

WEST CHESTER AREA SCHOOL BOARD—Meeting of February 22, 2021

I. Call to Order

The West Chester Area School Board met on February 22, 2021 in the Spellman Education Center, 782 Springdale Dr. Exton PA. Due to the pandemic, the public viewed the meeting on the WCASD YouTube Channel. Mr. McCune, Board President, opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with a moment of silence for Joan Osborne, Accounting Technician who recently passed away. Eric Soares and Ranay Torres of Mary C. Howse Elementary School led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Mr. Bevilacqua, Ms. Chester, Mr. Durnell, Mr. Gallen, Dr. Herrmann, Mr. McCune, Dr. Shaw, Mr. Spackman, Mrs. Tiernan. Student Representatives: Alice Tran, East High School; Colleen Kinkead, Henderson High School; Davis Patel, Rustin High School.

Members Absent:

III. Approval of Minutes of the January 25, 2021 Monthly School Board Meeting

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Mr. Spackman and seconded by Mr. Bevilacqua to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2021 monthly School Board Meeting.

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

Mr. McCune announced that the Board met in Executive Session on February 4 regarding a legal matter and school safety, February 16 regarding a personnel matter and a legal matter and this evening, February 22 regarding a legal matter and school safety.

IV. Approval of the February 22, 2021 School Board Meeting Agenda

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Dr. Herrmann and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the February 22, 2021 meeting agenda.

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

V. Superintendent’s Report

The High School Student Representatives gave monthly reports.

VI. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Dr. Sokolowski read public comments on agenda items received via google form. The comments will be attached to the official meeting minutes.

VII. Approval of Personnel Recommendations—Dr. Ulmer (Copy In)

I. Removal from Payroll

a.	Resignations
1.	Shelby Boothman, 1.0 Secretary to the Assistant Principals at Henderson HS, effective 2/11/21.
2.	Maurice Hill, Custodian at East HS, effective 2/23/21.
3.	Brianna McCabe, 1.0 LTS at District, effective 1/29/21.
4.	Christy Rutherford, Business & Marketing Education Teacher at East HS, effective TBD.
b.	Retirements
1.	Christine Bland, Gifted Teacher at East HS, effective end of the 2020-2021 school year. 16 years of service.
2.	Joan DiSalvatore, Paraprofessional at Glen Acres ES, effective 6/30/21. 21 years of service.
3.	Jane Halligan, English Teacher at Peirce MS, effective end of the 2020-2021 school year. 16 years of service.
4.	Deborah Krupa, Special Education Teacher at East Bradford ES, effective 4/5/21. 12 years of service.
c.	Deceased
1.	Joan Osborne, Accounting Technician at Spellman Education Center, passed away on 2/17/21. She served 37 years in the District. Joan will be greatly missed.

II. Additions to Payroll

a.	Professional Staff: Contract	
1.	John Dodson	
	Placement	1.0 Grade 4 Teacher at Exton ES, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective TBD, Level 1, Step 2, \$49,400.
	Education	Bachelor of Science from Shippensburg University 2014-2018
	Experience	Building Sub at West Chester Area School District with Kelly Education Services 9/2019 - current
	Certification	Instructional I, Elementary K-4, Special Education PreK-8
b.	Professional Staff: Long Term Substitute	
1.	Jane Bryer	
	Placement	1.0 Grade 1 Teacher at Mary C. Howse ES, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective 1/25/21, Level 1, Step 1, \$46,000. During Ms. Kane's leave of absence.
	Education	Bachelor of Science from West Chester University of Pennsylvania 2016-2020
	Experience	Substitute Teacher with Kelly Services 12/2020-current
	Certification	Instructional I, Grades PK-4

2.	Cassandra Cerullo	
	Placement	1.0 School Counselor at East HS, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective 2/17/21, Level 1, Step 1, \$46,000. During Mr. Lindros' leave of absence.
	Education	Bachelor of Arts from James Madison University 2012-2016, Master of Education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania 2017-2019
	Experience	School Counselor Long Term Substitute at Great Valley School District 8/2019 – current, Substitute Teacher with STS 1/2017-6/2019
	Certification	Educational Specialist I, Elementary & Secondary School Counselor PK-12
3.	Rachel Hubbs	
	Placement	1.0 Reading Teacher at Stetson MS, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective 3/1/21, Level 1, Step 1, \$46,000. During Ms. Whitmire's Temporary Assignment.
	Education	Bachelor of Arts from Eastern University 2009-2013, Master of Science from Saint Joseph's University 2015-2018
	Experience	Teacher at Collegium Charter School 1/2017 - current
	Certification	Instructional I, English 7-12
4.	Brandon Olmeda	
	Placement	1.0 Music Teacher at .5 Penn Wood ES/.5 Westtown Thornbury ES, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective 3/4/21, Level 1, Step 1 \$46,000. During Ms. Elder's leave of absence.
	Education	Bachelor of Arts in Music from West Chester University of Pennsylvania 2016-2020
	Experience	Substitute Teacher at Octorara School District 12/2020 - current
	Certification	Instructional I, Music
5.	Charles Owens	
	Placement	1.0 Science Teacher at Henderson HS, Temporary Professional Employee (Non-Tenured), effective 2/4/21, Level 1, Step 1, \$46,000. During Ms. Foster's leave of absence.
	Education	Bachelor of Science from Widener University 2008-2012, Certification from West Chester University 2017-2019
	Experience	Building Substitute with ESS, New Jersey 8/2020-current
	Certification	Instructional I, Biology, General Science
c.	Administrative Staff: Contract - None	
d.	Support Staff: Non Bargaining - None	
e.	Support Staff: Contract	

