

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/4/2020 22:11:18	Shawn Bowen	Good evening. I am writing in hopes that the district strongly considers in-person learning daily for our most at risk students. This includes kids with IEP's, 504's, ELL or any child that did not learn or progress during the spring eLearning. The district has worked hard with many of these children and run the risk of regression. This regression can last a lifetime. It is not the next three months of remote learning that is at stake. It is a lifetime trajectory. Small groups of these students can operate in-person even if we change to phase 3 of open Illinois. Please consider this important decision! Kids lives depend on it!
8/5/2020 8:07:05	Rosie Anglewicz	I thank the board and staff of District 205 for what they have done so far. I have a preschooler with an IEP attending Madison, a Kindergartener with an IEP attending Fischer's bilingual program, and a 4th grader at Field. My husband and I both work, and medically I am high risk, so our struggle when making a decision was not about my preschooler even though he has an IEP, as my parents will be helping us, nor my 4th grader, as she can read and with my minimal assistance she can maneuver her way through e learning, but my Kindergartener. Kindergarteners are at a vital crossroads for learning, as they are learning to read and delays with this fragile age group can cause a domino affect. I understand the concerns from both sides, I believe the plan should be a hybrid approach based on grade level. Kindergarten through 3rd grade should be the top priority for in class sessions because they are learning to read and "school" is "new" to them. They are unable to work independently, especially those with IEPs. Although it will be difficult for families, 4th graders and above students are capable of remote learning with less assistance and more focus. This would allow the school buildings including the high school to be used for smaller, safer K through 3rd grade classes for families who choose in person. I think the Board and teachers have to recognize that children under the age of 8 especially need the structure and attention to be successful.
8/5/2020 10:34:27	Kate Subramanian	I'd like to start by thanking the board, teachers, administrators and community leaders who are trying to help our children in this very difficult time. I think the current state of communication in 205 is very sad. I wish it were not playing out on social media the way it is. It comes across as unprofessional and is causing so much anxiety in our community during an already stressful time. As a parent of three children in District 205, I'm looking for an open dialogue on what needs to be done to open our schools successfully and safely at some point. Right now, the teachers are telling us they don't feel safe and the majority of the community is saying in-person school is important to them. We need a solution. This can only be done by working together. As a parent of a child with an IEP, it seems the most vulnerable in our community are being forgotten in this back and forth. Please consider them first in our back to school plan. We have 1,300 children in District 205 with IEP's and these children are suffering the most right now. Although this is a large number, it is only 16% of our total enrollment and seems a manageable amount to return to our schools safely and first.
8/5/2020 18:10:13	Patrick Ryan	Please support the teachers union and consider going to remote learning until a more well thought out plan can be agreed upon. You know the CDC requirements for what is safe, you know what resources you have. Instead of catering to angry, entitled parents who expect you to make a miracle, you should be listening to the teachers (the heroes more like it) who keep your district going and who make it excellent. If you had spent all this energy making a robust elearning plan and creating a safe alternative for parents with no childcare, instead of trying to create an impossible plan, we wouldn't be in this situation. Administrators always tell teachers we need to innovate, adapt and change, but you are unwilling to do that yourselves. Now is the time to be creative in how we attack this problem. We can't think of school as how it was, because that's unsafe and that's a dream.
8/5/2020 18:20:21	Veena Kaniyal	My name is Veena Kaniyal and I'm a science teacher at York High School. As a science teacher, I have taught my students the importance of analyzing data and using evidence to support a claim. This pandemic has been one intense data analysis lesson and the question that is getting answered is "is it safe enough to go back to school?" In this case, there is no best solution. There's only a RIGHT solution. And based on the DATA, it's not safe to start school in-person. If we could make the decision based on our wants, then all of us, including the teachers, would be back in person. But if it's not safe enough to have a public board meeting, then how can it be safe enough for students and teachers to sit in a small classroom for hours at a time? The RIGHT decision is a decision that no one likes; not even teachers. However, it is a decision that guarantees that there won't be an email sent out notifying the community about a student or teacher death. It's a decision that gives time for the district to prepare safety measures to get us back in the building sooner. And it's a decision to limit the trauma of uncertainty and unrest for students, parents, and staff. Please put safety above desires. Let us start remotely and safely. Thank you.
8/5/2020 19:06:31	Maggie DiPaolo	Can someone outline a typical day for a child in the classroom? For a child in Kindergarten on the autism spectrum, will there be assistance provided to him for acclimation to the classroom in terms of making him comfortable or consoling him if upset? What will goals for a child with social work hours for learning to interact with other children independently look like?
8/5/2020 19:08:51	Monaghan Family	How do you plan to keep people socially distance based on CDC guidelines? If a student is diagnosed, what will be the mediation response ? If a teacher/district employee is diagnosed, what will be the mediation response ? How will the rooms be cleaned? (What materials will be provided and what are the expectations/standards to cleaning) What if someone is found to contract COVID-19 via a classroom, who is liable? Will there be repercussions? What happens with regards to sick days/time off if a staff member is a victim? What is the expectation for extra-curricular activities? What will happen in rooms that are not well ventilated?  We are members of this society, and even though I no long have students in the district, I am interacting with the community that attends this school and will have a greater risk the more interactions people have.
8/5/2020 19:09:09	Patrick Ryan	Please support the teachers union and consider going to remote learning until a more well thought out plan can be agreed upon. You know the CDC requirements for what is safe, you know what resources you have. Instead of catering to angry, entitled parents who expect you to make a miracle, you should be listening to the teachers (the heroes more like it) who keep your district going and who make it excellent. If you had spent all this energy making a robust elearning plan and creating a safe alternative for parents with no childcare, instead of trying to create an impossible plan, we wouldn't be in this situation. Administrators always tell teachers we need to innovate, adapt and change, but you are unwilling to do that yourselves. Now is the time to be creative in how we attack this problem. We can't think of school as how it was, because that's unsafe and that's a dream.
8/5/2020 19:13:47	Kimberly (Vicary) Hoffman	This is a classic case of profit or perception over people. Moving to e-learning does not make D205 weak, it means that you give a shit about the people who make the district look good and perform well in the first place. If you cannot clearly answer questions about teacher and student safety, you should not get to have these quality educators representing your incredibly poor and selfish leadership team.  Let the teachers develop the incredible virtual programming they're qualified to develop, and let them deliver it from a controlled environment. It's not a hard decision.
8/5/2020 19:20:26	Karen Vicary	This is a classic case of profit or perception over people. Moving to e-learning does not make D205 weak, it means that you care about the people who make the district look good and perform well in the first place. If you cannot clearly answer questions about teacher and student safety, you should not get to have these quality educators representing your incredibly poor and selfish leadership team.  Let the teachers develop the incredible virtual programming they're qualified to develop, and let them deliver it from a controlled environment. It's not a hard decision.
8/5/2020 19:33:56	Kelley Rodriguez	I graduated from Edison, Sandburg and York. This is my 11th year teaching at York. I am now an Elmhurst homeowner. I genuinely love this town, its schools and see no where else as my home. I worry that the Open D205 plan is not safe for students or teachers. As a high risk teacher myself, the anxiety that I feel about safely being in a building that I have called home for over a decade will be enough to affect my ability to deliver the best instruction that I know I am capable of. I know that if we are remote I, and my colleagues, can deliver high quality, student centered, and engaging instruction to our beloved students. Please keep us all safe and give us that opportunity.

