

On October 5, 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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Zasowski announced that due to reinstatement of Governor Wolf’s mandate restricting group meetings to 25 people and that which does not allow for any percentage of any room capacity, the best way to participate in a Spring-Ford School Board meeting is by watching on YouTube or Zoom. She stated that this meeting is not open for in person attendance beyond a total of 25 people. She added that speaking on her own behalf she can assure the public that she has been sent a number of emails and she had reviewed them all and has done her best to respond to as many as possible. Mrs. Zasowski commented that with regards to tonight’s presentation, she asked all members of the community to remain open-minded, listen intently to the options presented, and to remember that they do always have a choice to follow the prescribed plan of action that will hopefully be approved this evening by the board or to go cyber. She stated that in any case, the choice they make will be the right choice for your family. Mrs. Zasowski advised that the commitment survey is set for distribution on the 7th and she asked that they watch for this and respond as they see fit. She asked that instead of taking the initial public comment at the start of the meeting they are going to start with the discussion of the district’s proposed reopening and should there be a motion to approve a reopening plan then public comment will be taken on the motion prior to voting.

I. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Postponed until after the discussion.

II. DISCUSSION ITEM

Dr. Goodin advised that tonight they will propose an opening plan for 7-12 grade students which was developed in coordination with the SFEA Leadership and has components of live instruction and virtual elements. He stated that students at the secondary level change classes every period, so a hybrid structure is being proposed in order to limit student density. Dr. Goodin provided an overview of the presentation say they will cover reopening goals, reopening timeline, what in person learning will look like for marking period 2, what virtual learning will look like in marking period 2 and what the next steps will be. He advised that on September 28th administration was directed to develop an in person virtual opening plan that has the support of SFEA. He stated that they have identified 3 plans that would be supported by the SFEA; first an in person hybrid with a Spring-Ford Cyber Learning option, second and in person hybrid with an asynchronous virtual option and a Spring-Ford Cyber Learning option and third an in person hybrid with a synchronous virtual option and a Spring-Ford

Cyber Learning option. He provided an overview of each of the options including the daily schedule recommendation. Dr. Goodin spoke about why the hybrid model works for the secondary grade levels. He spoke about the K-6 plan that was approved last week providing some additional details as there were some questions that had come in regarding that plan. He next explained class changes at the 7th grade level and at the 8-12 grade levels.

Mrs. Ritter spoke about the 7-12 hybrid option and virtual option which allows students to be in class two days a week and it will allow teachers to use the virtual component by making sure that there is digital content that will fit with the lesson plan. She stated that for some teachers on some given days this may include a livestreaming option when it will work, an option for recorded videos for students to watch with the Canvas content which will give students the opportunity to watch those recorded videos at home if the teacher is not live-streaming. Ms. Ritter stated that this gives teachers the opportunity to make sure that the students who are not present will have the best possible learning environment for that instruction. She commented that the student support that had always been available would still be available whether in person with the hybrid option or whether following the virtual option.

Dr. Goodin provided a quick recap of the information he presented at last week's meeting which included the reopening schedule recommendation, a special education student return timeline review, mask requirements, cafeteria and lunch procedures, changing of classes, bus procedures, daily cleaning of buildings, parent expectations, employee expectations, Spring-Ford COVID-19 Task Force including the update from the school nurses, the weekly COVID Communication, how students will continue learning while quarantined, the timeline for return to full in person learning and the next steps.

Discussion took place on the plan being proposed and supported by the administration and SFEA which was the in-person hybrid model with the synchronous virtual option and the cyber learning option. The options for Wednesday were discussed with regards to the option of the day following the bell schedule or being left for the students to go at their own pace on this day in order to allow greater flexibility to students. There was confusion expressed over livestreaming and why it seemed to be an issue at the last meeting but not as great an issue this week.

Mrs. Ritter spoke on behalf of SFEA saying the understanding is that livestreaming is an option and teachers will implement their lesson plan in the manner that works best for them. She advised that the virtual component is challenging especially when trying to engage kids both in person and at home at the same time. Mr. Laurie commented that it is not the actual technology that is the issue but rather the way it was being approached and with the model presented tonight it provides much more flexibility to the teachers to be able to engage the virtual students.

Mrs. Zasowski made a motion to approve the district's hybrid with the virtual option reopening plan for grades 7-12 and Mrs. Fazzini seconded it.

Mrs. Earle asked about the distance between desks in a hybrid environment wondering if only half of the students are reporting each day then wouldn't you be able to obtain the 6 feet needed for social distance and Dr. Goodin confirmed that was correct. Mrs. Earle next asked if a parent chooses to send their child in the hybrid mode and then decides they do not like it or vice versa, would they be locked into their decision and in what way would this be enforced? Dr. Goodin replied that the district could not enforce it but we are asking parents to make a commitment for the marking period but circumstances arise and if changes need to be made then we will make accommodations for them. Mr. Fitzgerald responded that many districts are requiring commit-

ments for a specific time period and most districts will allow for the move from hybrid to virtual but from virtual to hybrid is generally limited and based on capacity for the most part.

Mr. Jackson stated that he struggles with the hybrid at this time as we have no data to support this.

The floor was opened up for public comment on the motion that was just proposed.

Karin Deeney, Royersford, commented that she wants her kids back in school and they desperately want to be back in school as virtual is not working for them and they need to be in school full-time hands on with full periods of learning. She spoke about her daughter's struggles with Canvas and asked why the district changed the learning system. Ms. Deeney stated that kids are currently playing sports together, working together and are participating in marching band together and questioned why they cannot be back in school. She expressed her frustration over other schools being back in either full-time or with hybrid. She asked when school became childcare as it is referenced that the younger ones need to be in school for childcare and she stated that school is meant for kids to get an education. Ms. Deeney stressed that the older kids need to be in school as mentally they are drained and as fed up with this as she is. She spoke of the students returning to school full-time in February and asked if this could be reevaluated every two weeks rather than waiting until the end of the marking period. She urged the board and Dr. Goodin to do a better job and get the kids back in school.

Colleen Emmons, Collegeville, questioned how parents are expected to make an informed decision on whether to send their kids to school when the school district is not telling them the COVID numbers in the schools. Mr. Fitzgerald interrupted her and advised that this comment section was on the motion at hand.