1.	Carol Anderson	
	Placement	.5 Part-Time Custodian at District, 4 hrs./day, 5 days/week, 260 days/year, effective 2/16/21, Group 5, Step 1, \$18.30.
2.	Lawrence DelloBuono	
	Placement	.5 Part-Time Custodian at District, 4 hrs./day, 5 days/week, 260 days/year, effective TBD, Group 5, Step 1, \$18.30.
3.	Victor Hernandez	
	Placement	.5 Part-Time Custodian at District, 4 hrs./day, 5 days/week, 260 days/year, effective TBD, Group 5, Step 1, \$18.30.
4.	Dina Mulhern	
	Placement	1.0 Paraprofessional in Autistic Support Room at Fern Hill ES, 7 hrs./day, 5 days/week, 182 days/year, effective 2/16/21, Group 1B, Step 3, \$13.56.
5.	Alijah Munoz	
	Placement	1.0 Special Education Paraprofessional at Exton ES, 7 hrs./day, 5 days/week, 182 days/year, effective 2/22/21, Group 1 B, Step 3, \$13.56.
f.	Support Staff: Substitute - None	

III. Personnel Events

a. Status Change

	Name	Type	From	To	Effective Date
1.	Kelly Cromleigh	Support Staff	1.0 Attendance Secretary at East Goshen ES	1.0 Secretary to the Principal at East Goshen ES	2/16/21, Group 3, Step 4, \$19.91
2.	Jennifer Fitzgibbon	Professional	1.0 Staff Nurse at East HS	1.0 Certified School Nurse at East HS	2/3/21, Level 3, Step 5, \$54,100
3.	Jason Moore	Non-Bargaining	1.0 Custodian at Glen Acres ES	1.0 Head Custodian at Spellman Education Center	1/22/21, \$52,964

b. Involuntary Transfer - None

c. Voluntary Transfer - None

IV. Personnel Leave

a. Sabbatical Leave

	Name	Position	Effective Date	Ending Date
1.	Elena Castilla	1.0 Gifted Resource Teacher at Henderson HS	8/23/21	1/25/22

	Name	Position	Effective Date	Ending Date
2.	Heather Cosgrove	1.0 Art Teacher at Peirce MS	8/23/21	6/16/22
3.	Jessica McKeever	1.0 Grade 2 Teacher at Exton ES	8/23/21	6/16/22
4.	Caitlin Student	1.0 Health/Physical Education Teacher at Fugett MS	8/23/21	6/16/22

b. Unpaid Leave

	Name	Position	Effective Date	Ending Date
1.	Vivian Borochnan	1.0 Paraprofessional at East Bradford ES	2/8/21	2/26/21

V. Additional Information

1.	Madisyn Aman's start date was 2/3/21.
2.	Dr. Kristen Barnello should receive \$2,500 for her work in Secondary Cyber Program for the month of February.
3.	Mary Beckert is extending her unpaid leave return date to 3/19/21.
4.	Delaney Bowes' start date was 2/8/21.
5.	Megan Breslin's start date was 1/28/21.
6.	Dr. Rebecca Eberly should receive \$2,500 for her work in Elementary Cyber Program for the month of February, 2021.
7.	Katie Lasater's start date was 2/16/21.
8.	Dawn Mader's salary should be \$140,765, not \$140,675 as previously reported.
9.	Krista McNichol's start date was 2/17/21.
10.	Emily Paladino's start date was 1/29/21.
11.	KerryLynn Resnick has withdrawn her acceptance of the 1.0 Paraprofessional position at Hillsdale ES.
12.	Nikolette Trofa's last day will be 2/26/21.
13.	Morgan Whiteside's start date was 2/8/21.
14.	In accordance with the PA State Auditor's recommendation, the following list of drivers, employed by our transportation contractors Krapf's and On the Go Kids, require School Board approval. The credentials and security clearances for each of these drivers has been verified to be in compliance with our transportation carrier contracts and have been vetted through the WCASD Transportation Office.

KRAPF'S

First Name	Last Name	Driver/Aide
Rosa	Ruiz-Denizard	Driver
Kareen	Schofield	Driver

ON THE GO KIDS

First Name	Last Name	Driver/Aide
Breannah	Cooper	Driver

First Name	Last Name	Driver/Aide
Severn	Green	Driver
George	Harris	Driver
Kiona	Larios	Aide
Alita	Miller	Aide
Alyssa	Sammartino	Aide
Tasha	Wylie	Driver
Razyia	Wylie	Aide

VI. Supplemental Contracts

Last Name	First Name	Location	Season	Step	% of Contract	Total Contract	Position Title
2020-2021 Additions:							
Bridgehouse	Ethan	PMS	Spring	2	100%	\$2,835	Head Boys Lacrosse Coach
Clay	Charles	HHS	Spring	4	100%	\$1,104	Spring Intramurals
Enns	Katie	SMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,156	Asst. Girls Lacrosse Coach
Fad	Alex	EHS	Spring	1	100%	\$3,696	Asst. Boys Track Coach
Gillard	Emily	PMS	Spring	1	50%	\$1,078	Asst. Softball Coach
Kropp	Sarah	RHS	Spring	1	100%	\$3,696	Asst. Girls Lacrosse Coach
Martin	Madeline	PMS	Spring	1	50%	\$1,078	Asst. Softball Coach
Patterson	Emily	SMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,464	Asst. Track Coach
Pester	Gary	SMS	Spring	2	100%	\$2,520	Asst. Track Coach
Phethean	Theresa	PMS	Spring	4	100%	\$2,944	Asst. Track Coach
Saunders	Rebecca	HHS	Spring	3	100%	\$3,888	Asst. Girls Lacrosse Coach
Scelsa	Meredith	EHS	Spring	5	100%	\$1,143	Spring Intramurals
Whiteside	Morgan	SMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,772	Head Girls Lacrosse Coach