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8/5/2020 19:41:13	Nancy Wallace	<p>As a middle school Math and Science teacher I believe the scientific data surrounding the covid pandemic. In class I teach my students to use science to make decisions. I want my students and their families to continue be safe at home. Please listen to the science when making a school decision.</p> <p>Covid is a serious health concern. In March, my healthy mother and younger sister both contributed to the number of covid cases. One was hospitalized for 2 weeks and the other was home quarantined with all of the typical symptoms, now both left without any taste. An otherwise very healthy neighbor man passed from covid complications in May. Covid is real.</p> <p>Our emergency school stoppage on March 13 had teachers working overtime at home. We are here now again and ready to start the creative content engaging process from home however, the current state of affairs in Elmhurst has been a major distraction to gearing up for the school year.</p> <p>I'm looking forward to Elmhurst making the correct decision and setting up my at home work space with energy!</p>
8/5/2020 20:01:04	Maria Pro	<p>It is time to throw in the towel and recognize the lasting impacts on staff, students, and the family members that in person learning may have. We may not know everything about COVID-19, but what we do know is startling. We know that this causes lasting impacts on the heart, and kidneys. Much like other viruses (HIV leading to AIDs, Chicken pox, and HPV) this disease in the short term has already proven that it may have lifelong impacts on the individuals that this virus has infected. There is no way to appropriately ensure that proper protocols will be enforced accurately, and I for one do not agree with allowing our teachers and support staff to be the guinea pigs during this unprecedented time. We have the unique opportunity to rearrange the way that we "do" school. We need to be creative in our approach to elearning, however, I believe that the staff who cares immeasurably about their students, and the students have the potential to make this year unlike any other. The devotion that teachers and support staff have to their students will surpass expectations of what elearning May look like. We need to adapt to the times, and put health and safety first.</p>
8/5/2020 20:05:52	Monaghan Family	<p>How do you plan to keep people socially distance based on CDC guidelines?  If a student is diagnosed, what will be the mediation response ?  If a teacher/district employee is diagnosed, what will be the mediation response ?  How will the rooms be cleaned? (What materials will be provided and what are the expectations/standards to cleaning)  What if someone is found to contract COVID-19 via a classroom, who is liable? Will there be repercussions?  What happens with regards to sick days/time off if a staff member is a victim?  What is the expectation for extra-curricular activities?  What will happen in rooms that are not well ventilated?</p> <p>We are members of this society, and even though I no long have students in the district, I am interacting with the community that attends this school and will have a greater risk the more interactions people have.</p>
8/5/2020 20:07:47	Marti Good	<p>As an Elmhurst resident and teacher at Jefferson School, safety is my singular concern about in-person learning. Yesterday, data from Georgia Tech's COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool shows a 47% chance that at least one COVID-19 positive person will be present within a group of 50 people in DuPage County. Remote learning is a very real option that ensures the safety of students and staff. It can be engaging, meaningful, and rigorous. Elmhurst has the teachers and the resources to make remote learning a positive learning experience for children.</p> <p>One public comment made at the July 14th Board Meeting asked, "What are you prepared to be responsible for?" For me, that is a daunting question given that the national death toll from COVID-19 is over 150,000 people and that health officials are still learning the long-term health effects of the virus. In-person learning is our common goal but we are not at a point in the pandemic where we can do it safely. There are real lives at stake.</p>
8/5/2020 20:12:14	Kim Willard	<p>Although I selected in-person learning, I plan to pull my kids to remote learning in the event that the whole district is not remote by the start of the year. I'd however, like them to be with their classmates in a remote class if the district is forced into remote learning (ex: we move back to phase 3), so I selected the most flexible option. On the other hand, I'd we continue with in-person learning, it must be considered that full, 5-day learning means that students are not safely distanced st 6 feet apart. Let's please consider any rid model if we are not beginning remote. Thank you!</p>
8/5/2020 20:14:57	Kathleen Curley	<p>The amount of unanswered questions remaining for teachers, staff, parents and community members shows us that remote learning is the best option for the school year. Not only are most other districts in the area beginning the year remotely, the Jefferson County, CO that the board modeled their plan after has also made the switch to remote learning to begin the school year. This is sad for our whole community, especially that life is not being respected. One student or teacher dying is too many, and unfortunately this will be the new normal if students are in school. Also, 85% of families did not opt for in-person learning, 71% did, and 14% did not respond. That does not mean that 85% of families want to go in person, and that being included in communication to district families by our superintendent was a misleading statistic, especially considering that families are not allowed to change their minds if they chose remote learning, but are allowed to change their choice from in-person to remote at any time. This skewed data and was extremely deceptive.</p>
8/5/2020 20:21:38	Alicia Carney	<p>It is unsafe for teachers, staff, students, and all of their immediate family members to return to classroom learning. It is obvious from the schools that are already open elsewhere that it is impossible to maintain a 6 foot distance in the hallways. Based on the number of people working and learning within district 205, there will be someone who dies of COVID. Why take that risk when a group of teachers worked over the summer on various online curriculums? Why take the risk at all? Please wait until there is a vaccine or reliable and effective treatment.</p>
8/5/2020 20:28:39	Tiffany Pruitt	<p>Is the risk worth the reward? For the safety of all students and staff members, please consider the lives of our loved ones and continue with online learning until we have a vaccine.</p>
8/5/2020 20:31:37	Charles Moser	<p>I support the teachers. As dedicated hands-on educators familiar with the day to day realities of classroom learning, I trust their judgment to decide what is best and safest for the students and staff. I have no doubt they will dedicate themselves to understanding and perfecting this new model of remote learning. Thank You.</p>
8/5/2020 20:33:09	Ann Donohue	<p>My sister is a Chicago school employee and our whole family celebrated this week when CPS announced remote learning. She now can interact safely with our elderly parents, aunts and cousins. She does not have to risk her own life or isolate because CPS has chosen the most prudent course. We will celebrate again when this Board provides the same humane protection for our Elmhurst teachers, admins and custodians. Keep our children safe. Keep our teachers safe. Keep. Us. Safe. In a month or two we will know so much more about the virus' spread in schools from our neighboring states and their experiments in hybrid learning. We will make better decisions then. Give us that time.</p>
8/5/2020 20:37:18	Patrick Heywood	<p>Children need to be in school. Tax dollars fund education, and if anyone employed by D205 chooses not to perform, then they should not be compensated. Are there protocols in place to refund the tax payers if the schools don't open? The ETC should not have the authority to call the shots. If schools don't open August 24th (in-person), I predict they'll be closed for the remainder of 2020</p>
8/5/2020 20:41:15	Marianne Logsdon	<p>I would like hybrid learning but since things seem to be turning towards 100% online I would like to say I would like to see as much "live zoom" or some kind of live classes as possible for high school. There was way too much busy work in the Spring. I would like to see my child up everyday and online doing live classes if she is forces to do 100% elearning.</p>
8/5/2020 20:48:52	Laura Branning	<p>I wanted to let you know I am supportive of the CDCs recommendation for in-person instruction and also the D205 boards decision to Re-open schools for in person instruction. I will remain optimistic that the schools can find a way to manage in-person instruction just as successfully as the hundreds of daycares and YMCAs have done throughout the entire pandemic to care for essential workers children. I am hopeful that D205 is successful in returning to in person instruction not just for my children but for those who don't have the resources or connections to provide home tutors, or participate in "PODs". I chose to be positive, and hopeful for success with in-person instruction so every student can be provided the same quality education to ensure the education gap does not widen from economic inequalities. Most of all I'm hopeful; I am able to make my own decision on what's best for my own child regarding in-person education. I will be supportive of whatever is decided; I just hope that decision. is based on medical professionals advice versus the POV of groups so people who are not qualified to provide guidance on what's best for children from a medical standpoint..</p>

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8/5/2020 20:52:59	Terese herbert	<p>It is irresponsible of the board and administration to subject staff and students to a deadly virus with a modicum of preparation and planning. The entire summer could have been used to construct e learning strategies that meet curriculum standards and parent expectations. The board was responsible for developing and implementing this — not every teacher “free lancing”. Your failure to prepare should not result in risking the lives of staff, students and their families.</p> <p>If it is not safe enough for the adult administration to sit face to face it is ludicrous to ask staff to be in a building with hundreds of youngsters. Your “plan” is merely words on paper. No plan at all. Flying by the seat of THEIR pants is negligent. The boards’ lives are not on the line. You won’t even meet in the same room.</p> <p>Teachers are trained to “teach” material. EDUCATE. They are not responsible to feed, provide mental health, activity or socialization in a global pandemic. Parents must shoulder the responsibility of partnering with the teachers to insure their children engage and fully participate in e-learning.</p> <p>Remote learning until there is a vaccine is the safe and responsible EDUCATION.</p>
8/5/2020 20:54:49	Catherine Disterheft	<p>Hello, my name is Catherine Disterheft and I am a Spanish Teacher at York. I empathize with the 85% of parents that would like to see in-person learning this fall. My oldest child is supposed to begin kindergarten, and I found out last week that her school will begin the year with distance learning. Dropping a child off on the first day of kindergarten is an important milestone. I mourn not having this moment with my own daughter. Both teachers and parents desire the normalcy of beginning the school year in person, and we both want our children to be safe while receiving the best education possible. In addition, we all have to deal with childcare issues, and the stress of having to work and parent. None of this is easy. Distance learning is not easy for parents, and it’s not easy for teachers either. Even though it is a difficult and undesirable situation, I am writing this comment to advocate that D205 begin the year remote. I believe that this is the only solution to provide a rigorous and high quality semester that minimizes disruption in learning, while at the same time maintains the safety of the greater community. The first thematic unit of the year in my Spanish 4 ACP class is called My Community. During this introductory unit, we explore characteristics of communities. Year after year, my students tell me that Elmhurst is a strong community because in Elmhurst people respect each other, care for each other, and tolerate each other’s diverse perspectives. In this time of extreme difficulty, we are all in this together. The safety of the Elmhurst community, its teachers, and their families, depends on this decision. Thank you.</p>
8/5/2020 20:56:56	Antoinette Dobric	<p>My name is Antoinette Dobric. I am a life-long resident of Elmhurst, have two elementary-aged children in the district, and have been teaching at Jefferson School for the past 17 years. I wanted to share my disappointment with the district’s opening plan for our town. We need a plan that prioritizes student and staff safety, and puts public health at the forefront, especially now that COVID cases continue to rise in DuPage County. The plan that we currently have does neither. Recent studies, including one from Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, have found that young children could spread COVID as much as older children and adults, and that young children have a higher viral load than older children and adults, which may suggest greater transmission. With face to face and hybrid models, children will catch the virus, spread it, and bring it home to parents and grandparents. Children will get sick, and possibly have much worse fates such as long-term health effects or even death. Family members and school staff will undoubtedly die as a result of this plan. What can be more important than human lives?</p> <p>Please think of our students, their families, school staff and their loved ones. Make the right choice that puts everyone’s well-being first. Remote learning is the safest and most sustainable option for our district to start the 2020-2021 school year.</p>