Mary Jo Mcnamara, Royersford, stated tonight completely contradicts last week's meeting as facilities has been solved, capacity has been solved and the district will still have 20% virtual students all of the time as per the survey results. She questioned Mrs. Ritter asking with 20% of the students participating virtually why it was okay not to livestream and leave them behind. She urged the district to bring the students back to school and felt that the hybrid model was taking a step backwards. Ms. Mcnamara asked Dr. Goodin to do his job and come back with a virtual option for five days a week. She stated that the board previously voted for K-12 to return in person on November 12th.

Venkat-Priya Parigi, Royersford, commented that he agreed with Mr. DiBello that the hybrid option is a compromise with the teacher's union and administration and does not give options to parents. Mr. Parigi expressed that he wants to go completely virtual. He questioned teachers being given the option to choose to either livestream or not. He stated that every other district has implemented having a camera in the classroom rather than having teachers have to carry an iPad around. Mr. Parigi urged the district to go virtual for the rest of the year. He asked that before voting the board let parents decided who wants to be in school and who does not.

Michael Lebiezinski, Royersford, stated that the hybrid with a virtual option will result in teachers having more students remote into the classroom than if students were to return to school 4-5 days a week in person. He felt that the teachers would unconsciously ignore students who are virtual and focus on those in the classroom. Mr. Lebiezinski stated that hybrid was a step backwards as student interact now 5 days a week and it will go down to 2 days a week and this was decided without any benefit or data. He added that based on the survey numbers, grades 7-12 will have fewer students in each classroom than at the K-6 grade levels. He stated that no options presented address what parents clearly vote on via

the survey as an option was provided for virtual and one for hybrid but nothing for those who want their kids in school 5 days a week.

John Mentzer, Limerick, stated that he wanted to understand blue and gold and whether they would all be from the same classroom or different classrooms. He spoke about going from 5 days a week via Zoom down to 2 days a week and added that they want 5 days a week in the classroom but will take 4 days in school with Wednesday being the asynchronous day. Mr. Mentzer commented that the current program with Canvas is very difficult and he hears nothing but complaints from his children and does not understand why the district did not stay with Google Classroom.

Sheri Zawislak, Collegeville, commented that she agrees with most of the callers that this is a step backwards. She added that this is a worse option than virtual for students who take broadcasting as the entire program is based around the kids working together as groups. Ms. Zawislak stated that kids need to be in school at least 4 days a week. She expressed that virtual and Canvas are not working and she did not feel that hybrid would work or that it was a good option. She advised that her kids are up all hours and getting more work this year than they had their previous years in high school. Ms. Zawislak urged the board and administration to go back and reevaluate this as it is not going to work. She stated that they want the SFEA's approval and the administration's approval but asked if anyone had asked the students what is best for them. She expressed that Spring-Ford needed to do better as there are other school districts that are way ahead of us and thinking of the kids.

Jill Schadler, Royersford, implored the board with the motion in front of them to listen to every caller who has spoken and her comments as well as not one parent felt this plan would work and they do not support it. She felt that the plan last week to the plan this week made no sense and is a step backwards. Ms. Schadler said she did not agree with the SFEA and felt that they blew their own analogy by not presenting anything different tonight. She asked that the board forget the parent's anger and speak to the kids. She indicated that her 8th grader did not feel the students were being treated with decency and added that the students are ready to petition. She expressed that anxiety was up for students and there are kids in therapy. She asked Dr. Goodin to think about whether he should resign as she did not feel he was doing his job.

Marie Cagliola, Royersford, said she was speaking tonight on behalf of all of the children of Spring-Ford and stated that all of them should be able to go back together in a safe way. She applauded Dr. Goodin for doing the right thing by the kids and offering a hybrid option that allows kids to return back in a safer way than five days a week. She spoke about the large number of parents that have been emailing the board and Dr. Goodin and felt that there were parents out there that should be able to be heard in the same night as those that came and protested as even though they are not present their voices still matter. Ms. Cagliola spoke about the recent uptick in COVID-19 cases in other states that started to return carelessly full-time and are being closed. She felt that the hybrid plan offers the ability for all kids to go back together, permits safe social distancing, allows for less kids in the hallways and cafeterias, and most importantly cuts the risk of COVID-19. She urged the board to vote the hybrid option so that kids can go back to school together and experience school once again in a way that works for every family and not just the ones who scream the loudest. Ms. Cagliola said in order for Spring-Ford to be stronger than ever the parents need to stop thinking about themselves and their children. She stated that hybrid was not an option in any of the surveys and added that they were not good surveys. She implored that the district get better surveys and a plan that works for all and not just the ones screaming the loudest.

Hope Bodenschatz, Royersford, expressed her concern saying that the plan says that on the virtual synchronous days' instruction will be accessed through livestream or recorded video. She stated that teachers can then choose to use the recorded video option so students could end up with only 2 live instruction days a week. Ms. Bodenschatz stated that anything less than 4 days they are getting right now is a step backwards and is not in the best interest of our students' academics. She added that if the hybrid plan is what we have to have then our kids need at least 4 days of live instruction and no less.

Annie Schlichter, Spring City, stated that she agrees with most of the previous callers as well as Mr. Jackson and Mr. DiBello that last week it was an issue with the hybrid option and that it would not work but now this week it works. She asked about the hybrid plan saying if the 25 people per room is a mandate per Governor Wolf with 6 feet distance as a recommendation then how do we plan to accommodate 30 students per class and would some children be turned away and made to go virtual?

Joy Crowle, Collegeville, commented that she agrees with Mr. DiBello and Mr. Jackson that this hybrid option makes no sense whatsoever. She stated that she agrees with teachers that it is too much for them to do all in class and stream virtual all at the same time. She added that she also heard last week and the week before that we could not do virtual as we did not have the equipment which sounds like the PPE as first we do not have it and then we do have it. She expressed frustration over this going back and forth and said it is a never-ending cycle. Ms. Crowle stated that she is concerned over her son's SATs for next year as half of last year and so far this year has been a wash. She commented that she understands people being afraid of sending their kids back and she feels there should be two options and if you cannot do virtual livestreaming for the full 5 days per week then do cyber. She stated that cyber is an approved Spring-Ford alternative to being in class. Ms. Crowle added that if a parent is afraid to send their kid back 5 days then they should be afraid to send them back 2 days. She stated that keeping all of the other kids home that want to be in school is not fair.