Last Name	First Name	Location	Season	Step	% of Contract	Total Contract	Position Title
Wildermuth	Timothy	PMS	Spring	2	100%	\$2,205	Asst. Boys Lacrosse Coach
Yahn	Frederick	PMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,156	Asst. Baseball Coach
Removals:							
Chavarria	Courtney	SMS	Spring	2	100%	\$2,835	Head Girls Lacrosse Coach
Cherubino	Marshall	SMS	Spring	2	100%	\$2,205	Asst. Girls Lacrosse Coach
Egleston	Amanda	SMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,464	Asst. Track Coach
Gilligan	Gregory	FMS	Spring	1	100%	\$2,772	Boys Head Lacrosse Coach
Pinder	Mitch	EHS	Spring	1	35%	\$1,293.60	Asst. Baseball Coach
Schorn	James	EHS	Spring	4	100%	\$5,888	Head Boys Lacrosse Coach
Virgilio	Edward	EGE	Annual	7	100%	\$3,879	After School Intramurals
Adjustments:							
Pinder	Jeffrey	EHS	Spring	1	100%	\$3,696	Asst. Baseball Coach

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Dr. Herrmann and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Personnel Recommendations as presented.

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Mr. Bevilacqua and seconded by Ms. Chester to approve the following Consent Agenda Items:

Education	
1.	Approval to establish the following Activity Account: -East HS Breast Cancer Awareness Club Funds
2.	Approval of Revised Board Policy 122 Extracurricular Activities, First Reading
3.	Approval of Revised Board Policy 123 Interscholastic Athletics, First Reading
4.	Approval of Revised Board Policy 123.2 Sudden Cardiac Arrest, First Reading

Pupil Services	
1.	Approval of (1) one Special Education Settlement Agreement
2.	Approval of Revised Policy 113.1 Discipline for Students with Disabilities, Second Reading
3.	Approval of Revised Policy 113.2 Behavior Intervention, Second Reading
4.	Approval of Revised Policy 113.4 Confidentiality of Special Education Student Information, Second Reading
Personnel	
1.	Approval of (2) Two New Assistant to the Director of Teaching and Learning Positions and Job Description
2.	Approval of (1) One New Assistant to the Director of Pupil Services Position and Job Description
3.	Approval of Revised Equity Advocate Job Description
4.	Approval of New District Department Leader Job Description
5.	Approval of (1) New Lead Intervention and Mental Health Specialist Position and Job Description
6.	Approval of Revised Public Safety Supervisor Job Description and movement of position from the Non-Bargaining Employee Group to the Act 93 Administrative Group
7.	Approval of (2) Two New Campus Safety Officer Positions and Job Description
8.	Approval of Revised Security Greeter Job Description and movement from Group 1 Support Staff Bargaining Unit to Group 2 Service Support Staff Bargaining Unit
Property & Finance	
1.	Approval of Revised Policy 827, Conflict of Interest, Second Reading
2.	Approval for 2021-22 E-Rate Bids: Crown Castle 60-month dark fiber lease \$15,499.77/mo. Optiv Security Dell-branded switchgear for Network Operations Center (NOC) \$176,624.50 CDW/G HP Aruba-branded edge switchgear and Aruba-branded wireless access points, controllers, and licenses. \$384,285.00
3.	Approval of Contract Award to Metal Alliance, Inc. in the amount of \$1,297,500.00 to furnish and install replacement roofing and associated work for the Phase 2 work area of Rustin High School
4.	Approval of Contract Award to Keystone Sports Construction in the amount of \$108,217.98 to furnish and install synthetic turf with shock absorbing pad in the courtyard of Greystone Elementary School
Other Business	
1.	Approval of School Board Treasurer's Report and Statement of Disbursements Summary Schedule for the Period of January 1, 2021 to January 31, 2021
WEST CHESTER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT FEBRUARY 22, 2021 STATEMENT OF DISBURSEMENTS SUMMARY	

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2021 - JANUARY 31, 2021	
GENERAL FUND DISBURSEMENTS	14,388,408.20
includes Technology, Federal Programs and any Special State Funds	
BILLS PAID	14,388,408.20
INVESTMENTS	0.00
CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	84,733.19
CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND	1,361,518.33
SPECIAL REVENUE - Athletics	1,892.70
TRUST FUNDS	0.00
CAFETERIA	163,407.68
STUDENT ACTIVITY FUND DISBURSEMENTS	30,358.21
TRUST AND AGENCY FUND DISBURSEMENTS	<u>12,154.55</u>
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	<u>16,042,472.86</u>
NOTE: A copy of the details of the above disbursements is available for review from the Board Secretary.	
2.	Approval of the January 31, 2021 Financial Report

On roll call vote to approve the above Consent Agenda Items, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

IX. School Board Reports

Education Committee—Mrs. Tiernan

Pupil Services Committee—Ms. Chester

B-5.Approval of Family Service of Chester County Contract

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Ms. Chester and seconded by Mr. Durnell to approve the Family Service of Chester County Contract

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

B-6.Approval of Mary Daniels Independent Contractor Agreement

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Ms. Chester and seconded by Dr. Herrmann to approve the Mary Daniels Independent Contractor Agreement

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

Personnel Committee—Dr. Herrmann

C-9.Approval of Revised WCASD Management Team Organizational Chart

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Dr. Herrmann and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the revised WCASD Management Team Organizational Chart

On roll call vote, all members present voted “aye.” Motion carried 9-0.

Property and Finance Committee—Mr. Bevilacqua

X. Other Business

X-3.Approval of Revisions to Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan for SY 2020-21

BOARD ACTION: It was moved by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Bevilacqua to approve the Revisions to Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan for SY 2020-21

On roll call vote, seven members present voted “aye” with Ms. Chester and Dr. Shaw voting “nay”. Motion carried 7-2.