8/5/2020 20:59:05	Jennifer Sabourin	<p>I am a former teacher, now school administrator, and a parent in this community. The task of planning school reentry has been a tremendous effort, with every question and decision given ample thought and consideration. I don’t believe that any school district would make a decision that isn’t in the best interest of its students and staff. If a school cannot open safely- which means no nurse, no air conditioning, no PPE, inability to maintain social distancing- then the school should not reopen. However, if Elmhurst 205 can open its schools safely, it has an obligation to the children to do so. Safe doesn’t mean comfortable, and safe doesn’t mean a return to normal or pre-pandemic conditions. Safe means in compliance with IDPH and CDC recommendations, and adhering to additional guidance offered by the DuPage County Health Department. If the District can comply with the health and safety requirements provided by those organizations, then schools should reopen. If classes need to be staggered or in a hybrid model in order to adhere to social distancing, this is preferred over no on-site at all. The children in our community need school. Remote instruction is not a substitute for in-person instruction. I do worry about my daughter entering kindergarten, who will wonder why she has to wear her mask all day. She will wonder where her friends from Madison are, since she’s starting at a new school. She will wonder who her new teacher is. My daughter has special needs, and she requires specialized instruction and related services in order to have a meaningful education. Expecting her to form a relationship with a teacher she has never met and trying to learn from this person virtually equates to almost no education at all. My daughter deserves an education. All of our children deserve an education. If our schools can be reopened safely, I urge you to reopen them. Schools are a lifeline in the community, and there simply is no substitute. Our governing entities have called upon schools to provide on-site instruction and I have no doubt that 205 can answer the call. Parents have a choice. Staff have options. Please do not cave to social media pressure. Create and follow a safe school reentry plan. My kindergartener and my preschooler depend on this.</p>
8/5/2020 20:59:25	Tiffany Pruitt	<p>Please consider teaching virtually until their is a vaccine for the safety of all our students and staff.</p>
8/5/2020 21:01:59	Jennifer Leban	<p>I can’t wait to go back to school when it’s safe. But it’s not safe yet. I am a 20-year veteran teacher of D205, and a 2020 IL State Teacher of the Year Finalist. I am also a mom of a 3rd grader. My husband (also a teacher) and I decided that he would be learning remotely this school year before ANY of the school districts had even released their plans. We didn’t need to know what the school had planned, or what the other parents thought. We knew that it was not safe to return to school.</p> <p>The current D205 return to school plan states that social distancing will be used “when possible.” I’m not sure that the community realizes that it’s NOT possible. EVER. Not with our current plans, and not with the way our class sizes and staffing are set up. There are countless numbers of teachers who would be willing to prove it to you, to let you come in and see this in person... but you can’t, because it’s not safe. The BOE meeting to announce an in-person school plan was held virtually... because it wasn’t safe. The administrative retreat this week wasn’t held in-person... because it wasn’t safe.</p> <p>Remember when we used to plaster our classroom walls with inspirational posters and quotes? The one that sticks with me the most is the one that urges our students to make the right choices, even when it’s not popular:</p> <p>“What’s popular isn’t always right, and what’s right isn’t always popular”</p> <p>No child’s health should be sacrificed to prove this point to the general public. We’re watching numbers rise in DuPage County and in Elmhurst. People are returning from their summer vacations and posting pictures of it on social media. And although not all parents can agree on whether or not they want to send their children into school buildings, most will agree that eventually, somewhere, somehow, someone will get sick. The problem is that everyone’s just crossing their fingers that it’s not their own kid.</p> <p>It’s the lottery you don’t want to win. Why are we taking this chance? Why can’t we just do the right thing to keep our children safe? Thank you.</p>

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8/5/2020 21:06:47	Dewey Hyde Jr	<p>The schools in District 205 should not be reopened for face to face or hybrid instruction until there is evidence that children can wear a mask effectively for five hours a day, as well as experiencing no long term health effects. It is also imperative that evidence from DuPage County Health Department shows that the Coronavirus is declining.</p> <p>DuPage County Health department has shown a steady rise in new cases reported and the deaths of the Coronavirus in the month of July. As of August 5th, there are 11,792 reported Coronavirus cases and 513 deaths related to the Coronavirus in DuPage County.</p> <p>To date, the district has failed to show in detail what steps have been taken to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus in the schools. From my understanding there will be no Plexiglass on desks between students. What PPE will be provided to staff and students? The classroom desks should be 6 feet apart, many of the current classrooms were not built to accommodate the average 22 students per classroom with these distancing guidelines. Will the toilets and wash basin sinks be cleaned after every use? Will social distancing be practiced in the washrooms, and who will monitor this? Will there be enough paper towels and sanitizing wipes for classrooms when much of the medical field is lacking supplies?</p> <p>In my opinion, the current approved plan by District 205 fails miserably at answering these basic questions. The school year should start remotely like our neighboring communities until these questions can be answered.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Dewey Hyde</p>
8/5/2020 21:13:36	Molly Tomazin	<p>As a resident of Elmhurst and an alum of District 205, I am absolutely stunned that the school board is considering in person learning for Fall 2020. There is an ongoing pandemic which is taking the lives of 1,200+ Americans everyday and the safety of the students, their families and teachers/staff/administrators should be of utmost importance to the district. Yes, the mortality rate for children is lower than it is for adults, but there are more than children in our schools everyday and children go home to their family at the end of each school day. As we sit here today, we do not know the long term impacts this virus has on the human body. We do not know what long term impacts the survivors will have to deal with in the years to come. It is irresponsible to put children back in classrooms without a plan to keep them and their teachers safe. This time before the school year begins would be better spent planning for a fully remote school year and equipping teachers to be most effective in that medium. No matter what decision is made to start the school year, everyone must realize that the schools will ultimately be remote as it will be nearly impossible to manage the number of exposures/quarantines on an in person basis. Given this reality, every effort should be made to make that remote experience the best it can be from the beginning and to not accelerate the spread of the virus within our community.</p>
8/5/2020 21:15:03	Karen Wilson	<p>As a parent and fellow educator, I understand how essential it is for children to be in school. I am a big advocate for early intervention, academics, and social emotional learning. Yes, these would all look more ideal in a typical school setting. However, with the uncertainty of this new virus and the many longterm effects that we don't know, it doesn't seem smart or responsible to be allowing students, teachers, and staff in schools. My very own district has included many more safety protocols and I'm still very anxious about returning to school. Nothing is 100%, especially when you are talking about the littlest learners. This doesn't mean I don't want to return to my classroom. Trust me, I DO and every single educator I know does. It means that I value the LIVES of the children I teach and care for. I didn't get into education to teach from a computer. I did it to encourage children to take risks, learn new things, and see their bright smile when they've conquered something new. This past spring was downright difficult, both mentally and emotionally, despite all of the support from administrators and parents.</p> <p>This is not the time to be at the forefront in education. This is the time to support your teachers and families by keeping them safe. Bringing back in person learning doesn't fit. I beg of you to at least start the year remotely and see how it works. Provide your teachers with the tools they need to be successful. Don't use data that surveyed parents over a month ago regarding their opinions. As educators, you know that we learn more and more each day. That data is no longer relevant to this conversation.</p> <p>Thank you for making the best decision to ensure the future success of District 205's community.</p>
8/5/2020 21:30:27	Jewel Anderson	<p>Elmhurst is in a privileged position to have more resources and a higher average income than many communities in Illinois. As such we should be leaders in safety and creating quality remote learning rather than putting families at unnecessary risk.</p>
8/5/2020 21:31:22	Adam Minick	<p>If the teachers are refusing to teach for "safety reasons", can they at least be required to conduct e-learning from their empty, socially-distanced classrooms? If not, we will have more of the same issues we had in the spring - where they spend their time just teaching their own kids and baking sourdough bread.</p>
8/5/2020 21:36:27	Yari Krieter	<p>I am incredibly disappointed about the decision to open up the elementary schools without offering a hybrid model. I understand you have one in place "ONLY if the need arises" but the need is present. I fully understand how crucial it is for kids to be exposed to an educational environment as well as the benefits of having them learn alongside their peers but having them go in for a full day, 5 days a week puts them in an extremely high risk situation. How will social distancing be possible if you are asking ALL students to be present at the same time?</p> <p>I cannot wrap my head around the idea that a 5 or 6 year old is expected to wear a mask all day. Furthermore, the idea that they would be maskless during lunch and recess is shocking as this puts them in an incredibly vulnerable situation. I understand that there is an option for remote learning but as mentioned above, I fully comprehend the benefits of kids learning alongside their peers which is why offering a hybrid model (as you are doing with both the middle school and highschool) would be the best solution for our elementary aged children.</p> <p>This eliminates the large groups while also cutting down on the time spent wearing a mask everyday. Who will take responsibility when our children are exposed to this virus because of this full day model? Please reconsider your decision of having elementary aged students attend a full day. Please consider offering a hybrid model at the start of the school year.</p>
8/5/2020 21:36:40	Mia Nevarez	<p>To whom it may concern: I am asking that the school board and the District start this school year remotely to safe guard our community, families, teachers and staff. It is clear this virus is hard to control. This is apparent not just locally, but nation wide and world wide. It was clear that Covid cannot be contained properly when York's summer sports camps were shut down in just 3. It took only 3 days to shut down the entire program due to the numerous positive tests across several sports. It's alarming how fast that happened. It is an example of how quickly covid can spread and even more so in enclosed classroom settings. Given that less than 1% of kids die of Covid, that would mean about 50 students could die in elmhurst. Which 50? And will you be responsible for any deaths of any students or their family members or will you be asking parents to "attend at their own risk" and sign a waiver? And even if that percentage is wrong would anyone be ok with any student dying of covid because schools opened? Would any parent be ok if they lost their child/children, spouse, or grandparent to Covid due to a school outbreak? In addition, the safety protocols are impossible to enforce and no discipline measures have been put in place for defiant students. Will they be sent home right away and forced into remote learning for failure to comply? This is an immense and unfair amount of responsibly being put on teachers and staff. It is also clear it will be impossible to do contact tracing in a timely manner. Will entire classrooms or entire grades be forced into quarantine? This kind of panic and disruption is not emotionally healthy for our students. Students need to feel safe in order to be able to work at their highest potential. Constantly being worried and stressed about covid infections will create a high anxiety environment that will only hinder the overall well being of students. In order for remote learning to be successful students need to be in their "desk" safely at home and teachers in their classrooms teaching live for the duration of the school day. Teachers need to have access to their students throughout the day not only in live sessions but in small groups and/or 1:1 sessions to ensure students are engaged and learning through out the entire school day. In person 1:1 sessions can be considered for any high risk student. This minimizes exposure to both the student and teacher provided it is in a sanitized classroom with proper use of masks. It is much easier to monitor the mask of one student than an entire classroom. This is also an option for sped students on IEPs. These students can then have the much needed 1:1 support in core subjects of math and reading. There is a much lower risk of exposure with 1:1 sessions which is very important with students with special needs. Many of these students have high risk factors and will benefit from not having additional exposure from a full school and having to move around from class to class. In addition, these students can be served by their IEP required therapies in 1:1 sessions. As you can clearly see from the daily rise of the positivity rate, and the fact there are no clear measures on how to handle outbreaks or how to deal with day to day discipline or exposure, and the fact that York's summer camps shut down within days of opening, it is best at this time to start this school year by remote learning. Please make the right decision and safe guard elmhurst families and teachers by going to remote learning this semester and reevaluate after this semester when there is a much better understanding of Covid and a vaccine. Thank you for your time and for considering remote learning as a safe option for Elmhurst schools.</p>