Faith DeRose, Collegeville, stated that she is in agreement with most of the callers that this plan makes no sense in relation to any of the other meetings she tuned into all summer. She commented that education is essential and we are falling behind all of the other districts that have kids in school. She asked if parents are not comfortable sending kids to school 5 days a week then how are they going to feel comfortable putting their kids on a bus and sending them to school with a classroom that might have half of the alphabet in there with them. She stated that this plan does not look into what the kids need and deserve. Ms. DeRose commented that we are a blue-ribbon district and want our kids to succeed and this plan is failing them. She advised that she has so many friends who are teachers and would love to be back in the classroom and those that are in districts that are using hybrid hate it. She expressed that she thinks the kids should have the options of being in school 5 days a week, cyber or a classroom with a camera set up focused on the teacher so kids can watch virtually that way. She questioned why the district was spending so much time on this as it is a temporary solution and hopefully the kids will be back in school sooner rather than later.

Meg Kyle, Collegeville, commented that regarding the 7-12 plan, the presentation has no discussion about kids with IEPs. She stated that it was previously decided that those students were being brought back in October and very limited information has been shared on this. Ms. Kyle asked what happens with the special education students as currently as of 10/22 they are to be back in school 4 days per week but what happens on November 12th, will they go in only 2 days per week rather than the 4 they were doing? She felt that voting on this without knowing those details was not in the best interest of the kids.

Christine Grines, Royersford, stated that they voted as a board to go back in person K-12 or some other plan. She asked if they didn't have to go back and revote or do something to amend that motion? She added that with the survey that was sent out 71.7% voted for in person 5 days a week and questioned why send a survey if they are not going to listen to the results. She noted that there are 161 days before the Class of 2021 walk out of the door and said that we are failing these kids. Ms. Grines felt the plan to go back hybrid made no sense and asked why it did not work last week but now works this week. She urged that the district figure out how to bring the students in 5 days a week and if parents are not comfortable with that then they can choose cyber. She added that right now the students are faceless, voiceless, black boxes on a screen and this is not how our teachers were taught to teach or how our students were taught to learn. She pleaded with Mr. DiBello, Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Zasowski to not go back on their word as she knows they want the kids back in school 5 days a week.

Tara Grotto, Royersford, expressed that she was fearful that with this particular option the district was going backwards academically. She stated that with having two students at the secondary level her experience is that virtual has not been productive. She commented that she fears students will get less content than what they are now and she asked that the district really think about what the lessons will look like for those students at home for those 3 days. She advised that she knows for a fact that some schools in New Jersey that are hybrid and have teachers teaching the same lesson two days in a row. Ms. Grotto added that her concern, based on what she has heard from SFEA, is that most teachers will not livestream and the students will suffer. She stated that the teachers are doing an amazing job and she has concerns that the hybrid models will cause the teachers to have to put in more work than they are currently.

Lisa D'Annunzio, Royersford, stated that she has a daughter who was supposed to start her high school year and has been home since March and a son who just went back because of his IEP. She stressed that the district needs to get the kids back because we are not doing right by them and we are doing them more harm than good and they are starting to regress. Ms. D'Annunzio implored the board to make the right decision and bring students back 5 days a week. She addressed Dr. Goodin saying she hoped he would step up and support this decision as we are in October and no further along than we were in July.

Roland Olsen, Colledgeville, stated that the last caller reflected a lot of emotion that a lot of people have right now. Mr. Olsen's call was lost.

Jasmine Ewing, Royersford, said she is calling as a parent and as a teacher. She asked the board to consider bringing everyone in full-time or keeping everyone virtual. Ms. Ewing stated that back in August the Canvas platform was thrown at them and they have worked really hard to train and get it together to be ready for the kids. She advised that they put in a ton of hours working together as a team and she believes they did a great job and that the system is working. Ms. Ewing said she teaches the entire class period interacting with students just as she would if they were in the classroom. She expressed that she is nervous about the hybrid option thrown at them and again stated that things are working fine as it is. She urged the board to keep things the same for one more marking period and felt kids were getting everything they would be getting in the classroom.

Danielle Folino, Mont Clare, stated that she agrees with other callers and is flabbergasted that anyone feels this is an acceptable plan to vote on. She commented that what she is hearing is that they want to do hybrid to help the minority of kids, based on the survey results, that don't want or can't be in the classroom and she questioned why the choice would be made to leave the majority of the kids behind by limiting them to only 2 days in person. Ms. Folino stated that right now they are getting 4 days of dedicated synchronous learning albeit

virtual. She commented that last week teachers said they could not teach students physically in the room with them and some online so that was voted down to be looked at again as it was said to be impossible last week but now a week later they are saying they want to do the same thing but have more people at home being left behind. Ms. Folino felt this was absolutely not acceptable. She relayed that her son had told her there were numerous times where a teacher spent an entire class trying to figure out how to share their screen with the class. Ms. Folino asked how the district can expect a teacher to be able to teach an entire class effectively in a hybrid situation. She stated that she did not think the board should vote for that.

Mrs. Zasowski proposed taking another 15 minutes of public comment and ask the public to limit their comments to 2 minutes and try to offer a differing opinion or thought from what has already been said tonight.

Kate Palladino, Royersford, stated that she supports tonight's presentation and proposal as she feels the hybrid proposal reaches and provides the best education for all students, not only those who are okay with limited social distancing. She commented that more families will choose hybrid rather than an in-school model than if there was only a choice of 5 days in school or virtual. Ms. Palladino felt that hybrid provided the social distancing that many are looking for and teachers will have more contact with more students which makes instruction more productive as students are regularly physically engaging with their teachers. She stated that the original survey was very skewed as 71.1% isn't even close to accurate. She added that she for one chose back in school but she only felt comfortable doing so if social distancing guidelines are met and she knows there are many who did the same. Ms. Palladino said she is speaking in support of hybrid as it is an option that will allow social distancing.

Kim Anderson, Colledgeville, commented that she has a lot of confusion and would love to see the board stall on this vote tonight as she believes that it is necessary to go back to the drawing table. She agreed with others in questioning what the difference was between last week and this week. Ms. Anderson stated that the teachers who were concerned with juggling approximately 20% on some sort of device while on a Zoom are now going to have more kids to juggle on a device if they are doing a livestream and she questioned how this was better. She commented that she had a problem with the teacher who spoke tonight and said they will have more students in person overall, like globally, under this hybrid model as the survey showed 71% which some consider to be flawed but that is what the survey showed. She added that the teacher's statement of pursuing more inclusion now gives all students much less face time seems to be a very negative solution for those 70% wanting to be back. Ms. Anderson addressed another comment on digital medium made by a teacher regarding filling time when you are not livestreaming saying obviously everyone knows that at teacher teaching the class is the best way for kids to learn and she has a concern as she hears more and more about filling time with digital medium.

