votes and in fact did not hear Ms. Sullivan or Mrs. Earle offer anything but one comment. She commented that she wanted to address the earlier discussion regarding project managers and stated that Dr. Wright finally asked some questions of her fellow board members. She added that if there are difficult topics such as furloughs for the board and they do not want to discuss those difficult topics then there is a position you can take which is to step off the board. Ms. Schadler stated that "we all want to go home" was a comment she heard tonight and she noted that it was 11:15 and she has to get up at 4:30 but she is staying on because these are important matters they are talking about. She added that talking about where you get your hair and your pedicures is clearly addressing your feelings and not listening to your community and focusing on the children's plan to get back to school. She asked if the board really spent 25 minutes on its agenda discussing a senior tailgate and questioned where the focus on the plan was for students, teachers and continuing this district to be a great school district. Ms. Schadler stated that she is seriously frustrated and said that the furlough cost savings they all just voted on tonight can pay for the project manager. She added that she wanted to use a slogan that everyone has heard which is "why don't you be like Nike and just do it".

Sarah Daunoras, Royersford, thanked Dr. Wright for her comments saying she felt they were absolutely necessary and right. She expressed hope that everyone can move forward including the parents, the public, the board and the administration by working together and questioned why anyone would consider that to be out of line and added that we all need to give each other grace. She commented that in regards to the survey she was pleased to hear that there will be a student ID number required to ensure that the results are valid this time. She asked that they please consider with the short timeline to deploy the survey that it's not possible for the district to guarantee that a virtual option will be available and she explained that what she thinks this means is that they will be broadcasting the live teachers from the buildings for the kids that would be staying home. She did not feel that this can be a possibility in this kind of a timeline that the district can say this could happen. Ms. Daunoras stated that she did not feel this could be made an option on the survey as it may be a down the line option but it is not a true option at this point. She added that she felt it may be helpful to realize that some families may opt for an outside charter school or a private school if necessary if they are not satisfied with the true options that are available with the district's position. She asked that all of this be kept in mind.

Kim Desposito, Royersford, stated that Mr. DiBello asked a very important question regarding the rights for the GIEP, IEP and 504 students that were never addressed and sort of brushed over. She stated that she has had no communication since July 29th regarding her child's GIEP and added that she knows she is not just speaking for her child but many in the district who have received zero communication as well. She commented that they start school in one week and it is very frustrating and very disheartening as are many things going on right now unfortunately with our planning. She asked where the plan was and where are we at with the children's plans for GIEPs, IEPs and 504s. Ms. Desposito reiterated that we are one week away from school and she has heard nothing about her child starting 5th grade and what her plan is. She addressed Dr. Wright's comments regarding attitudes and the parents' level of frustration at this point saying she remembers many, many meetings ago where parents on the other side of the fence were speaking very passionately about their children staying home, talking about children in coffins, burying faculty members, a death page in a yearbook, and were just as rude, disrespectful, passionate and frustrated as those parents who want to see their children back in school and not

learning from a virtual platform. She stated we are Spring-Ford School District and we owe it to our children and families in the community to do what's right at this point and get our children and staff back into school safely.

Cory Parsia, Schwenksville, stated that he wanted to talk about the furloughs and how heart-breaking it is to see people in this community who do interact with kids, are a familiar face to the kids and are mentors to the kids. He commented that he hates to see them lose their jobs and suffer. Mr. Parsia said the reason he brings this up is because he mentioned it at a curriculum board meeting before that the district the last school year spent approximately \$160,000.00 to Pete Grande & Associates for outsourced staff development. He advised that it appears this year that we are spending half of that for outsourced staff development. Mr. Parsia asked that if the district is under a virtual learning platform was there a way of backing out of this contract and get some of this money back to help people in our community or to prevent further furloughs and more people from losing their jobs. He stated that he did not see the need to spend all that money when the teachers have a lot of other things to do rather than get outsourced in-service from an outside company. Mr. Parsia commented that he hated to see these quality people have to go through this when the district could maybe save some money.

Erica Hermans, Royersford, thanked Mr. Catalano and the Technology Department for ensuring that every kid had a device if needed. She said that it sounded like the Technology Department had done a lot of scrambling and a fine job of getting creative in meeting every student's technology needs in spite of supply problems and postal service issues. She stated that she knows some agree that the senior tailgate was a trivial matter and not a board issue but she believes that this should not prevent board members from being able to offer up an opinion. She thanked Mrs. Zasowski for speaking up and taking a stand regarding the senior tailgate because she believes Mrs. Zasowski's point that something like this could jeopardize the school year was 100% on point. She thanked Dr. Wright for listening to the community, advocating for kindness, empathy not discounting people with different opinions, advocating for a flourishing culture and so on. Ms. Hermans appreciated Dr. Wright's continual advocating for the perspective of medical professionals. She added that she did not want to forget the recommendation of the CHOP professionals that met with the board at the last meeting which was "yes, we need to worry about the children but we also have to worry about the whole school eco-system, the role in transmission and bringing it back into the home". Ms. Hermans stated that this is more than about the kids as it is about the staff, our teachers, our families and our community. She commented on the previous comments on survey fatigue saying that as someone who works professionally with adults in learning and development for over 15 years she knows firsthand that an over surveyed population will reduce response rates and data effectiveness whether you believe that should be the case or not. She asked that now that the board has moved towards October 8th and 11th for the survey dates they should give consideration on how they word the survey because without consideration you run the risk of having incomplete and unclean data. She urged the board to scrutinize the data that comes in because figures don't lie but liars can figure.