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8/5/2020 21:37:13	Tracy Fleischer	<p>I'm writing in support of our teachers in District 205. Many have expressed concerns about their safety as well as the safety of their students if they return to in-person learning. There are careers where employees know that they will be exposed to potential dangers. Police officers, Firefighters, and anyone in the medical field were aware before they decided on their job that they could be risking their lives. Teaching is not one of these professions.</p> <p>There is concern about the quality of remote learning. If the district and administration had used the Summer months to formulate a plan for remote learning, parents may have had more confidence in the quality of education their children would receive. District 205, along with many others, waited too long to formulate a plan. Teachers, students, and Elmhurst residents should not pay the price for this mistake. Without a safe plan, no one should be doing in-person learning.</p> <p>Please listen to the concerns of the Elmhurst Teachers' Council and support those who help make District 205 as wonderful as it is. Teachers should not have to decide between the health of themselves, their families, or their students and keeping their job.</p> <p>Thank you, Tracy &amp; Robert Fleischer</p>
8/5/2020 21:41:13	Emily Hyde	<p>I want to thank the Board for their response to the ETC letter and the consideration this Board has had to date for reflecting and deeply considering the needs of this community. The survey results were resounding that a majority of families decided it was best for their children to return for learning in-person for the school year. For our family, this decision was not made in spite of teachers' safety, but it was centered on the needs of our children and our assessment on what is frankly the inability to meet the needs of our children through remote learning long term.</p> <p>We took into consideration the age of our kids (Pre-K and K, not effective for distance learning), the IEP needs of one of our kids who thrives with in-person resources and also have monitored the Dupage Covid numbers. With an understanding that the most severe cases have occurred in Long Term Care Facilities, the weighing of risks for us fell greatly in favor of providing our kids the in-person, quality education that they deserve and need. I am also happy that families who felt this risk wasn't worth it for them can choose to keep their kids home.</p> <p>My biggest fear is that union pressures will now cause us to go fully remote which would be a huge blow for our kids. Without a definitive way of knowing when and how we will have a treatment for this virus, I worry that demands will continue to be made for remote learning by the ETC with no end in sight. Worse, there continue to be no real answers on how remote learning will be delivered effectively or how success will be measured. If our educators were serious about providing quality remote education, simulated curriculum and sample lesson plans could have been recorded and shared out as part of a plan to SHOW this community how this can be done and prove that the number one goal is to provide quality education to our kids when done remotely. Unfortunately, the lack of accountability and commitment to do so has given me ZERO reason to believe that the remote learning will be anything but an additional burden on families who cannot commit to dedicating 2-3 hours daily to facilitate this when young children are involved.</p> <p>I hope the Board will consider decisions in other communities and districts to reverse course as secondary to the needs of the kids, parents and taxpayers in our community and push for as much in-person learning as possible.</p> <p>Thank you again.</p>
8/5/2020 21:48:38	Kristen Gates	<p>Hi my name is Kristen Gates. I've been teaching Spanish at Sandburg for 20 years. I consider Sandburg my second home, which is why I'd stop at nothing to keep those who enter safe. I believe despite everyone's best efforts, it will be impossible to keep Covid out of our schools. We see daily local and national examples of the best-laid plans failing. I believe it will be difficult to learn a world language while masked. It will be challenging for students to hear my accent, for example. Also, I can't imagine teaching Spanish in a socially-distant classroom where students cannot have conversations with a partner or do group work. Remote learning will allow me to communicate clearly and effectively, while pairing up students through breakout rooms and small group conversations.</p> <p>While we all want this year to proceed normally, it cannot. We should all grieve for that. As a parent, I'm grieving for that along with you. But, after a lot of thought, I've come to the conclusion that it's better to grieve for missed school experiences, than to grieve for lost students, parents, and teachers. This is why I'm advocating for remote learning for 205.</p>
8/5/2020 21:53:59	Erin Epley	<p>It was my understanding that if I signed up for remote, I could not switch to in-person in the event that the virus became less of a threat. However, it appeared that I could sign up for hybrid and switch to remote at any point. I spoke to other parents who also had this understanding. I believe the survey numbers are skewed in terms of how many parents actually wanted their children to go back full-time. Many of us were just trying to secure a spot.</p>
8/5/2020 21:55:00	Sarah Grantham	<p>The District's plan for the upcoming school year is unsafe for a multitude of reasons, not the least of which entails too many students in overly tight classrooms in older schools with poor ventilation for seven hours a day. Even if students manage to wear their masks for that duration, scientists believe Covid-19 is airborne, meaning it's spread through aerosols which seep through masks at varying rates dependent on filtration quality and can linger in the air for hours. Over time, in a confined space, if someone is infectious, asymptotically or not, viral aerosols can accumulate and reach what's considered a contagious viral load, exposing everyone to contracting the disease.</p> <p>And it's not just death we're worried about, it's the long-term effects of Covid-19 which are still poorly understood. A recent study showed that 75% of Covid survivors endure long-term heart damage. Other long term effects recorded include trouble breathing, extreme fatigue, nervous system damage, kidney failure, diabetes. We don't yet know enough to say whether these effects will be permanent or if they'll resolve on their own, but teachers, students, and the rest of the staff should not be part of this devastating experiment.</p> <p>In addition to the inherent danger of Covid-19 is the instability of the plan. Classrooms, inevitably, and likely repetitively will be shutdown as students or teachers test positive at various times. In class. Online. In class. Online. That hardly fosters continuity which is key to successful learning. A better model would entail a robust, reliable, and interactive e-learning curriculum around which students can build a routine and focus on what's important -- education. At least until we can tame this disease.</p> <p>And finally, the plan is more of a plan about having a plan. There simply aren't enough details to spell out all of the ways you'll mitigate for the plethora of safety issues or in fact whether or not you've even considered the plan deeply enough to try to resolve them with enough specificity to put everyone at ease. How will students enter and leave the building safely when there's always a crush of students? How will lunches be safe without masks -- what if someone contagious coughs or sneezes? Distancing won't be enough once all of those aerosols are spread. What kind of discipline will there be for students who refuse to wear masks? How will you maintain social distancing between students when they're mobile? When they're outside? Etcetera. Etcetera. Thank you for your time.</p>
8/5/2020 21:55:05	Reina Maldonado	<p>Insane if kids go back to school wearing a mask. My 12 year old won't last with his allergies and other conditions. Please take in consideration that majority of cities and states are doing remotely. It's insane to be fighting this 205 district for something that makes no sense. We have elderly teachers to think about too. Life's matter more than anything.</p>
8/5/2020 22:03:35	Greg zerkis	<p>Remote: what will our kids be doing? Zoom with each teacher and the class? Webex, BlueJeans, etc? For how many hours daily? The same as a normal day I assume? Online testing? Please explain.</p>

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8/5/2020 22:03:50	Dianne Falco	<p>As I look around Elmhurst, I see baseball games/leagues being played at East End, Wilder Park, churches in attendance, tons of kids out playing with friends on the block, together, no masks. Fine.</p> <p>For my son, his special ed camps were shut down, all of his socialization has been eliminated since March. These kids playing on our block, he never gets invited. Those baseball games (his league) he usually plays were cancelled, while others leagues are being played.</p> <p>The e-learning he did was fine, however most of the time, i felt, was very slow and only helpful when I took over after the computer was shut down. Although he did do better, during summer school, when workbooks were followed, accompanied with instruction. A lot of the e-learning is waiting for others and too much background noises. We had quite a few technical difficulties which was frustrating and at times we'd give up.</p> <p>He has regressed and his only socialization is at school with peers of his age. His school friends love him and he so desperately needs this to return asap.</p> <p>I really hope that you do NOT have the kids do 100% remote. I need my child in school. I am an essential worker. My husband is an essential worker. We are protected with masks/ppe and i see no reason why teachers don't fall into the "essential" worker category.</p>
8/5/2020 22:04:28	Billie jo Bradford	<p>My kids need to go back to school!!!! This last spring was such a disappointment. My 12, 13 and 13 year olds had to self teach themselves with no face to face teacher interaction. They were mostly confused and it felt like school was just over.</p> <p>E learning can't be nearly as effective as face to face and I can't stay home and homeschool/ manage the work load of 3 kids as a single mom while also trying to work.</p> <p>Our property taxes pay for these schools! I'm also concerned about the mental state of our children staying home. Teachers are essential workers! They need to fully teach in whatever manner that may be!</p>
8/5/2020 22:07:07	Becky Sheehan	<p>I support in person/hybrid learning to start the year.</p>
8/5/2020 22:08:07	Michelle Shoemaker	<p>I feel very strongly that all 4 of my children, grades 5th, 8th, sophomore and senior should be attending school, in person. IOur kids need to be learning in person with their teachers and peers. They need to be interacting for the sake of mental health. They need to have their sports and extracurricular activities. I believe very strongly that our kids mental health is at risk being home, or wandering around neighborhoods, or on computers, phones or games all day. District 205 should continue to work towards a way to get our kids back in the buildings, even if that means delaying a few weeks, the goal should be to be back, to in person learning for all that want to be. And from the survey results, there is a high percentage that want to be back. I encourage this community to stop throwing stones and blaming others and judging and using social media to campaign for the outcome they want, and instead work towards the goal of doing what is in the absolute best interest For the future of all of our children!</p>
8/5/2020 22:13:37	Cherice Nicosia	<p>Our kids need to be back in school! A decision has been made &amp; the board needs to stand by that &amp; not be bullied into changing what was already decided.</p>
8/5/2020 22:17:00	Krystyna Shpak	<p>Thank you for opening up schools</p>
8/5/2020 22:24:05	Leslie Stettin	<p>This is my letter to Dr. Moyer... I wanted to take an opportunity to reach out one more time before the beginning of the school year and the board meeting tomorrow. As I look at the number of parents opting for the hybrid plan (5 full days of school was not even offered so we have no data on that option), I have realized that the overwhelming majority want their kids in school (86%). I sympathize with you, as I understand that you are in the middle of pleasing your staff and upsetting many parents. I am aware that many surrounding districts have recently opted for e-learning and that gives you an opportunity to please your staff and start the year with remote learning in place K-12. As a parent, I wonder when we will be able to go back to "safe" learning in the eyes of the teacher's union. As a teacher, recent stay at home mom, I also know the power of the union leaders, and how persuasive they can be for their teachers. In a New York Times article from June 5, 2020, Harvard and Brown University studied the affects of e-learning in the spring and stated, "the average student fell behind by seven months of academic learning" and "administrators and teachers know they will need to catch students up in the fall, perhaps through reviewing skills and content that would have normally been covered this school year". As an individual who has a degree in special education and elementary education, the need for in-school learning for any child, let alone those with special needs, is incredibly important. In a District 181 BOE meeting just this week, the staff verbally admitted that teachers would probably get through 50-60% of the curriculum for the year. I don't know if District 205 teachers are that much better than Hinsdale teachers, but I'm guessing they will struggle to teach 100% of the curriculum in a year that begins with e-learning.</p> <p>Let District 205 lead the way! Let District 205 be the example! With social distancing in place, along with mask wearing, I don't understand how we can give in to the union's request and cave to their unrealistic expectations that the guidelines put in place aren't sufficient. Why can't we give it a try? How is that not owed to your students who are suffering academically, emotionally, and socially?</p>