XI. Comments from Residents

Dr. Sokolowski read public comments on non-agenda items received via google form. The comments will be attached to the official meeting minutes.

Ms. Chester read the following, “So, while once we asked how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe, now we assert, how could catastrophe possibly prevail over us? We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be.” Things to do during the pandemic: “Read children's books, dance alone to DJ music. Know that this distance will make our hearts grow fonder. From a wave of woes our world will emerge stronger.”
~Amanda Gorman

February 22, 2021

XII. Adjournment

BOARD ACTION: On motion by Mr. Gallen, seconded by Mr. Spackman, the Board, on voice vote, agreed to adjourn at 9:25 p.m.

Board Secretary

FEBRUARY 22, 2021 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Comments
Kathryn	<p>When considering a movement to decrease student distance from 6 feet to 3 feet, please consider the lack of opportunity by teachers to acquire a vaccine. This decreased distance will bring greater risk to teachers. Teachers want all of their students back at school, but not when it could bring harm to them and their families. In Chester County, it is incredibly difficult to acquire a vaccine. Please consider that even if teachers want to get a vaccine, they do not have the opportunity to do so. I respectfully request that you wait to implement 3 foot distancing guidelines until vaccines are more widely available so teachers and their families can be protected. This time is stressful for all, but going to work every day with the fear that one could become ill, and in turn make their family ill, adds additional stressors.</p>
Jacqueline Ruppert	<p>From the superintendent's letter, it says that 6 feet of social distancing is still recommended for teachers. With this being the case, should this recommendation of six feet still hold true for high school students? I believe that the studies concerning schools are done at younger grades. High schoolers are adult size and both they and staff should be held to the same guidelines.</p>
Elizabeth Montgomery-Lewis	<p>Throughout the pandemic, the CDC and other health officials have stressed to maintain 6 feet of distance to keep yourself safe. THAT is how we have reduced numbers. Your obligation is to keep the staff and students safe. To reduce the distance now to 3 feet is simply caving to parents who want their kids in school no matter what. The staff needs you to protect them as much as possible until 1b opens up. The children need to be protected. Yes, kids don't get as sick, but that doesn't mean this won't have long term effects on their health. Studies of lungs and hearts show damage even to those people who had mild cases and feel no different. We all have an obligation to protect the kids until the vaccine is available to them. Thank you, Elizabeth Montgomery-Lewis</p>
Dixon Conway	<p>I do not know</p>
James Wilson	<p>Please consider the following when deciding to come back under reduced social distancing guidelines. As of 2/12/21 CDC Recommends at least 6 ft of social distancing. Coming in at reduced distancing goes against this guidance. Further teacher vaccinations are recommended for more in person instruction and PA continues to refuse to prioritize teachers being vaccinated and with the continued delays in vaccine distribution makes this almost impossible. Please consider these factors in making your decision</p>
Dixon Conway	<p>Why is it safe for students to be within 3 feet and not teachers? There has been a lot of talk about students being able to easily fight COVID-19, and therefore their safe. Please remember some students have high risk people living with them, and if one person in a household gets the virus everyone in that house will contract the virus. Thank you for your time</p>

FEBRUARY 22, 2021 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Comments
Leah Tasca	I understand and appreciate the recommendations made by Chester County Health Dept to get children back to school. While I do appreciate there will still be distancing not less than 3 feet, how will the schools be able to accommodate this recommendation if class sizes are 25 plus students? My fifth grader has a class size of 29 kids.
Ave Beatty	The school board, the county, and the state has had more than enough time to figure out how to get kids back to school full time. Get the kids back to school 5 days a week now. If private schools can do it successfully, so can public schools. If someone wants to keep their kids home, fine. But the schools should be operating in person, full time, immediately.
CHRistianne Ottinger	I am not in favor of reducing physical distancing in the schools. Both the CDC and health department support and recommend 6 feet distance. With our current reduced student population, it is easier to manage those transient times in the hallways, bathrooms, and dismissal times. And, yet, kids still need reminders to keep their distance during those unstructured times. The hybrid A/B day model also allows for safer indoor recess activities, snack times and mask breaks in the classroom that students need. Reducing distance to 3 feet will put students and staff, who can't yet be vaccinated, at significant risk. Some staff members spend multiple class periods supervising lunch (1 hour or more). Filling the cafeteria with maskless children who need help opening their snack bags, puts those staff members at significant risk. Envisioning kids 3 feet apart, working on a set of math problems, is not the problem, it is all the time where they need to have their masks off, where they're in the halls at less than 3 feet, and the inability to disinfect the common surfaces that more people will be touching. For the health and safety of our children and staff, as well as for the emotional well-being of our staff members who are already stressed and doing what they can to make school work, please keep the distance at 6 feet until we have the opportunity to be vaccinated.
Julie D Pfaff	I implore you to re-open schools for at least four, and ideally five, days per week. Too much valuable education time has already been lost - particularly for our most vulnerable students. Additionally the mental health of our students is at stake if schools not return to something slightly more normal. I understand there may be parents who are still uncomfortable sending their children to school, however I think the remote option will meet the needs of those parents through the remainder of the year.
Elizabeth Fremont	Enough is enough. These kids, especially at the elementary level, need to be in school full time. My first grader is unnecessarily behind with her learning and now requires tutoring.
Tara O'Neill	Hello, I would like to voice my opinion on having the children return to the classroom for 5 full days. I am hoping that that you will amend your guidance to allow schools to use the 3 feet of social distancing as opposed to 6 feet. I have two children enrolled in the WCASD and the system is failing them miserably. In addition to educational support, I am looking for emotional support for them as well. Remote does not work for schooling children, especially elementary.