Gabrielle Deardorff, Royersford, encouraged the board to accept this plan, vote on it, approve and move and make progress so that life can continue for those that want their kids back in school as soon as possible. She stated that to keep wanting this revisited, revamped and redone is just keeping us virtual longer. She again urged that the board please vote, approve this and keep it going.

Kim Huston, Royersford, stated that she is extremely disappointed in all of the hybrid options presented this evening. She commented that there are quite a bit of other local schools who are moving forward to get their kids in school 5 days and we are now just presenting hybrid. Ms. Huston stated that by the time we start this the other schools are well on their way to add more in-person live instruction days. She expressed that she felt

we were going completely backwards as kids will get less live learning than they are getting within the current 100% virtual environment. She added that within the plan the students are in school 2 days and then on the virtual days instruction is left up to the teachers to either teach live or provide reported instruction. She relayed that she has a junior and this year is so important as they try to learn as much as possible to be ready to take the SATs and the ACTs in the spring and she questioned how the kids are going to be ready when with the hybrid options they will be receiving less instruction than in a virtual environment. Ms. Huston stated that she did not understand why we would have in the plan to continue with this until February. She asked what the purpose of the survey was as 70% indicated that they wanted to be back in school but that is all being dismissed. She added that she knows that administration is concerned as everyone is with capacity and social distancing but the plan tonight specifically indicates that there will be no social distancing on the school bus which she said makes no sense. She commented that the kids need to be in school in person 5 days and if parents do not want to send them back then there is a cyber option.

Yvonne O'Dea, Royersford, said she is a proud Spring-Ford community member and even more proud Spring-Ford teacher for 25 years. She stated that she disagrees with those people saying that students will get less instruction with the hybrid model as anytime she can look at a student face to face, even if there is a mask, that is part of their education. She added that yes, students want to be in full-time and she wants to see her kids full-time every day but can it be done safely as 2,000 kids moving around the high school hallways makes people a little uncomfortable and it is just not the right thing to do. Ms. O'Dea commented that hybrid gives teachers a chance to see the kids and interact with them which is so important and that is what kids are missing. She added that they are missing the interaction and that she does not care if they are six feet apart as they can still hear each other and can see each other's faces. She stated that this hybrid plan is going to have to work and for her, personally, she plans on livestreaming every day so her kids will have live class every day and she knows a lot of teachers who will do this as well.

Erica Love, Royersford, voiced her support for this plan as she believes it is the plan that works best for staff and students and actually follows the guidelines put into place by the Department of Education and health officials. She said it is very important to listen to the health experts at a time like this because obviously not everyone feels safe as it is still a scary time as COVID still exists and is out there. Ms. Love commented that brining in everyone 5 days a week does pose an increased risk of spreading the virus as well as an increased risk of staff shortages. She stated that she believes this is the safest option for both staff and students and again voiced her support for it.

Syl Kailey, Royersford, stated that she is a senior and is in no way a representative of the entire student body. She commented that the majority of students do want to go back to school but they also understand the risks that are associated with this and full-time simply is not feasible at the moment and complete virtual is not ideal for any of them. Ms. Kailey felt that although the hybrid model has its faults, it is the best option for students at the moment. She added that in addition, the cyber learning was referenced on multiple occasions and is not an option for some students specifically those who take AP classes. She stated that choosing cyber learning would restrict student progress and later impact their AP scores. She stated that although two days a week is not what they would like it is better than where they are now and a steppingstone to be fully in person. She thanked SFEA and the administrators for all the work they have put in so far.

Joy Moore, Limerick, commented that she is not for this plan at all. She advised that she is the parent of a senior and a freshman and expressed how upset she is as she has never seen her kids so disconnected and not interested in school. She urged that the district come up with a solid plan, a real plan and actually listen to the callers.

Hillary Borzillo, Royersford, stated that it is that time of year where the numbers will be going up and people will be interacting with their family members during the holiday season. She commented that while there is no great solution here she felt that the board and the school district had come up with a nice compromise that helps keep the kids safe considering the large numbers within the school. Ms. Borzillo added that it sounded like some of the issues that are coming up about the virtual learning are issues that go beyond the classroom and she stated that she would appreciate if the loudest voices were not the only ones heard as she would like all voices to be heard.

Courtney Dougherty, Schwenksville, said she wanted to echo what a lot of parents are saying in that the hybrid option was an option because of the 71% as people do want their kids to go back into the school setting. She stated that last week when Dr. Goodin made his presentation he said none of the teachers were comfortable with the current hybrid situation which is why it sounds like the teachers are being wishy-washy but they are not as they are compromising. Ms. Dougherty urged the board to vote in favor of it but it does not mean it is permanent. She added that we are a month into the last plan we voted on and it's changing so it doesn't mean we can't change the hybrid to make it better but this is a start and a stepping stone. She felt it was a compromise between the kids who want to do virtual and the kids who want to go back full-time. Ms. Dougherty stated that this is a safe compromise that the teachers, board and parents are comfortable with and it is just a steppingstone. She urged the board to vote for this but to continue to evolve it moving forward.

Mrs. Zasowski stated that it was not her understanding that it would be teaching the same criteria twice a week as her understanding is that it is new content and she confirmed that Mrs. Ritter was nodding her head in agreement.

Mrs. Zasowski advised that there was a motion on the table to approve the hybrid with virtual option reopening for 7-12.

Mr. Shafer said he would like to clarify before voting and he then provided an example of a student who comes into school on Monday, Tuesday the student is home but checking in on the bell schedule and participating and we are allowing the teachers to teach, Wednesday is, as he called it, Wacky Wednesday, Thursday this student repeats Monday and Friday he repeats Tuesday. He asked is that where we are at and Mrs. Zasowski replied that was correct.

The motion passed by a vote of 7-2 with Mr. Jackson and Mr. DiBello voting no.

A. Return to In-Person Learning Plans for Students in Grades 7-12

III. **BOARD COMMENT**

Mr. DiBello stated that he did not want to give anyone the impression that the teachers were compromising with the 7-12 plan as he knows they worked very hard along with administration on the plan. He explained his reasoning for voting no on the 7-12 return to in-person learning plan saying he could support starting in a hybrid plan and moving forward but he was disappointed that the next step is not until the 3rd making period where we plan on going from hybrid to all in and he said he does not support this. He also stated that he was not comfortable with seeing that the instruction the students would be getting when they are virtual at home. Mr. DiBello stated that he does not believe that teachers would ignore any student who was virtual. He felt that the survey should be refined and ask for a commitment for the 7-12 teachers. Mr. DiBello advised that there will be changes announced tomorrow from Governor Wolf regarding capacity limits. He stated that some districts had gotten creative with assigning sectors or sections to their stadiums with their own entrances and exits thereby permitting more parents in to be able to see

their student participate. Mr. DiBello next spoke about the Montgomery County website which breaks down Covid cases by school districts and municipalities. He questioned how much information a district could disclose if informed of a student being infected and Mr. Fitzgerald encouraged the district to make weekly announcements regarding cases within the school community but discouraged identifying any buildings.