8/5/2020 22:25:44	Rhonda H Stein	<p>I am surprised by the decision to have in person instruction for the children of district 205 this fall. It seems irresponsible in the middle of a pandemic. There is so much we do not know about the disease in children, how they spread it and even whether we can say with certainty children will suffer no lasting effects. In addition, District 205 students do not live in a bubble. There are so many others to consider, teachers, staff and the families these children go home to. Resuming in person instruction will lead to increased community spread. The governor's COVID 19 task force still recommends masks and social distancing of 6feet. How will that work with a 5 year old? I believe too much time has been wasted on this plan to return students to the classroom. This time would have been better spent assisting our teachers prepare to teach remotely to the best of their ability. And to be honest, sports are not a priority when you consider what participation may cost in human lives. This is deadly serious, more than 150,000 of our fellow citizens have lost their lives to this horrible disease, and many many more will never recover full health.</p>
8/5/2020 22:35:12	Stevan Dobric	<p>My name is Stevan Dobric and I am a person with many hats. I am a resident of Elmhurst, a father of two D205 students, a teacher, and a soccer coach at York. This past spring I watched helplessly as Covid tore my soccer program apart leaving many girls devastated within our community. I did all I could to support my program through the guidance of my supervisors and our district. I even became a pseudo amazon delivery man driving around all of Elmhurst dropping off spirit wear orders to over 30 different homes like many of our spring coaches. Still I felt shortchanged and frankly a little resentful that my seniors lost out on so many special rights of passage their senior year. As athletes we hold on to those kinds of memories for ages. This was nobody's fault and the result of a global pandemic. These sacrifices were made by many of our seniors who can never get those opportunities back.</p> <p>What are we teaching our children if we ignore those sacrifices made in the spring? If we ignore the warning signs again and try to return to normalcy too quickly, we could risk losing all sports this year. Is that something our community wants to see happen when we are already faced with shortened seasons? I know my heart could not handle another year like last. Current trends of the virus continue to grow and according to the IDPH, specifically, in Elmhurst the largest group of positive cases are people under 20. Our peer and neighboring schools such as Oak Park, Lyons Township, Leyden, Naperville 203, Indian Prairie 204, Maine Township 207, Schaumburg 211, and Stevenson who are all going full remote to start the school year. What is different in their communities? Viruses do not know boundaries of communities; they only know hosts. Many of these schools along with our district are considered leaders in education for our state. Why is it that they can provide rigorous, engaging opportunities for remote learning, and we cannot? Our teachers are ready, we just need the green light to prepare. If we choose to open D205 without going fully remote, we are putting this senior class at jeopardy for losing out and having to make the same sacrifices that were made last year.</p>
8/5/2020 22:38:17	Amy Lichon	<p>My son is an 8th grader at Bryan, and relies on a classroom aid to successfully meet the goals and objectives of his IEP. Because of his diagnosis of Kabuki Syndrome he is considered to be immune compromised. Based on his diagnosis and the lack of clear direction and information for how his day-to-day will look like returning to school I have decided to begin his school year remote learning from home. He had his most successful ESY experience this summer because of the one-on-one instruction he received from Ms. Strieter &amp; Mr. Fisher. If he could continue to receive live instruction from his teachers and aids (ex: Ms. Laura Masood) then I am confident the parameters of his IEP could be seamlessly met.</p> <p>Please consider keeping our student's classroom aids to meet with them "remotely" to support their IEP's, and to continue to provide opportunities for them to meet with their teachers and specials remotely one-on-one.</p>

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8/5/2020 22:40:36	Jennifer DeBosschere	I have lived in Elmhurst for 25 years and hopefully we can all say many positives about this town. I know I can and the #D205 has been one of those positives- until lately. I am hoping this can be changed by Dr. Moyer taking the time and ego strength to listen to the educators of this district and show respect and recognition instead of lying about them. That will make a more positive experience for all. There is no one good answer right now to the question of how to educate our students that will make everyone happy. But there is best practice. Best practice would be to consider the safety of the students, staff and all families. In my opinion, this would be to choose remote learning for all students in 205. Or at least, let the staff with medical needs or family with medical histories choose to work remotely and let them know of this assignment immediately. Best practice would also be to consider not only the safety guidelines but to think beyond and see how practical these can or cannot be implemented in the school buildings. Kids are not robots and cannot be programmed to wear a mask appropriately and not socially distance at recess, on the bus or when the teacher is helping another student. I know there are temperature checks each day that are supposed to be done at home but what if a student or staff member has COVID unknowingly and is asymptomatic and fever free but able to pass on the virus? Finally, as a school social worker of 30 years, I have seen the social emotional development of children and teens around me flourish during this pandemic in healthy families. Since March, family members are spending more time at home and together. There is more laughing, more activity, more discussions happening in the home more than ever. Yes- there are disagreements with all this together-time but in healthy families, they can be communicated and problem solved. Has it been tougher for families who have experienced financial hardship and abuse? Sadly yes. However kudos to #D205, the Foundation and families for providing food and community resources. Systems, whether they are comprised of a family or a department or a school building or district work better when problems are heard and solutions are well thought out and best practice is delivered to all. We will get through this pandemic and the wonder, excitement and thrill of a "normal" school year will return. Please have faith in the #D205 educators that they will do their best with the students. With three children from Fischer, Churchville and York, I know I do. Thank you.
8/5/2020 22:47:43	Sarah Fischer	Please start with remote learning to keep the children, their families, and faculty safe. We can move to in-person learning once cases have settled. America is not in a stable state right now to handle the amount of cases that will peak 2 weeks after starting in-person learning.
8/5/2020 22:53:44	Janet Cheng	Can you help us understand how much elearn prep the teachers have been able to do? Can I request kids in our elearn pod to be in the same D205 online sessions with the same teacher?
8/5/2020 22:58:48	Justin Riskus	I would like to thank the board for their commitment to the district, it's children, and staff. These are unprecedented and historic times that have proven extremely challenging to all of us.  As a father of two young children, I would certainly prefer to have my kids back in school (which has gone remote). And I am sure many in Elmhurst feel the same. The strain this virus has put on society is unbearable in many ways. I know firsthand how extremely stressful it is to scramble and find child care a month before school starts (remotely).  In the back of my mind, however, is the awful fear of what might happen to kids with so many of them in one place, and we cannot truly know what will happen. It is an almost certainty that some will get sick. And the nature of this virus is such that it affects people in extremely different ways.  Yes, remote learning is not easy or ideal. But the risk is too great.  There are so many questions to be answered prior to starting the school year. The reality of having many students in one building, many of whom have not seen each other in quite some time, is that social distancing and proper safety protocols will not be followed, and will almost be impossible to uphold. I do not blame children in any way, for it is human nature. Many of us have likely experienced this in gatherings with family and friends.  Though I hate to say it, and would much rather be teaching students in my own classroom, it is better to be safe than sorry. I believe it would be prudent to delay sending students back to the classroom until the district has had more time to ensure proper safety measures are all in place and ready to go. There is no room for error.
8/5/2020 23:00:16	Bozena Hyde	Many families within our community seem to promote the importance of mental health that can be achieved by face to face learning. In regards to current guidelines set out by Governor Pritzker and the CDC, it is impossible to return to school as children did back in 2019. This new year will be faced with absenteeism for both students and staff due to quarantines or illness. Students will lack consistency from losing time in the classroom and having substitute teachers, if they are even available, for an extended period of time. I personally do not view that as a mentally stable environment and I would go as far as to say it will induce trauma and possibly PTSD to many students and staff, especially if a student believed they contributed to a staff or family member's death for attending school. Many other leading school districts in our area are going full remote to start the year until cases are under control like other developed nations. Remote learning is the only stable learning environment that is plausible at this time to promote consistency, rigor, engagement and mental health
8/5/2020 23:10:32	Cynthia Pekron	Thank you for your hard work on these plans. I recognize how challenging it must have been, and that there is no perfect answer that will suit every child, teacher, staff, parents', or family's needs. I was disappointed with the board's response to our teacher's request to consider all-remote learning, implying that the teachers do not care about the quality of the education that they provide. We ALREADY ask our teachers to regularly practice to take bullets for our children at school, and now we're asking them to risk their lives, and their families lives, to keep their jobs. This is the situation for many of our community's essential workers, but the reality is that there are alternatives to in-person learning for all. Remote learning is an option. The benefits of in-person learning are truly deteriorated by the threat of the virus- masks, no sharing of toys or objects, extreme distance between children, etc.  I find it unconscionable to ask our teachers and staff to go in-person to school. While I was underwhelmed by remote learning in the spring, I believe it could be done in a productive way. The schools can be opened for students with IEPs or special needs only, or who do not have someone to supervise them at home. We will assuredly have positive covid tests, and be back to remote learning at some point; it seems best to just plan to do it well now. The money the district will spend on daily cleaning and opening up HVAC systems early, etc. would be so much better spent investing in quality remote education plans, technologies, and resources.  I'd like to point out that while our family answered the district's survey truthfully to go all-remote, there were major incentives to answer "in-person" given that parents knew they could go remote at any time, but still solidify their child in a physical classroom with a teacher in their assigned school. Consequently, I don't believe that the survey results are an accurate reflection of parents' true desires for the school year. I hear a lot of talk in the community about how taxpayers think of themselves as "clients," and that they deserve to "get what they pay for." While the wants of individual parents, families, or taxpayers are to be considered, these are fiduciary decisions. While the input of a patient matters, a doctor does not make treatment decisions based exclusively on the input from their patient. I also believe the ramifications of this decision fall far outside the scope of this board's responsibility, as so much of the health of our entire community is at risk, not just the 10,000 students and staff in the district. It is the role of this board to be perspicacious and dispassionate about this decision. I've heard the board report that their duty is to "provide a quality education." Peoples lives are more important than the quality of the education students receive this school year. It is sad and disappointing to say aloud. It's still also true.  The lack of agreement I've seen on how to execute this school year is not about synchronous or asynchronous learning, or what garbage some of the youtube videos were that got sent home last spring. It is a dispute about the fundamental goals-- we need to decide, as a community: are we trying to optimize for education or optimize for number of people living to see next school year? Regrettably, those goals are mutually exclusive. All other details hinge on the answer to that question.