FEBRUARY 22, 2021 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Comments
Nathan Barnes	<p>I am happy to discuss further with you if you like.</p> <p>I'd rather be delivering this message in person but a letter will have to suffice. My name is Nathan Barnes and I am the proud parent of three children attending three different schools in the West Chester Area School District. I'd like to commend the School Board for their efforts throughout the pandemic. Over the last year, you made difficult decisions in the midst of a crisis that we had never encountered and/or contemplated.</p> <p>However, NOW is the time we must consider the latest guidance published by the CDC. The CDC now states that schools CAN OPEN for full time, in person learning. In fact, a lot of schools HAVE BEEN open for full time, in person learning. The following sentences are from the CDC website (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html):</p> <p>"Schools that are open for in-person instruction (either fully open or hybrid) MAY DECIDE to remain open even at high (red) levels of community transmission. These decisions should be guided by information on school-specific factors such as mitigation strategies implemented, LOCAL NEEDS, STAKEHOLDER INPUT, the number of cases among students, teachers, and staff, and SCHOOL EXPERIENCE."</p> <p>While no two sentences can solely guide the Board, I would ask you to consider the first sentence as published by the CDC. It states that SCHOOLS MAY DECIDE. You, our Board, HAS THE CHOICE. While I wouldn't recommend remaining open at high levels of community transmission; I request you consider that nearby schools and private schools HAVE BEEN OPEN even during Moderate Community Transmission levels as defined by the CDC.</p> <p>The Board needs to consider the second sentence of the aforementioned excerpt as well. The current SCHOOL EXPERIENCE of this hybrid model is NOT WORKING. The LOCAL NEEDS of our children are not being addressed. Many WCASD students are falling behind academically while others are not being challenged. They are socially isolated, emotionally repressed and they need to be in school full time.</p> <p>Finally, now is the time to acknowledge your STAKEHOLDERS; the THOUSANDS of parents who want their children in school, full time.</p> <p>Follow the CDC guidelines and open our schools to full time, in person learning.</p>

FEBRUARY 22, 2021 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Comments
Stephan Jerabek	<p>The proposed changes to the Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan for SY 2020-21 do not adequately address the CCHD mitigation requirements for waiving the 6 foot distance requirement. The board should vote no on these proposed changes until it addresses the following CCHD mitigation requirements:</p> <p>Per CCHD, "the following mitigation measures will be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · engage with families to ensure such a change does not negatively impact families (i.e., more families choose to remain remote with less than six feet), · implement a COVID screening testing plan that has been reviewed by the Health Department; educate and promote participation in the screening testing, · educate and promote vaccination as an extra layer of safety for individuals and the school community overall, and · ensure learning options remain in place for families who choose not to return to in-person learning with less than 6 feet physical distancing." <p>Further, it should be noted that CCHD is still vaccinating Phase 1A (most educators and staff will be in Phase 1B) and that CCHD cannot vaccinate anyone under age 18. We remain in a very high rate of community transmission (which in the first version of this plan would have meant virtual instruction), and should see more consideration than what the plan currently addresses.</p>
Angelique DiBruno-Ristine	<p>This change from the health department seems premature. As the state is still vaccinating those in phase 1A (and struggling to do so) shouldn't this change wait for teachers to be eligible and receive the vaccine (if they so choose) in advance any consideration a return to school in closer proximity. It is reported that children are largely asymptotic which leaves the teachers at higher risk as well as the members of my multi-generational household. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my concerns and I wish you all the best while navigating these very difficult decisions to the best of your abilities.</p>
TRICIA B STEVENS	<p>The vote on school reopening plans is significant and I implore you to read community comments verbatim. After the Jan school board meeting, I filed an Open Records Request for the public comments because my comment was not read in entirety and I heard the same complaint from others.</p> <p>When I received the file, I was told that comments were edited to meet a 2 minute maximum. However, a cross-check of the actual "read time" for these public comments, using the video recording, showed that the edited comments were nowhere near 2 minutes in length. In fact, 100% of edited comments had "read times" of less than 1 minute. The edited content for almost all comments clearly would have fit well under the 2 minute max window.</p> <p>75% of ALL comments submitted in Jan were edited or not read. Edits removed concerns about remote learning including the stark increases in failing grades and absenteeism, some of this being the same content that was</p>

FEBRUARY 22, 2021 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Name	Comments
	<p>suppressed from the Education Committee update. Families' stories of harm from remote learning were also edited including children with new anxiety and new therapists; failing grades turning kids off to learning and crushing college dreams, and overall worry for long-term irrevocable harm - both educational and emotional.</p> <p>The community has a right to be heard and not censored. I implore you to read comments verbatim straight up til the 2 minute maximum.</p>
Michael Alexis	<p>To the School Board and Superintendent:</p> <p>I want to begin by thanking the Board and Superintendent Scanlon for your service during these unprecedented times. You are at the center of a contentious debate, with compelling moral arguments on both sides, and I appreciate the difficult position WCASD is in.</p> <p>With that said, I urge you to reopen schools to the maximum extent possible, as soon as possible. Teachers and staff should be vaccinated as rapidly as possible, and I encourage you to be flexible with higher risk teachers and staff, until they have an opportunity to receive the vaccine. Likewise, parents who are not comfortable sending their children to school should continue to have a choice. However, President Biden was correct when he referred to the continued closure of our schools as a “national emergency”, and there are compelling public health and ethical reasons to reopen schools to the maximum extent feasible.</p> <p>From a public health standpoint, we know that closing schools has a significant negative impact on the mental and emotional health of our children, and increases the risks of suicide, such as the recent surge in student suicides in Clark County, Nevada. School closures also result in depression and anxiety. We also know that there is a correlation between educational attainment and lifespan, and that the full or partial closure of our schools is having a significant, negative impact on educational attainment. In November of 2020, JAMA Pediatrics published a paper suggesting that missed instruction in the U.S. during 2020 could be associated with an estimated 13.8 million years of life lost by our children. We must mitigate the risks of COVID, but not at the expense of the lives and futures of our children.</p> <p>We also know that the COVID risks to teens and younger children are low, compared to the risks to adults and seniors. The risks to teachers and staff are real, but these risks can be mitigated by the Chester County Health Department’s revised social distancing requirements, which still call for six feet of distancing between teachers and students and between and among teachers.</p> <p>I expect other statements submitted tonight will come from people whose children are thriving in virtual school. I am happy for these people, but a</p>