Mrs. Zasowski commented that the first survey was flawed in that the piece regarding hybrid was omitted and she said it will definitely be included in the next survey.

Mr. Jackson stated that he respects the decision of the board but struggles with the fact that a survey was sent out that came back with data that we now seem to be dismissing that data. He said the district could have gone with hybrid back in August as the same data was available.

Mrs. Melton commented that the number of students walking throughout the building is not desirable so while hybrid may not be optimum as there is no right answer for every family. She thanked everyone involved in pulling together the best option for our families as this is a prudent first step to getting students back into the buildings. Mrs. Melton expressed her concerns with the way Spring-Ford handled some of the crowd capacity requirements and was offended that the district offered Perkiomen Valley tickets when it was clearly disallowed and not supported by the board. She stated that this was in direct opposition to what the PAC has put out and she hoped in the future that the district adhered to the guidelines.

Mr. Shafer disputed Mrs. Melton's comments that the board supported the PAC and said that this topic is coming up for discussion at the Extracurricular Committee meeting tomorrow which Mrs. Melton serves on and he indicated that he was looking forward to that conversation.

Discussion took place on what PAC had allowed, the decision made by some to offer tickets to the opposing team and permitting parents to be admitted in order to watch their children participate in the events surrounding the game on Friday night. Mr. Fitzgerald spoke about the PAC versus the Governor's ruling and which one supersedes the other saying that on the night of the Perkiomen Valley versus Spring-Ford game, the only guidelines in effect were the ones issued by PAC. He stated that now the governor's order has been reinstated by the Third Circuit Court but in addition there is new guidance issued by the Montgomery County Department of Health saying they may be willing to exempt sizes or make larger sizes if a safety plan is submitted to the County Department of Health. He added that they would have to stay within whatever guidance PAC provides for us a member school of that athletic conference. There was confusion over how the original motion read as Mr. DiBello understood it to say tickets for both home and visiting teams and Mrs. Zasowski felt it was only for home team participants. The decision was made to move the discussion to the Extracurricular Committee.

Eshika stated that she felt it was important to get this out to the board and have it verbally stated, she asked when students and staff return, what would happen if a teacher got sick with COVID, what the plan would be, would they have to use sick days or would their absence be covered under some type of COVID days plan? Mrs. Zasowski replied that this would be a personnel issue. Mr. Fitzgerald added that Mrs. Leiss is very knowledgeable in the FFRCA and on top of all different types of leave aspects for the entirety of staff.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Arlene Hudak, Schwenksville, stated that she is very happy that the board approved the hybrid learning. She commented that we have a lot of great teachers who work together and co-teach and she recommended that they work together as far as one of them taking care of the kids in the classroom and the other taking care of those who were virtual and then switching. Ms. Hudak conveyed that she felt it was important that the kids feel that they are being heard as well as having all of their educational needs being met both in the classroom as well as online. She felt it was important for the seniors have a year this year to be able to go in and talk to the teachers and the FPC so that they can help them make their college choices, look at recommendations, and find out more about the colleges they would like to attend. She expressed appreciation for all of the work that has been going on.

Kate Doyle, Collegeville, thanked the board for approving the hybrid plan and listening to guidance offered from the administration and teachers as they are the experts that have often been referenced and they have the best interest of students in mind. She asked that the board trust them as they know what will and will not work in the classroom. Ms. Doyle commented that opening in the hybrid model will allow the district to lower the risk of transmission through greater social distancing as well as allow the returning students to acclimate to the new environment ensuring that the safety precautions can be followed. She added that if things proceed as expected then hopefully students could return full-time when the risk is low enough. She asked the board to consider revisiting the hybrid option for grades K-6.

Venkat-Priya Parigi, Collegeville, commented that the board voted 7-2 in favor of the hybrid option and although his child will remain virtual he questioned why no one had addressed the concern over how synchronous learning will work for the virtual students. He stated that he hoped to see a plan with regards to extensively using technology, new webcams or whatever they want to install in the classrooms to allow livestreaming of all classes. Mr. Parigi said his main concern is that the teachers were very clear about what would not be live and what would be live and as the parent of a junior he needs to understand this option. He stated that safety and security have been severely compromised and based on the recommendation of six feet it has been said that there is none of this on the buses so many kids are at risk of exposure. Mr. Parigi commented that one thing he has not seen is a virtual option post February and he asked why the district is not prepared for the eventuality that this entire academic year may extend being virtual as we do not know how the pandemic is going to span out.

Colleen Emmons, Collegeville, stated that she wanted to be sure that the district planned on emailing families once per week on the number of COVID cases in the district.

Cindy Wisienski, Collegeville, advised she has been listening to all of the board meetings and she has one comment which does not seem to be addressed which is whether or not our students are making progress and if they were having meaningful educational experiences whether virtual or hybrid. She relayed that she has one child making progress and one that is regressing and she questioned how this was being monitored. Ms. Wisienski felt that the district was trying to satisfy everybody by giving a little bit here and a little bit there but if there were kids that were not progressing then the plan is not working.

Julia Allen, Royersford, asked if kids will have the opportunity to tour schools as many kids are switching buildings this year and that is huge concern. She next stated that the board clearly did not listen to any of the parents who said they wanted their kids back in

school full-time and she questioned why they cannot just start now and why are we wait until November to bring them back hybrid? She felt there was no sense in waiting as this was the same schedule as back in July. Ms. Allen added that if board members did not have kids in Spring-Ford then they do not understand that this is a parenting issue and as a board member they are supposed to care. She stated that she was appalled at a board member stating they didn't care about Wednesdays as they are not dealing with it because they are not up until 11:30 at night with a child, after working all day, trying to get homework done.