8/5/2020 23:24:32	John Kimble	Why is the board meeting virtually while at the same time deciding to send kids and faculty to school during a pandemic? It seems to me the board is more concerned about their health Than the health of the kids and school staff.  How will the board deal with lawsuits from families and school staff that are requesting monetary damages because they got coronavirus at one of your schools?  How will the district handle the death of one of its staff or kids due to coronavirus?

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/5/2020 23:32:33	Michele Carlson	<p>To begin, I want to thank all of you for working so hard for our community.</p> <p>I want to go back to school, in school. I miss my students and my colleagues. But I want to go back into a school that is safe for my students and their families, for my colleagues and for me. I do not know how our buildings will be safe to study and work in because I do not know the plans for the protection of our safety.</p> <p>My classroom, which I love, is small. It's cozy. When desks are lined up, there is one foot of space between desks that are next to each other and 6" between desks and chairs in the column. The desks in the front row touch the teacher's desk which is approximately 18" from the wall behind it. Will the district ensure there is plexiglass for the teacher's desk, which would protect both the students facing the teacher's desk and the teacher?</p> <p>Further, the ventilation in the room is poor. Even though there are windows, teachers, including myself, and students have experienced allergy-like symptoms and headaches after being in the room. Will HEPA filters be provided to ensure that the air will be filtered of any potential virus? How will this be a safe environment for the potentially 15 of 30 students each period.</p> <p>How will the room be cleaned between classes? In the '20-21 year the classroom I am in was used by two teachers and was occupied almost all day, hosting a class during 7 of the 8 class periods. How will the rooms be cleaned? Will there be cleaning supplies provided by the district? As of March there was a single bottle of disinfectant and a single rag for the room. Will there be one rag? Will there be a rag provided for each period? Each day? Each week? Who will clean the desks in the classrooms? The students? The custodial staff? The teachers? Will there be a protocol for disposing of the rags after each period? After each day? Will they sit in the room, in a container, or will they be collected immediately? Will they be cleaned or destroyed? Will the classrooms be deep cleaned each night?</p> <p>Will there be enough time between periods to clean the room thoroughly? Sufficiently? If teachers clean the desks, how do we ensure that the students waiting in the hallways are social distancing and staying safe? If the students are responsible for cleaning the desks, do teachers have to monitor the degree to which they ensure that their seat is safe for the next student?</p> <p>How can I ensure that my students have been protected in the hallways while they walk to and from my classroom. Will they walk in single file lines with 6 feet between them and the person ahead of / behind them? Will there be directional hallways and stairways ensuring that people can only walk in one direction? Who will ensure students follow these expectations and stay safe? Staff? Community members? Parent volunteers?</p> <p>What will be the protocol for students who need to leave the classroom? Will students be able to leave class to go to the bathroom? Once they leave the room, I cannot ensure that they will not compromise the safety of the other students in the room upon their return. What happens if there is a "no-leaving the room during class" policy and a student becomes anxious and needs to leave the class? Can they leave to meet with their counselor or social worker?</p> <p>What will lunch look like? What is the process for the disposal of food waste? Where will study halls meet? Who will monitor lunch and study halls?</p> <p>I have so many questions.</p>
8/6/2020 1:10:49	Jill McCall	<p>I want to teach, in person, but I want to teach in a building that I know protects the safety of my students, my community, and myself.</p> <p>What is the feedback after using Illinois Virtual School (IVS) for summer school? If it worked OK, could we expand the list of approved courses there and expand to other pre-existing online options that have already been proven (ask education consultant Rayna Yaker (<a href="https://www.ryeconsult.com/team">https://www.ryeconsult.com/team</a>) to share her "best in class" online options by grade level)? How can we help parents understand and organize pandemic pods? How can we keep tabs on other leading school districts and discover what online services they are using? How can we create peer relationships between D205 teachers/staff and IVS teachers, as well as those in relevant associations (could include <a href="https://www.virtualearningalliance.org/">https://www.virtualearningalliance.org/</a>, <a href="https://nationalhomeschoolassociation.com/">https://nationalhomeschoolassociation.com/</a> and <a href="https://hslida.org/">https://hslida.org/</a>)? What about with College of DuPage teachers and administration? Could we also find helpers (high school kids willing to do community service and Elmhurst college kids studying education) to help parents and younger kids in the neighborhood who need extra hands and other support? How can we provide more flexibility to high school kids so they can help that way during core education times? Can we negotiate discounts on relevant pre-existing online resources? Could we subsidize anything, if even as reimbursement? How can we stay open to innovative ideas as we go (maybe an online suggestion box)? This transition may be abrupt but it could also be amazing! Thanks.</p>
8/6/2020 2:19:18	Jacky Oviedo	<p>If and when the state of Illinois mandates we return to remote learning, our current plan pulls resources away from our goal of having an effective online learning plan in place by working towards offering both in-person and remote options.</p> <p>Last spring's online learning was an admittedly overall failure. Would the goal then not become to improve the product provided, as opposed to spread ourselves out even more thin and pretend it is no longer needed?</p>
8/6/2020 6:54:56	Susan LaDeur	<p>I just sincerely hope more effort/time/funds are put into improving online learning instead of efforts/funds/time towards promoting what is sure to be a temporary return to in-person instruction.</p> <p>You asked, the parents answered. 85% want in person learning. You came up with a reasonable, thoughtful plan. Please don't let the vocal minority change that. Our children NEED in person learning. This is being accomplished successfully elsewhere, you can do it too.</p>
8/6/2020 6:58:35	David Tam	<p>I will absolutely not sign anything, waiver or otherwise absolving the school or district of legal responsibility if my kids get sick leading to any elder family member getting sick. The district will bear responsibility. The only reason I opted in was because only then I could opt out.</p>
8/6/2020 7:00:06	Steffanie Ernst	<p>Writing to ask the board to push for in person school. My family will have a kindergartner and 2nd grader and they are not capable of having an enriching experience online. They struggle to stay focus and desire a routine with their peers and teachers. With energy to burn and a need for structure e learning is a disservice to these kids. I don't know one Lincoln parent that does not feel the same way and I am very involved in the community. I know these are very hard times but it is in the best interest of the children emotionally and mentally to keep moving on. This virus is not showing a threat to children and masks are highly effective at controlling the spread of germs. Parents that I know will also be very good to not send their kids if they show any signs of a sniffle. This community is ready to move forward.</p>
8/6/2020 7:01:48	Debi kogan	<p>The assumption that school can be effectively taught online is not supported -especially by our last d205 experience. Our children need to be engaged to learn, they need to hear their teachers enthusiasm for the subject and be able to ask live questions. It is simply not an effective way for our children to learn, develop and grow.</p>
8/6/2020 7:20:42	Heather Walker	<p>My child needs to be in school to be engaged as learning for her is better in person. Socially she needs to be in school as online learning is very isolating. She needs a routine, which includes getting out of bed, getting dressed to go to school, not sitting in bed doing e-learning in her pajamas. I understand they must wear masks and social distance but I know my child is willing to do that to be back at school. She did not find e-learning at all engaging or remotely difficult. She needs to be challenged. Please give these kids a chance to prove they can handle this.</p>
8/6/2020 7:24:03	Shirley Stilson	<p>I am a physician and have treated COVID patients from the onset in Illinois. So I have seen this first hand and can say that I am highly in favor of the kids being in school full time in person. There are many ways for the teachers to maintain their own safety. I have seen that there is a lot of s disproportionate amount of fear with this illness compared to the flu which also takes lives every year. I have a great amount of respect for teachers and the work they put in for our children. I would not advocate for this if I truly felt their lives were at risk. Our children are at the greatest risk right now for falling behind academically, suffering from depression, addiction or suicide.</p> <p>Please get everyone back to school. I am happy to speak more on this topic if needed. Thank you for your time.</p>

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8/6/2020 7:35:34	Keelie Mueller Witzel	I urge the D205 Board of Education to follow many of our surrounding districts and begin the school year remote. You have not provided parents, teachers and staff confidence that your plan will truly keep students and teachers safe. Many of the school districts D205 highly regards, have decided the best safety precaution is to start remote, this included Naperville 203 & 204, Stevenson HS, etc. Also, CPS has made the same decision. We ALL want our schools to open, however with increased Covid19 cases in the last few weeks, that would be reckless at this time.
8/6/2020 7:38:05	Sheila Wright	Please please please keep the plan! Of course things will not run smoothly at first but we will get to a new norm! My husband and I are both born and raised in Elmhurst and chose to stay and raise our kids here because we truly know no where else in the world does it better than Elmhurst and D205! Of course this is uncharted water but we can do this! Please lean on the community to help til we get fully up and running. I've tried to never miss an activity where parent can be present because I don't work. I can always be available and want to help and this shouldn't be any different. I will be there with a mask on to take temperatures, monitor social distance, whatever it takes to create the new norm for these kids to be in school!
8/6/2020 7:41:00	Jen Gallagher	This virus is terrifying and the thought of going back to my elementary school full days with full class loads terrifies me. I'm afraid to bring this virus home to my family. I do not feel it is safe for The students and staff to go back at this time. I would feel much more comfortable starting remote and working towards getting back to schools. I know With proper training and support, the teachers can do an amazing job with remote learning. We just need to feel supported. Please support us.