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	<p>system in which the majority of students are left behind is not in any way equitable. Furthermore, the current virtual/hybrid model exacerbates existing disparities and leaves disadvantaged children behind. Simply put, it is unjust and inequitable, and WCASD should do better.</p> <p>The CDC recently stated that the decision to reopen schools should be guided by what is “feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community.” Six feet of social distancing between students is not feasible in the WCASD. It means that schools will remain virtual or hybrid for the foreseeable future. The Chester County Health Department’s revised guidelines are based on developing science, and on the urgent need to resume in-person instruction to mitigate the massive harm being inflicted on our children, particularly our most vulnerable children. Accordingly, WCASD should act on the revised guidance provided by the Chester County Health Department to reopen schools to the maximum extent feasible.</p>
Candace Walter	<p>I'm so disappointed in this School Board! In last month's meeting you read LESS THAN HALF of my comment and you did not share any "Academic Effectiveness Measures" that were reviewed in the Education Sub Committee on how students are failing at much higher rates than last year and missing much, much more school than last year.</p> <p>How is it that students failing and missing school is NOT a topic on the school board agenda? It's a topic for the Education Committee but not the School Board where most parents come to get updates. 8-10% of High School Students failing any given subject - like Math and Science, etc, For Freshman, students failing 2 OR MORE subjects went from LESS than 1% last year to ALMOST 9% NOW! And, for Freshman in the Cyber Program, OVER 25% are failing 2 or more classes. Failing grades also up for Middle School students. Obviously, remote learning is not working for many students, but you don't want to share that in that school board meeting. The Academic Success assessment also showed worse impacts for boys and minority students. Many of these children now see themselves as failures. All of you seem to be hiding the bad things from remote learning that will stay with many of these kids for a lifetime.</p> <p>Now that the Health Department has changed the distancing to 3 feet minimum - no more excuses - you need to bring these students back to school. I want to hear in the next school board meeting how you plan to catch these kids up academically and help them emotionally.</p>
Katie Marge	Is WCASD participating in the Project ACE-IT?
Erin Harrington	If students are able to come back 5 days will there be enough space for all students to return in person at 3ft?!
Dottie Foley	Thank you for considering the new guidance from the health department. Please bring all students who want to attend back to 5 days in person instruction. Please start the high schools back to 5 days at the same time as the elementary students.

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Beth Ann Rosica	<p>I have timed my comments to ensure that they are less than 2 minutes long, so please read through in their entirety. I am very pleased that the new CCHD guidance allows for less than 6 feet of social distancing under ANY circumstance. Specifically, it states that School Superintendents and their governing bodies are the responsible parties for determining the instructional models that best fit the needs of their community. The new guidance further states that even in very high community transmission, meaning greater than 100 cases per 100,000 over a 7 day period, that 6 feet of social distancing is NOT required. It is recommended, but not required. I respectfully request that the Board be honest and transparent in its decision making regarding the full reopening of schools for any family that wants that option. If you choose to not fully reopen for 5 full days, it the decision of the Board, not any other entity. I ask that you own this decision.</p>
Jacquelyn Crane	<p>We are almost 6 months into this school year. That's 6 months of experimenting on our own children. We took a conservative stance this year, which was absolutely the right move when we had to made that choice in an information vacuum. We did what we thought was right, but we can only remain on the moral and scientific high ground if we are willing to examine and re-examine our decisions as we receive new data.</p> <p>We've now had the opportunity to observe real-world evidence of virus transmission in schools. Locally, we've seen no large outbreaks linked to schools, even in those that opened with less restrictive parameters than Chester County and the WCASD. I look to Bucks County as an example, as well as to many of our local private schools. We've also seen evidence that many children are falling behind, many students are failing classes who have never failed before, and many children are struggling with new or worsening anxiety and depression. All observable data is telling us it's time to reopen our schools full time to all students who want to be there.</p> <p>I understand not all families will want to send their children back at this time, and I'm proud that our district has made it possible for these families to choose what's best for them. I also want the opportunity to choose what's best for my children.</p>
Patricia Wenger	<p>I am the mother of a 4th grader at Starkweather. I strongly support increasing in person learning for students. I think it is De Minimus that the county transmission rate is only 3 above the 100 per 100,000 arbitrary level. Of course studies have shown that children tend to not get the virus or transmit the virus. Also, studies have shown that socialization is critical for the academics and general wellbeing of children. Interaction, modeling and play is inherent in the healthy development of children. I understand busing might be an issue, but I am confident that creative initiative should be able to address that concern. I will be pleased to participate on a task force or other type of group to find solutions to the busing or other perceived impediments to increasing in person learning to students. For all of these reasons, and more, I strongly support increasing in person learning for children. Thank you.</p>