Christine Grines, Royersford, thanked board and administration for allowing SAT's to take place this past weekend and stated that she understood everything went really well and it just proves that there is an effort that we can make to get students back into school safely even if it means we have to alter the way we do business. She asked where the teachers stand, what is their statement and do they have an official point of view on whether or not they want to go back to school. Ms. Grines commented that she keeps hearing from parents that teachers do not want to go back and she disagrees with this. She added that the teachers she knows and knows well absolutely want to be in the classroom safely. Ms. Grines stated that she has not heard any formal standpoint from them and she wondered what that was and if it was possible to get that. She felt a survey might do some of this work but was not sure if the teachers would be truthful on the survey. Ms. Grines next spoke about the senior tailgate saying she understands that it is not a big deal in the grand scheme of life and that seniors have bigger things to worry about such as graduating but somebody went out of their way to derail what the parents were safely putting in place. She added that for those who are

insinuating or assuming that they know what the plan was are gravely mistaken as there was no plan to have 700 people anywhere. Ms. Grines stated that they are very well aware as parents of the state guidelines for outdoor gatherings so if they were to hold this event, which they will, it will be done with all of the safety guidelines put in place with parent chaperones, social distancing, masks and hopefully a few smiles. She said to take that for whatever it is worth and whoever it was who went out of their way to try to derail them...keep trying.

Christine Pergine, Limerick, commented that she is really confused as to why the district is operating under the red plan as Montgomery County has not been in the red zone for a few months. She stated that she believes a lot has changed since the first vote of 9-0 to keep the kids virtual to start the school year. She added that it keeps being said that the first marking period is virtual but she believes it is time to move the stake in the ground and work on getting the kids back sooner rather than later. Ms. Pergine commented that she thinks if the district starts with bringing the elementary kids back then that would be a start. She asked what the board and administration thought would change between now and November. She added that a few meetings ago Dr. Goodin made a comment that he couldn't figure out how to do both virtual and in person but many of the surrounding Catholic schools are doing that right now with many of the schools starting today and she wondered why Spring-Ford could not learn something from them. She felt that it would wise to talk to these other school boards or administrators to see what is going on. Ms. Pergine stated that with regards to the survey she feels we need something in Skyward that will make sure that most everyone answers the survey similar to the first day verification packet and make it imperative that everyone answer it.

Rachel Kerchner, Phoenixville, addressed Dr. Wright's comment regarding giving grace and stated that she is the biggest proponent of giving grace and never judging a person because they potentially could be having the worst day of their life. She commented that you do not know what they might be going through but that is very different from holding people who are in a position of power accountable for what they are responsible for. She encouraged everyone to step up and realize that what we are doing is important and we don't always need to do it with a please and a thank you as this is serious business and it does not always have to be personal. Ms. Kerchner advised that she has the great honor of being the liaison to the administration and the school board of the Council. She commented that on August 6th she had sent an email on behalf of The Council that addressed enhanced productive communication between the community and the school board. She added that the email also addressed specific measurable criteria to be created that when met would support that established reopening date of the green plan. Ms. Kerchner stated that these things are still not accounted for and this is over three weeks ago and tonight when there was discussion of a plan it seemed as if this was the first time that this idea had been brought up to you. She felt this was very disheartening because they were things that were very much thought through and brought to their attention through an email communication. She commented that she doesn't want to hear that it is 10:00 and they want to go home. She felt the board should have a specific agenda with things that are efficient and she gave examples saying what are the survey dates, what will be included and what is the measurable criteria that will support in person learning. Ms. Kerchner stated that all of these things are still floating out there and are not bound down as the board has not figured them out yet. She felt that this was not efficient and that it was no wonder that the board was not home at 11:32 at night because it is all talk and no action.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Shafer made a motion to adjourn and Mrs. Fazzini seconded it. The motion passed 9-0. The meeting adjourned at 11:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Crew
Assistant Board Secretary

Diane Fern
Board Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED DURING BOARD MEETING 08-31-2020

Jamie Mon 8/31/2020 10:58 PM

Hi!

I worry about making responses to the parent survey binding so early. I understand the need for the board and administration to collect data in order to create a plan. However, as a parent focused on safety, it is difficult (perhaps impossible) to predict today the status of the pandemic in November. I want to send my children back to in-person classes as soon as I feel it is safe to do so. But I cannot predict whether that will be November 12.

I suggest the board to create and share a reopening plan based on data, for example "the schools will reopen for in person learning once covid-19 cases reach below X cases per capita". When a plan like this is created I would be able to confidently make a decision about whether or not to send my child back. Picking an arbitrary date and asking parents concerned with safety to decide if they would feel comfortable sending their child back is very difficult.

Thanks for you consideration,

Jamie Smith

19 Marshwood Dr

Collegeville PA 19426

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