8/6/2020 7:42:16	Liz Leonard	Dear Board, I want to thank you for your extra hours and hard decision making in this unusual time. There are no decisions that will make everyone happy. I am writing to urge you to leave the in-person/hybrid model as a choice. As reported, 85% of Dist 205 wants this model. Please do not be swayed by the 15%, who, after being on FB for a week, seem to be the "squeakiest wheels". Do not cave to these few. I also feel as though a majority of teachers wants to go back (being friends with many). People unhappy with the plan are always the loudest. The kids need to be in school so they can talk to/see teachers a FEW times a week. Most teenagers aren't self motivated, so remote isn't great no matter how it's set up. Even only being in school 2 days a week is worrisome, so please let the 85% keep their choice! Thank you for you time!!
8/6/2020 7:58:26	Amy Thompson	My name is Amy Thompson and Fall 2020 marks my 22nd year at York and 31st as an educator. I've served as both a Counselor with my own caseload of students and as a College & Career Counselor at York. In this work, I have found my calling. It's an exciting, dynamic, demanding, and rewarding career. The hours are long and the work is endless. In fact, my husband yells at me all the time to stop working so much! I give so much because I care so much. I'm in good company. The educators in our district have given their hearts and souls to nurturing our students. The York counselors and I take great joy helping students forge their own path and "launch" into their Life After York. It's a privilege and an ever-exhausting process!  This pandemic has brought so many challenges to us all. Moving to remote learning in the spring resulted in me completely altering my schedule to ensure I was accessible at times when students wouldn't need to check in with classes or work with teachers. I still worked many, long hours and answered an overwhelming amount of email. I even put together a couple of special parent/family programs to help ease concerns about post high school decisions. The pandemic has upended so much and I continue working really hard to stay connected with what is happening behind the scenes in college admission offices and on campuses while sharing what I learn with York families. This summer has not provided much downtime. Adding to that, every day my husband goes to work, I have to wonder if he will be infected when he returns home, making our home unsafe and putting us both at risk. As an ER doctor, he is seeing all of this first hand. He has to "gear up" in significant ways for every shift. He's reading everything he can to stay on top of the latest, most reliable research and shares what he learns with me. This is why I'm certain that remote learning is the best option. Even with strict masks usage, hand washing, and strict social distancing in classrooms (which may not even be possible in many spaces), there are so many other situations that set us all up for exposure: busses without social distancing, crowded hallway passing periods, the lack of HEPA filtration in the schools, interior classrooms and offices with poor ventilation, just to name a few of the most serious issues. He tells me that COVID cases are on the rise in significant ways in the suburbs. I hear his stories of otherwise healthy young people who are suffering mightily and sometimes dying from COVID despite the lack of pre-existing conditions. The fact is that the medical and public health community still does not have this novel virus totally pegged.  We would all love to have a normal year but things aren't normal. The past few months have brought on the grieving process for all of us in so many ways - some very tangibly as people have lost loved ones and/or jobs or income to COVID-19 and others less concretely, as we struggle with all that has been lost (family celebrations, rites of passage, connecting with others, ability to move about freely). We've struggled along with you, facing many of the same stressors. We educators don't live in a separate world from everyone else and yet, many of the comments I've read from people in this community seem to think we are untouched. But we are grieving and worried too. I've done a lot of grief counseling in my 21 years. It's gut wrenching and doesn't only come with losses like death. Things won't be normal because they can't be normal and we can all grieve over that loss but please don't add more grief to an already terribly difficult time by assuming the worst of us educators.  It is my hope that we can find a way to meet the needs of all of our students. I really want to see them in person but it's dangerous to take unnecessary risks. We need to find creative solutions to keep kids safely connected to each other and to help them learn as best they can in a very stressful time. I've shared my thoughts with my fellow ETC members on ways we can support students and keep everyone safe through remote learning. I think we all agree that some degree of in-person contact could be safe given the right level of protection and in smaller numbers than the current plan allows, focusing on our at-risk population. It is my sincere hope, and I know many, many of my professional peers agree, that we can find a more workable solution. We all care deeply about the D205 community and finding the right answers requires striking a really delicate balance. I can confirm one, definitive truth I have learned: We will all get through this by working together.
8/6/2020 8:03:32	Tonia Sutter	Our children need to go back to school for so many reasons. They need to get back on a normal schedule and start learning again. It's important for them to interact with other students and their teachers in a safe environment. As a parent I am constantly educating my child to wear a mask, maintain social distance and wash their hands. Now it's the educators job to teach my child and get them ready for their future. Teaching is essential just as the employees of Grocery stores, hospitals and our police/fire departments. This is such a critical time for these children. So many things have been taken away from them. I understand the importance of people's health and lives but we can't fear it and stop living. So many children are dealing with depression and anxiety. Do we need to create another pandemic? Please consider everyone in this equation.
8/6/2020 8:07:54	Jennifer Hopkins	I strongly believe the district should make every effort to have elementary students in school in person full time this year, as advised by multiple public health groups. Remote learning is not effective or appropriate for very young children. In addition, I believe the district should continue with the hybrid approach for middle and high school students. Again, face to face learning is very important for them, and multiple medical sources have stated that there have been significant increases in mental health issues for our kids during the pandemic. Our kids need to be able to have in person school, and we need to do what is needed to make that happen. The district's plan includes numerous safety measures to support a return to school in person. The results from the parent survey show that the overwhelming majority of parents in this community want this for their kids and the district has a responsibility to the community.
8/6/2020 8:10:18	Pamela Nitti	It's very important for my kids & all Kids to be back school academically, socially & physically.
8/6/2020 8:16:53	Angélica Kodosky	I am wanting my kids to start school this fall. It is important for kids to attend school and get educated in person!
8/6/2020 8:22:59	Diane Narcisi	The kids need to continue their education during this time with proper safety measures in check. This was the commitment to the students then it should be adhered to.
8/6/2020 8:30:02	Ashley Stevenson	It is my belief that going back to school, in a full face-to-face capacity, is not in the best interest of keeping our students and families safe. I acknowledge and appreciate the very complex and difficult decisions many families are currently facing. Teachers are committed to a high level of instruction, always. Given what we learned from remote learning in the spring, I am confident we can create meaningful and instructionally sound lessons to support our students virtually, until we can guarantee that safeguards are in place to ensure safety and health of all.
8/6/2020 8:37:31	Tonia Sutter	Our children need to go back to school for so many reasons. They need to get back on a normal schedule and start learning again. It's important for them to interact with other students and their teachers in a safe environment. As a parent I am constantly educating my child to wear a mask, maintain social distance and wash their hands. Now it's the educators job to teach my child and get them ready for their future. Teaching is essential just as the employees of Grocery stores, hospitals and our police/fire departments. This is such a critical time for these children. So many things have been taken away from them. I understand the importance of people's health and lives but we can't fear it and stop living. So many children are dealing with depression and anxiety. Do we need to create another pandemic? Please consider everyone in this equation.
8/6/2020 8:38:00	Justin & Mia Allen	In person school.

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8/6/2020 8:39:47	Laura Warnke	Our teachers are essential workers too! Our kids need that face to face interaction to be successful. Thank you!
8/6/2020 8:40:18	Becky Leonard	Our children have suffered irreparable harm from the lockdown measures and school closures. There has not been one single case anywhere in the world of transmission between students and teachers. All children belong in school, in person, without dystopian restrictions if we want to ensure their healthy psychological development and hope to recover any of the educational ground they have already lost.
8/6/2020 8:41:39	Margaret Wentte	These kids need to get back to school or we will be faced with a bigger problem of depression. This is very serious and I only hope you make the right decision and send them back to school.
8/6/2020 8:41:56	Celia Grebs	I just wanted thank the Board for their commitment to in person instruction for our children in the 2020-2021 school year. My children really need in person school this year. One of my children has a 504, and his need for social/emotional learning amongst his peers is very great. All my children do better with in person instruction, not only for their educational growth, but also for their social/emotional well being. I am a full time working mom with little to no help with e learning, and it did not go well for our family in the spring. I have a health condition that puts me at high risk for covid, and I still feel loss of education and social emotional learning poses a greater risk to our family than does the risk of covid. According to the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics, in person school is truly what is best for our children this year.
8/6/2020 8:42:59	Steffanie Ernst	<p>Writing to ask the board to push for in person school. My family will have a kindergartner and 2nd grader and they are not capable of having an enriching experience online. They struggle to stay focus and desire a routine with their peers and teachers. With energy to burn and a need for structure e learning is a disservice to these kids. I don't know one Lincoln parent that does not feel the same way and I am very involved in the community. I know these are very hard times but it is in the best interest of the children emotionally and mentally to keep moving on. This virus is not showing a threat to children and masks are highly effective at controlling the spread of germs. Parents that I know will also be very good to not send their kids if they show any signs of a sniffle. This community is ready to move forward.</p> <p>To begin, I want to thank all of you for working so hard for our community.</p> <p>I want to go back to school, in school. I miss my students and my colleagues. But I want to go back into a school that is safe for my students and their families, for my colleagues and for me. I do not know how our buildings will be safe to study and work in because I do not know the plans for the protection of our safety.</p> <p>My classroom, which I love, is small. It's cozy. When desks are lined up, there is one foot of space between desks that are next to each other and 6" between desks and chairs in the column. The desks in the front row touch the teacher's desk which is approximately 18" from the wall behind it. Will the district ensure there is plexiglass for the teacher's desk, which would protect both the students facing the teacher's desk and the teacher?</p> <p>Further, the ventilation in the room is poor. Even though there are windows, teachers, including myself, and students have experienced allergy-like symptoms and headaches after being in the room. Will HEPA filters be provided to ensure that the air will be filtered of any potential virus? How will this be a safe environment for the potentially 15 of 30 students each period.</p> <p>How will the room be cleaned between classes? In the '20-21 year the classroom I am in was used by two teachers and was occupied almost all day, hosting a class during 7 of the 8 class periods. How will the rooms be cleaned? Will there be cleaning supplies provided by the district? As of March there was a single bottle of disinfectant and a single rag for the room. Will there be one rag? Will there be a rag provided for each period? Each day? Each week? Who will clean the desks in the classrooms? The students? The custodial staff? The teachers? Will there be a protocol for disposing of the rags after each period? After each day? Will they sit in the room, in a container, or will they be collected immediately? Will they be cleaned or destroyed? Will the classrooms be deep cleaned each night?</p> <p>Will there be enough time between periods to clean the room thoroughly? Sufficiently? If teachers clean the desks, how do we ensure that the students waiting in the hallways are social distancing and staying safe? If the students are responsible for cleaning the desks, do teachers have to monitor the degree to which they ensure that their seat is safe for the next student?</p> <p>How can I ensure that my students have been protected in the hallways while they walk to and from my classroom. Will they walk in single file lines with 6 feet between them and the person ahead of / behind them? Will there be directional hallways and stairways ensuring that people can only walk in one direction? Who will ensure students follow these expectations and stay safe? Staff? Community members? Parent volunteers?</p> <p>What will be the protocol for students who need to leave the classroom? Will students be able to leave class to go to the bathroom? Once they leave the room, I cannot ensure that they will not compromise the safety of the other students in the room upon their return. What happens if there is a "no-leaving the room during class" policy and a student becomes anxious and needs to leave the class? Can they leave to meet with their counselor or social worker?</p> <p>What will lunch look like? What is the process for the disposal of food waste? Where will study halls meet? Who will monitor lunch and study halls?</p> <p>I have so many questions.</p>
8/6/2020 8:51:20	Michele Carlson	I want to teach, in person, but I want to teach in a building that I know protects the safety of my students, my community, and myself.