Michael Lebiezinski, Royersford, commented that he wanted to point out the complete lack of accountability within the board as they have to realize that they created this problem by not pulling a survey they knew was bad and not the one they wanted to go out. He asked what type of data they expected to get back from a defective survey. He added that from the bad survey came bad data and bad decisions which now has to be pulled back on based on actual parent feedback. Mr. Lebiezinski stated that the board also created this problem by not listening to the SFEA early and often and it was clear that despite the union trying to engage they were not being listened to. He commented that the next survey must distinguish between parents who want children in school 5 days a week and those who only want them in 2 days a week. Mr. Lebiezinski felt that the board continually ignores and disregards the actual data of what is happening with the virus in Montgomery County and he urged everyone to check out the Montgomery County website.

Kim Huston, Royersford, stated that in regards to the plan that was presented earlier, how does the plan impact special education. She stated that during the presentation it was indicated that the supplemental IEP students receive actual live instruction which seems to be completely contradictory to the email parents received from the Special Education Department. Ms. Huston reported that the email had stated that students would be receiving instruction virtually with teacher support and live instruction will be provided if possible. She stated that supplemental IEP kids are supposed to be back in school one week from today and at this point parents are not sure what type of instruction they will be receiving. Ms. Huston commented that clarification on all of this was needed sooner rather than later.

Kim Anderson, Collegeville, commented that she was very disappointed that the vote went through tonight as she felt that there was very passionate feedback from the parents that was completely ignored. She thought that it would have been discussed further but it was as if the parents had no voice. Ms. Anderson advised that she does not have kids in Spring-Ford sports and that she found that the whole discussion about the PAC and football has her really fired up. She asked that the board use commonsense and stated that we have two bleachers and at the last game against PV, the visitor bleachers were entirely empty. She urged the board to forget the PAC and if they deemed it safe to have two tickets per participant on our bleachers then why is it not safe for the visiting team to have the exact same thing. She stated who cares and added that they are parents who want to see their children at home games and away games. She asked the board to set a precedent and see if other districts will follow and what PAC will do. She stated that this was worth the push back.

Erica Hermans, Royersford, stated that there was a comment made that elementary kids are likely to be able to maintain the 4-5 foot distancing in the classrooms but this was not the message last week and it is not necessarily true. She indicated that she had talked to teachers and staff in both of her children's buildings and at Brooke, for example, with a maximum of 24 kids in the classroom there is approximately two feet of distancing which is a considerable difference. She added that with 20-21 kids it is three feet and with 16-18 it is four feet. Ms. Hermans stated that she would bet the

elementary schools are not going to have the class sizes of 12-15 kids which is the number necessary to maintain the five-foot distancing that is being suggested. She commented that she felt that the administration and board did not take into consideration how much elementary kids do move around the building. She stated that overall there are statements being made during the board meetings without care which is leading to general misinformation when parents need transparency. She asked how families can make an educated decision when the messaging is inconsistent from week to week. She added that if a school could guarantee four to five-foot distancing then some families might be more inclined to choose live in-person instruction. Ms. Hermans asked that the district not lead families who are on the fence into a false sense of security when it comes to their children's health by claiming four-five feet when the surveys are still out and the math does not add up. She stated be straightforward, consistent and choose your words wisely.

Alison O'Brien, Collegeville, questioned why there was no public comment prior to voting last week for the K-6 where parents were able to state their thoughts as the 7-12 parents were able to do tonight. She added that it was stated that there were multiple emails received by the board asking where hybrid went and that a lot of parents were not comfortable sending their children back full-time. Ms. O'Brien said parents in K-6 are asking this same question and that she would feel much more comfortable sending her child to school in a hybrid setting as it is obvious it would be far more safe to go back in a hybrid setting where there will be less children in a classroom and in school in general. She said it was also stated this evening by the board that there is county data that states that hybrid is the safest option in which to go back to school and questioned why they are not using the safest option for the youngest children. She felt that as a parent she had to pick between the safety of her child by keeping her home or between her education by sending her to school and that it was not fair to put a parent in that situation. Ms. O'Brien said that it was stated that this evening there would be four to five feet between desks in K-6 but many parents are being told by school principals that it would be far less than this and she asked which was the correct answer? She urged the board to find a plan that allows the youngest children to be in school but to be in school safely and address parent's concerns about their children's safety and education. Ms. O'Brien asked why the district is spending valuable time talking about football and extracurricular activities when there are parents at home desperately trying to figure out why the safety of their children is not being taken into full consideration.

Meg Kotes, Royersford, stated that she is the parent of a senior and 8th grader and while her senior is disappointed not to be back in school as of yet, she supports the hybrid model and the teachers. Ms. Kotes said she feels it would be presumptuous of her to try and guess the educational models as well as other people's health and safety considerations. She expressed concern over college students returning home in mid-November to district households and the community and stated that this is something to keep in mind as we move forward and that possible considerations should be made for 10 day quarantines of siblings of those returning students in order to keep everyone safe.

Joy Crowle, Collegeville, commented that she is very disappointed in the vote today but that she supports the teachers 100% and she thinks they are doing a great job. She wished the teachers good luck as it sounds like hybrid model is two full-time jobs. She also wished the students good luck as it sounds like two full-time jobs for them as well. Ms. Crowle addressed Mrs. Zasowski saying she is very offended and appalled by her comments tonight regarding telling callers to please only call and comment on things that have not been commented on yet. She stated that they are taxpayers and if the board has to sit there and listen to every single comment and that goes until 4:00 in the

morning then that's what it should be. She felt that no one cuts off the board members from speaking and stated that the taxpayers have a right to speak about whatever they want even if the board has to hear the same topic over and over again.

Jill Schadler, Royersford, stated that now that this ludicrous plan has been approved we might as well start now and get it going. She added that for the seven board members who voted yes, you are publicly elected officials and you did not represent the majority that has been stating their opinions and they should all be voted out. Ms. Schadler expressed that she hoped that everybody votes them out.

Christine McCreary, Schwenksville, thanked the board for voting on thanked board for voting for the hybrid plan and putting safety first for the staff, students and everyone else that works in the building. She stated that she believes the coronavirus is here to stay for a little while and we will have the flu on top of that plus a lot of college students coming back to their families. Ms. McCreary commented that one thing she noticed in the presentation was that one day the 7th and 8th graders will be back and then the 9th graders will be back in order to get the technology up and running but the 10th graders will not have a chance to be in the building earlier than when the juniors and seniors come in. She asked that there be consideration to having a 10th grade orientation so that they have a chance to learn the building a little bit. She voiced that her 6th grader was upset over not having a hybrid option and she is very sad that she does not have recess this year. Ms. McCreary expressed hope that there will be a way to get the kids outside if they choose to send her back. She stated that she was waiting to hear what tonight's vote was going to be before making that decision for her. Ms. McCreary reiterated that her daughter would like a hybrid plan and she again thanked the board for putting safety first.