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Name	Comments
Lisa Longo	<p>Thank you Board members. The decision to change school policy for a return to in-person learning must be based on the CDC guidelines as written. The letter from the Chester County Health Department that was sent out yesterday includes a misstatement that may give you the impression a reduction of social distance is being recommended. That is not true, there is no "support" for a reduction in physical distance in the current CDC Guidelines.</p> <p>We all want to return to in-person, and the best way to do so successfully is to follow the expert advice and guidance from the CDC. We can utilize our spaces differently, have students outside more, make sure classrooms have windows that open or air filtration systems in place. There are many parts of the mitigation strategies. None of them include a reduction in physical distance.</p> <p>Rushing to reopen without following the actual guidance as written can cause more closures, and no one wants that. It is up to elected school board members to follow the CDC guidance for public safety and health, to ensure there is a safe working environment for our staff and faculty, and that our communities are also not put at risk.</p> <p>We have all given up so much over the last year. Rushing to return to in-person and ignoring the CDC guidance is not a good choice, nor is it good governance. Please follow the CDC guidance as written. The letter from the Chester County Health Department is incorrect, there is no "support" from the CDC for a reduction in physical distance.</p>
John McDonald	<p>Good Evening Esteemed Members of the WCASD board (and Dr. Scanlon),</p> <p>Upon speaking with the Dr. last week regarding what it would take for your governing body to “allow” parents the option to provide their children with a 5x/week in person education, he divulged that it would take something outside of your control to achieve these ends. That mechanism would be of course the magic 3’ of space passed down from the omnipotent CCHD. Not 3’1”, but 3’ apparently is this arbitrary metric.</p> <p>Got me thinking a bit regarding the school board as an institution. You fine folks, hold an elected office. You are elected to this office to make decisions based on the educational needs of your clients (the students/tax payers). However, what you are engaging in is a full blown punting of the football as you are negligibly delegating your powers to an outside unelected bureaucracy. Why even have a school board if you can’t make decisions?</p> <p>Furthermore, if it is your duty to make educational decisions as Dr. Scanlon so kindly pointed out on the phone last week, then you are blatantly failing your constituents, the kids, and this community. As educators, this school district is failing on so many fronts. It’s amazing to me that you continue to pull in revenue through a steady stream from the taxpayer coffers. Had you been a private entity, the dissatisfaction of your customers would have allowed them</p>

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	<p>the mobility to take their needs elsewhere. But no, we are held hostage to the broken public school system.</p> <p>We implore you, to be adults and make decisions based on the educational needs of the children. Let the health department do their job to inform the general public and you do yours to allow for a continuation of services based off of customer demand. Allow people the power to make need based decisions and engage in personal responsibility. This doesn't have to be a zero-sum game. If parents want to send their kids to school full time, great! If parents want to keep their kids home, great! The freedom of choice is a power and beautiful phenomena. You are taking that freedom away and it is inherently evil to its core. Families are suffering and the data supports that.</p> <p>You all have a job to do. Let's get this done before more damage is done to these children and this community.</p>
<p>Rachel Langan</p>	<p>Please read my comment in its entirety, since my comment last month was censored during the reading of comments.</p> <p>I am asking the board to keep in mind that when you vote on the reopening plan, you are required to uphold the Public School Code of 1949.</p> <p>Act 14 of this code states:</p> <p>“Every child of compulsory school age having legal residence in the Commonwealth . . . is required to attend a day school . . . “</p> <p>As such, I believe that hybrid schooling does NOT meet state law, as hybrid education does not allow for children to be in school on a daily basis. For this reason, the board MUST vote to allow students back into the buildings 5 days a week.</p> <p>As board members, you should be voting based on whether or not the proposed plan upholds the laws of the Commonwealth. Your vote should NOT be based on your personal feelings.</p> <p>Our children have not been at school on a regular basis in almost a year. It is time to give families the option to send their children to school 5 days a week. We have been asked to be patient with the district as we all navigate the hybrid option. We are out of patience. Families who want to be cyber have that option. Families who want to be hybrid have that option. It is time to give the rest of us an option to send our kids to school 5 days a week.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
<p>Michael DiPaola</p>	<p>Hybrid is a disservice to students and teachers alike. Teachers have the burden of giving attention to both the students in the classroom and online simultaneously which is impossible.</p>

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Name	Comments
	<p>As the CCHD guidance allows the option to return to full time school, it is time to change to 2 options only - Cyber 5 days or In-Person 5 days. It's time to cancel Hybrid and this should be done for the 4th marking period forward including next school year. Proceeding with options of Cyber or In-Person gives options to those who want to learn virtually and for those who want to be in-person. In each scenario there is 100% dedication to the option by student and teacher which will optimize the experience for all.</p> <p>In-Person can also go back to 8 period days; again, where learning is optimal. The current block periods are too long and not fully utilized leaving long stretches of time where students are doing nothing, learning nothing.</p> <p>Hybrid has not worked well and this is the time to sunset it.</p>
Lynn Thompson	<p>I fully support continued efforts to return to, and maintain, 5 day a week in-person education. I am pleased that the Chester County health department updated physical distancing recommendations and hope that this will allow more students to return to brick and mortar. Cyber education is still an option for those who do not feel comfortable going in-person and should not impact those who feel otherwise. Our teachers and school personnel should be prioritized for vaccine administration as well - please continue to advocate for them on a local and state level.</p>
Colleen McCall	<p>I have serious concerns for both the children and teachers of allowing 5 days back to school with less than 6 feet of social distance. The CDC recommendations "of 6 feet should be MAXIMIZED to the greatest extent possible" (see their website) so we should be continuing this recommendation throughout the rest of the school year until we can obtain more vaccinations and herd immunity. We will not have achieved this in this school year. Teachers/classrooms are not "podding" students in the classroom; meaning some teachers allow students to change seats every day thereby making contact tracing even more difficult. There are also some teachers who are not masking in the classroom. While I would love for my child to attend "school normally" we are still not in the phase that this is allowable. I think the district is being pressured by the groups pushing to get kids back to 5 days and they are not thinking clearly. I know for a FACT that the leaders within the group are not responsible mask wearers, have not restricted travel, and do not quarantine when they return from traveling. This cannot be a group we should be listening to.</p>
Evelin canario	<p>Yes, full time .</p>
Alexis Cooper	<p>I am hopeful that our schools can go back to five days a week based on current county data, however I'm also concerned about the county rates being used to determine the number of students allowed in the building. Would the district have to revert to hybrid again if transmission rates and/or PCR percentages increase.</p>

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Name	Comments
Bette Naughton	If CDC is recommending going to 3 feet, they are also recommending , the CDC is also recommending educators be prioritized to get Covid Vaaccinations, why is the CCHD not following those guidelines?
Linda	test
Laura Detre	The CDC guidelines are clear that 6' distancing is the standard. Why is CCHD making a different recommendation and which guidelines will WCASD follow?
Timothy John Nanni Sr	Do you feel that it is right for an individual child to only go 2 days brick and mortar, who is getting solid 90 plus grades? Moreover why should a child be "penalized" socially by not being able to attend 4 days of brick and mortar school over children who "need" brick and mortar because they can not pay attention at home? This is outrageous and frankly not permitting a child to socialize at 4 days compared to 2 days brick and mortar is simply unfair to the child "putting in the time", doing their homework as directed and obtaining above average grades. My son wants to socialize 4 days a week with his friends and not be stuck in an ACP prison. Thank you for your time on my comment.
Christine McKernan	Open the schools 5 days! The kids are all suffering! Take off the masks! These kids have suffered enough! Just be clean and wash your hands. If it is possible in many other States we should ALL be open 5 days a week. Thanks
Lisa Rubinow	If all the kids are back at school at the same time, how will lunch be handled. That seems like too many people in one room without masks.
Eric Grote	For the purposes of transparency, What specific studies has the health department and school district used to make this decision? What studies show a 3ft distance is safe for all students and teachers?
David campli	What is the logic that the CDC considers when making vaccine available to teachers/administrators/custodial staff? I feel these jobs should be on level of healthcare workers. Can teachers get vaccine now and is there any special process to get This done quickly
Jeanette Argir	I believe that all teachers should be vaccinated before we let our children attend more in school days . Thank you for your time and attention
Beth Freney	On behalf of my children, I am advocating in favor of WCASD moving to five day a week in person education. This will give them an opportunity to experience a small sense of normalcy this school year. I am grateful that we have options for our children and appreciate the board making five days a week in person education one of those options.
Kathryn A. Marge	I would like WCASD to consider adding technology as a special. Other neighboring school districts and the some catholic schools have technology as a subject and it is an important subject in today's world.

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Name	Comments
Stacey Whomsley	<p>* PLEASE READ ENTIRE COMMENT, IT IS LESS THAN TWO MINUTES *</p> <p>I respectfully request the district please update the online policy information regarding staff email. The current online resources are not available and error out. I would like to understand the district's policy on use of personal email accounts before & during COVID as it has been reported that outside organizations are attempting to use personal email addresses of school administrators and staff to avoid public transparency of communications as they relate to school operations and policies. Thank you for consideration of my request.</p>
Suzie Smith	<p>Please read this comment in its entirety. The length is under two minutes.</p> <p>As the board votes tonight for school opening, we urgently ask that you return to a 5 full day, in person option for those who choose and need it. Also note that the day needs to be adjusted to include the 30 minutes lost when we returned to hybrid and Wednesday in person restored. Unaltered as it was previously a full, 5 days pre COVID school schedule.</p> <p>It has been determined that the CCHD guidance change was needed to allow WCASD to fully open. Goal achieved, so the change needs to happen ASAP. Every day counts as children are struggling and each day out of school is a chance for a life to be lost due to the mounting depression and increasing risks for suicide.</p> <p>For parents, please understand these board members are making decisions for not only your child, but the 12,000 in the district and their families. A vote to close schools is not a vote for everyone. A vote to fully open allows for everyone to have a choice. Their vote tonight is more important than ever. Please remember this when you vote for new school board members for 2021 and select those who allowed for everyone to have a safe choice. There has always been a virtual option. It is time to allow families to be in person or virtual if they want.</p>

Comments from Residents

The following comment was inadvertently left off when comments from residents were read during the January 25, 2021 school board meeting. It was included in the January 25, 2021 official meeting minutes under public comments. It was read at the February 22, 2021 meeting.

name	comment
Shannon Givler	<p>WHY is my little girls SCHOOL ISSUED iPad NOT under any parental controls? Please explain WHY my child has access to unlimited, unfiltered, explicit, inappropriate , PORNOGRAPHIC, ADULT internet content on her SCHOOL ISSUED & REQUIRED TO USE iPad? She's at Hillsdale.</p>

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The following comment was submitted for the February 8 Pupil Services Committee Meeting. Because it was a non-agenda item, the comment was read during the February 22 Board Meeting.

shannon givler	<p>My concern regarding SEXUALLY explicit and INAPPROPRIATE-ADULT content KNOWN for some time by this administration to be accessible to the children via their school issued iPads has not been publicly addressed by this board. I met with administrators last month to discuss this problem & I was assured that my board comment would be read at the 1/25/21 meeting. It was not.</p> <p>That the district believes they have a safe functioning filter program installed on the kids' iPads is ludicrous and simply untrue. An obscure algorithm that might flag SOME adult or SOME violent content on a child's iPads AFTER THE FACT is in NO WAY protecting them. Your argument of "oops we are terribly sorry your child has access to PORN & SEX on these darn iPads but....well....we can't block everything" is inexcusable, harmful & negligent. Finally, you all have known about this since SEPTEMBER and not ONE of you bothered to communicate this fact to the parents. I don't know what you (the board) permit your own children to look up, search for or have access to in your own homes, but I'd like to guess it's not Pornography. Please address this matter now.</p>
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