Trish Puleo, Collegetown, said she cannot begin to tell the board how disgusted she is with them except for Mr. DiBello. She stated that she cannot understand why they cannot just put cameras in the classroom for livestreaming for virtual. Ms. Puleo added that all she is hearing is parents that want to send their kids back five days a week so give it to them and let the rest of us stay home. She urged that there be cameras in the rooms and let the teachers teach live. She next expressed her disbelief that the district went against PAC rules and said she cannot believe we have a group of rebels on the board that don't care about public safety.

Sarah Daunoras, Royersford, stated that parents at this point, after this meeting, are getting some conflicting information about what the actual social distancing and mitigation efforts can be and without complete and accurate information it is not possible for them to make an informed decision. She said a potentially full class size of up to 24 students in K-4 or 30 students in 5-6 does not leave any room for social distancing. Ms. Daunoras said no social distancing on school buses is also a major concern. She added that with regards to grades 7-12, she was glad that the board voted to move ahead with hybrid as she feels it is the only safe plan at this time that protects staff and students. She asked for clarification on what options would be available for grades 7-12 and will full virtual still be offered in addition to hybrid and cyber.

Wendy Campo, Schwenksville, commented that she was highly disappointed in tonight's discussion and the inconsistency going back from week to week. She stated that as a parent following the board meetings and what they say one week and then what changes to the next week has been very discouraging. Ms. Campo said she feels like the board might be sitting there listening to the public but they are not hearing the comments and opinions of the public. She did not feel that the decisions are supported by the data being put out there by Montgomery County and how low we are. She added

that she has a senior and the seniors cannot get this time back as they were off school for 7 months and now they had their first opportunity to start taking the SATs again. She stated that all of this time is being lost and all of the things they are supposed to be learning in their senior year and programs like Broadcasting 2 cannot get this time back. Ms. Campo commented that with only going back two days a week what opportunities are being given to these students? She replied that they are not equal opportunities as one of the teachers expressed earlier this evening. She advised that she was glad that the kids may possibly be starting to get back in school in November but questioned why we are waiting and putting out there that we will wait until the next semester to figure out what's going to happen. She asked that this be looked at a lot sooner and reevaluate it every two weeks looking outside the box.

MaryJo Mcnamara, Royersford, stated that she was extremely disappointed in the board's vote tonight and she does not understand the inconsistencies and the contradictions. She said she was appalled by a board member telling her that it is the parent's responsibility to figure out what to do and what time to get their child up on a Wednesday. Ms. Mcnamara stated that Wednesday is a school day, figure it out and tell parents what they need to do. She said she did not know what kids were going to do in the hybrid model when there is no livestreaming and it is a prerecorded video and they have a question. Ms. Mcnamara relayed that she has a senior and in every single class he has a question so what happens to those kids that need to ask questions and the teacher is not available because they are teaching the 15 kids who are in the classroom. She reiterated that she does not want to be called the loudest but rather called the majority and whether you like the survey or not that's the numbers and there are 20% of the people that want to be 100% virtual. She added that you have all said yourselves and the teacher's union said themselves that those students that are 100% virtual will be left behind which is a joke. She thanked the board for not representing them.

Ashley Swanson, Collegeville, stated that she understood that K-6 is not on the agenda but as she is hearing the board meeting unfold she is understanding that the driving force is reducing class sizes in 7-12. She asked why reducing class sizes is not being done in grades K-6? She said she heard the wording self-contained classrooms and this is why K-6 is not considering the hybrid model. She implored the board to reconsider a hybrid model as self-contained classrooms are not synonymous with reduced class sizes which allows for proper social distancing. Ms. Swanson stated that in the elementary schools they are talking about reshuffling the children, new teachers if you are virtual or if you are in person and if they do the hybrid model it allows everyone to maintain their teacher, stay in the classroom, reduce class sizes and have social distancing. She highly implored the board to reconsider the hybrid model on the new survey that can be put out for K-6 just like you are on 7-12.

Roland Olsen, Collegeville, commented that last week Dr. Goodin and the teachers recommended against livestreaming of classes because it was a poor way of teaching but this week it is a good way of teaching and even better we are going to double the number of kids that are now going to have to us this methodology. He stated 4 months without a plan and in one week the teachers and Dr. Goodin came up with a plan, that with virtually no lead time, we were ready to vote on. Mr. Olsen said it sounds a lot like July when we had a 9-0 vote when half of the board did not ask a single question. He advised that tonight there are people wondering if some of the microphones work on some of the board members due to a lack of conversation and questions related to this. He added that this vote had already been taken before everybody saw this plan so he did not feel that this needed to be discussed. Mr. Olsen agreed with Maria Cagliola that the survey was useless and we need her company to do a survey which allows everyone

to have their say, not that it was going to matter as there are two people.....the Zoom call was lost.

Ed Kaercher, Collegeville, stated that he had a question regarding social distancing in the classrooms as it was brought up about the reduced class sizes versus the self-contained as mentioned by another caller. He commented that we are going somewhere now from a 4-5 feet distance in between and a concern he has is in regards to the policing of face masks. Mr. Kaercher stated that in looking at the CDC guidelines, it appears that they are recommending two layers or more for the masks and gators are not effective at this point, so how will we police that and especially how are we going to deal with that when we have a reduced number of square footage between kids? He asked if a second survey would be sent out for grades K-6 so parents can provide true data and feedback regarding this as there is obviously a little bit of cavalier and confusion between the reduced classroom size and the self-contained definition.

Olivia Trego, Royersford, commented that she is in 10th grade and said she is not speaking on behalf of all the sophomores but they feel left out. She stated that they are actually the ones who have to learn and participate in what is happening. Ms. Trego relayed that in speaking with some of her fellow classmates it is frustrating feeling like their opinions do not matter and they are constantly pushed down and they are not being listened to.

Mrs. Zasowski said she wanted to clarify a couple of things that were brought up. She advised that with regards to the 2 surveys that are out there, K-6 is still open and will close on October 8th and the 7-12 will go out on October 7th and will remain open until the 14th. She stated that there was a good question brought up regarding special education and she asked Mr. Rizzo to explain how this may or may not be impacted by the hybrid program. Mr. Rizzo advised that if a special education student is receiving instruction 4 days a week now or when they come back into the building then this will continue as long as parents choose to take this option. Mrs. Zasowski commented that one other piece that came up in tonight's conversation is regarding K-6 which is also a hybrid model because from the baseline that we have from the survey, not all are going to come back in so with that it does become a combination of in person, virtual or cyber and as such is a hybrid model also. Mr. Fitzgerald clarified that the state uses the term blended as they do not actually use the term hybrid. Mrs. Zasowski stated that Dr. Goodin had clarified for her that there is an option for grades 7-12 to choose hybrid, virtual or cyber and Dr. Goodin confirmed this was correct. Mrs. Zasowski stated that another caller brought up about a 10th grade initiation and Mr. Rizzo confirmed that the secondary administration is looking at creating an opportunity for them to come in as they have in the past. She asked Dr. Murray to provide more clarification on the Wednesday schedule. Mrs. Zasowski next asked Mr. Fitzgerald for clarification on where we stood for Friday night and he advised that as Mr. DiBello had hinted there could be movement on this as early as tomorrow with regards to attendance maximums. He stated that the county has also been given a green light to expand the number of attendees at football games. Mr. Fitzgerald advised that his recommendation would be, if this is what the board desires, to empower the administration to go to whatever the maximum extent possible is but stay within the mandates of the county or whatever comes out from the governor's office. He added that he did not think a motion was need but rather the board to be supportive of the administration staying within whatever the mandates are of the county or whatever the governor comes out with tomorrow to expand from the 250 max for Friday's football games.

Mrs. Melton asked about the PIAA and PAC and Mr. Fitzgerald replied that they all punted and clarified that they would go with whatever the district's guidelines became.

Mrs. Zasowski asked if the board was comfortable with giving that direction to administration to allow attendance beyond the 250 to whatever the rule is at the time and the board all confirmed their agreement with this.

Mr. DiBello asked if it was clear that this is both for home and visiting teams. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he believes the governor will come out with a maximum number for in the stands whether that be home or visiting fans.

Mr. Shafer added that as a courtesy to the board after tomorrow night's Extracurricular Committee meeting, if there is an update as he would suspect, he will provide them with an update via email as a mechanism to communicate unless something is sent around prior to that.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DiBello made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Shafer seconded it. The motion passed 9-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Fern
School Board Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED DURING BOARD MEETING 10-05-2020

Amy Miskiewicz 10/5/2020 Mon 9:50 PM

Forwarding this email to the proper email.

I fully support the hybrid with virtual. This is the best compromise for the students, teachers, parents, and district.

Amy

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Amy Miskiewicz <amisk518@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Oct 5, 2020 at 9:26 PM

Subject: 10/5 Board Meeting

To: <margaret_wright@spring-ford.net>, <david_shafer@spring-ford.net>, <wendy_earle@spring-ford.net>, <linda_fazzini@spring-ford.net>, <Clinton.Jackson@jacobs.com>, <christina_melton@spring-ford.net>, <diane_sullivan@spring-ford.net>, Goodin D.Ed., David <dgood@spring-ford.net>

Good evening,

Please forward this email to the other members of the board which I was unable to find emails.

I fully support the hybrid model. I do believe the teachers can and should be able to teach effectively to a combined in-person with live streaming to those who remain virtual. The cyber school is not a realistic option since that curriculum is not a match to what is offered within the brick and mortar building. I want the hybrid option and the teachers can learn to

The survey that was sent out was a farce. The questions asked did not represent what options were being considered. I feel that offering parents the option for in-person while maintaining virtual is the best option yet that was not part of the survey. I would not have selected in-person in my survey if the option was presented to allow for hybrid combination to keep my child at home while other children are in the building. I will opt for the virtual with live streaming over the in-person every time. Work with the teachers to improve their comfort with live streaming. It can and should be done.

Our son is doing well with the virtual at this time. His classes have been held as scheduled. He doesn't feel that the assignments are excessive or that the teachers are not doing work.

Thank you,

Amy Miskiewicz
411 Pikeland Ave
Spring City, Pa 19475
amisk518@gmail.com

Kelly Shirar 10/5/2020 Mon 10:24 PM

Hello Spring-Ford School Board,

I would like to ask for you to reconsider and bring the ENTIRE district back hybrid. Not just grades 7-12. Hybrid is the safest plan for all. How can you allow 29 kids per class at the 5/6 center yet you don't allow more than 25 adults in the cafeteria for the board meetings? This doesn't make sense. K-6 needs to open with a hybrid schedule just like 7-12. Please consider changing your decision.

Regarding live stream during the hybrid home days, please see North Penn's plan below. They are purchasing video conferencing equipment to make for a better live stream experience. I'm not sure why we are talking about our teachers having to live stream on iPads. Spend the district money and purchase large TVs or screens for every classroom! This allows the kids on Zoom to be fully engaged in the class.

Thank you,
Kelly Shirar

Dear North Penn Families,

It is seventeen days into the school year and I know all of us have never worked so hard. We have done everything we can to make the virtual start of the school year successful. At the same time, we are planning for the return of school for in-person instruction. I wanted to give you an update on where we stand based on this week's school board meeting.

We believe that the COVID-19 metrics for Montgomery County are at a place where students can return to school and we are preparing for this day. Our school board is discussing a plan for students to return November 9th with the possibility of bringing groups of students (e.g. primary grades and selected special education students) in before that date.

A hybrid model using a mix of in-person learning and online learning via livestream will be provided. How students will be broken into hybrid groups and which days they will be in person, and which days they will be viewing class via live stream is still being discussed. Students who do not want in-person instruction will engage in learning via livestream on all days of the week. More detailed information on both of these options will be communicated soon.

NPSD approved the use of grant money to purchase more than \$500,000 in video conferencing equipment to make this hybrid model robust and engaging. It will involve teachers interacting with online students via a large screen TV with a camera, a microphone so students at home and in school can hear each other, and a wireless microphone for teachers to speak with online students directly. Next week we will share with you a video that will better explain how this technology will be used.

Our plans are connected to this technology arriving, being assembled and installed, and providing time for teachers to become comfortable in its use.

Our school board has not yet voted on a specific return date, however, it is important that you are up-to-date on a potential timeline. Please stay tuned for additional information as it becomes available.

Overall, we know our families, students, and staff have been through an incredible amount of change, frustration, and anxiety. Our goal with the return to school is to limit these feelings and somehow bring a bit of normalcy back to all of our lives. We cannot wait to see our students in person.

Until then, please continue to be well and stay North Penn Strong.

Sincerely,

Curtis R. Dietrich, Ed.D.
Superintendent