8/6/2020 8:53:28	Gina Incandela	I'm very worried about my child with autism, for both his mental health and his ability to learn without in person instruction this year.
8/6/2020 8:54:38	Cheryl Eisa	My three children NEED to be in school where they can learn directly from the teachers and see their peers. I am confident that the district is taking all measures to ensure safety for the staff and kids. We will do our best as a family to follow all guidelines both inside and outside of school. PLEASE let the children go back to school.
8/6/2020 8:57:33	Molly Tomazin	As a resident of Elmhurst and an alum of District 205, I am absolutely stunned that the school board is considering in person learning for Fall 2020. There is an ongoing pandemic which is taking the lives of 1,200 + Americans everyday and the safety of the students, their families and teachers/staff/administrators should be of utmost importance to the district. Yes, the mortality rate for children is lower than it is for adults, but there are more than children in our schools everyday and children go home to their family ay the end of each school day. As we sit here today, we do not know the long term impacts this virus has on the human body. We do not know what long term impacts the survivors will have to deal with in the years to come. It is irresponsible to put children back in classrooms without a plan to keep them and their teachers safe. This time before the school year begins would be better spent planning for a fully remote school year and equipping teachers to be most effective in that medium. No matter what decision is made to start the school year, everyone must realize that the schools will ultimately be remote as it will be nearly impossible to manage the number of exposures/quarantines on an in person basis. Given this reality, every effort should be made to make that remote experience the best it can be from the beginning and to not accelerate the spread of the virus within our community.
8/6/2020 9:00:29	Megan Smith	It is imperative to our children's mental health to be in school, in addition to how critical it is to their ability to learn. As parents, not only are we working full time jobs, but we don't know how to teach. Nothing means more to us than our kids and we are not setting them up for success if they're not in the classroom. In addition, nothing is more important than their safety and the safety of our teachers. We are open to all options to allow us to get back to school: temperature checks, all day masks, face shields, personal sanitizers at desks and separators. We're also open to being creative with the school day and curriculum. Thoughts- half day every day, lunch and recess at home, specials over zoom. Whatever we can do to get the children back in the classroom for the Core curriculum. Please let us try using creative solutions. Others can opt out and do virtual learning if they are concerned. Thank you.

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8/6/2020 9:03:05	Jana Bendik	<p>I want to start by thanking the board for taking the time to read through all of the community's comments and concerns. I understand that this is a difficult position for everyone involved to be in and that the situation is constantly changing. That being said, at this time I think we need to turn to our educators and school staff to determine what is best for our students. If they think remote or hybrid is the best way to start the school year, then we need to trust that to be accurate. These are the same people we entrust with our children's lives most days of the year. We trust them to protect our children from fires, tornados and active shooters. I have zero doubt that they have their students' best interests and safety at heart. Teachers often refer to their students as their "children" or "kids" out of love, care and affection. Their desire to start the year remotely comes from these same feelings of love for their students.</p> <p>The sooner a decision is made, the sooner our teachers can solidify their plans for how to amplify their remote or hybrid plans. The sooner a decision is made, the sooner families can start to make their appropriate child care plans. And the sooner a decision is made, the sooner we can begin to determine the best way to support our students with Special Needs, IEPs and students who receive free and reduced lunch.</p> <p>Again, thank you for time and hard work.</p>
8/6/2020 9:07:36	Sherry Romano	<p>Teaching and learning is the most essential aspect of society. Science supports kids going back to the classroom. Experts warn of the damage we are doing to our kids by keeping them out of school. Most parents support their children returning to the classroom. It can be done safely. My cerebral middle schooler cried every day last year in e-learning. She completed her worksheets within minutes. She felt unsupported and unchallenged. I fear her love for learning has been lost. My high schooler and her friends sit around and discuss how easy it is to cheat with e-learning. There is no Independent thinking when you have google to access every answer, translate every Spanish phrase, or answer every math question. My kids are depressed. They are anxious. They have nothing to look forward to. They feel abandoned. I have to quit my job and go on unemployment as do most parents. I know the teachers and administration want to do what is best for our children and teachers. Countless people seek living in Elmhurst due to the amazing school system. I appreciate the support they have given to getting our kids safely back to school.</p>
8/6/2020 9:09:36	Melissa Bennis	<p>We support the efforts to get these kids back to in-person learning and all D205 has to offer. It is no easy task to accomplish but we're all in this together and provide our support!</p>
8/6/2020 9:14:10	Daniel	<p>I believe our children need to be in school. If this means only for 1/2 days everyday its important. We should consider morning testing /screening of all kids for symptoms prior to the start of each day. Possibly point of care testing should also be imemented for rapid read covid tests. Math, English, and science are crucial and should be the focus of curriculum.</p>
8/6/2020 9:16:27	Kristin Dailey	<p>It is of the utmost importance for the educational and mental health of our children to return to school. Remote learning will only put them further behind where the end of year remote learning put them. Children are willing to wear masks and follow any rules set forth, so they can go to school. This is just as important to them, as it is to parents. As a parent of a special needs child and others with IEPs, I can strongly say remote learning does not fulfill children's educational needs and plainly, does not work. If I felt it did, I would have chosen to homeschool my children. Covid has negatively impacted so many lives, let's not let it hurt our children's more than it already has.</p>
8/6/2020 9:18:43	Goriana Alexander	<p>My husband I pay huge taxes and we do so to enable our kids to have a education and public schools. It is absolutely crazy that school 5 days a week is not considered essential and Grocery stores , liquor stores and pot dispensaries are considered essential. This is causing a significant impact to our children's mental and educational well being. I am strongly requesting that school goes back August 17 and full time. E learning was biggest failure and I believe we are tremendously behind. Waiting for a vaccine is unacceptable and we can't live in bubbles. Wearing a mask and appropriate social distancing should work perfectly fine as the rest of us are working and working parents can't afford to stay home and teach their kids.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
8/6/2020 9:20:06	Jennifer Flessner	<p>I'm incredibly supportive of my children having the opportunity and option to attend school in person this year. Despite the inherent risk of any public environment during this time, the importance of face to face learning, socialization, educational support and mental health is vital to my children's ongoing development. I urge the Board to stay the course on the hybrid approach allowing our parents the right to choose and weigh risks for our children individually. Thank you to the Board and the leaders for their ongoing contribution to our community.</p>
8/6/2020 9:21:23	Teri Litavsky	<p>I know this is a difficult decision for everyone. But in the end, we can't take any chances when it comes to health and safety. The district has yet to provide any sort of plan for what will happen When, not if, a child or staff member gets the virus. It is a shame you have wasted these many months not putting together a strong e-learning plan. Why can't the district hire a large amount of aids to help the children at risk who are having difficulty with the e-learning. It seems as if you are lacking creativity for Solutions. Close the schools for e-learning. Keep everyone safe. Keep everyone alive. Thank you</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 9:23:13	Sue Campbell	<p>I am the parent of 5 children, 2 of whom are still in D205 schools (Lincoln 5th Grade and York sophomore). I am writing to express a few thoughts. Back in June, when we completed a survey for the district, we opted for in person, hybrid learning. It was a time when we were hopeful that the virus was controlled. As information has come forth from the D205 administration over the past few weeks, my husband and I have had many discussions related to our sons' return to school, in person vs remote. For our older son, there has not been much need to debate our choices. He is nearly 16, confident, smart, and a good communicator. We believe that with our support, he will make good choices while at school, and letting us know if he is uncomfortable and wants to make a change to remote learning. The fact that York is starting with the hybrid option made the choice easier, in addition to the new information last week that if we choose in person, we can opt out to remote at any time.</p> <p>The difficult decision for us came down to our 5th grader. He, too, is a smart kid, but at 10yrs old, is still developing these skills and characteristics. He did not have a good spring, learning from home. It was challenging in many ways, and that was with 2 parents present during the school day. (We both work from home these days, and have flexibility to help him.). He lacked focus, he was secretive, he wanted to be with his teacher and classmates. When we brought this to the attention of his teacher, Mr. Casten, he was attentive and, in collaboration with our principal, Mrs. Barnabee, thought creatively and found a way to engage our son and his classmates in an online group project. I am ever grateful for their attention to my son, especially in light of the fact that many were struggling with remote learning. There is no doubt that our son would do best in the classroom.</p> <p>However, we have serious concerns about the safety of sending him into the classroom. I am immunocompromised. Sending him back to Lincoln poses health concerns for our family. There has been no information from the district administration related to class size. A smaller class size would help me to feel more comfortable that he and the students will practice social distancing, that the teacher can monitor the safety of the students in the classroom AND still teach effectively. Another concern about sending him back was the idea of self-certification of health. How many parents will still send their child when the child has symptoms of a cold, which could possibly be COVID symptoms? How will the school manage a line of children, waiting to get into school each day to verify that the parents self-certified? In the rain or other inclement weather? How will the school monitor social distancing in those lines? How will students be disciplined if they get too close, remove their mask, remove someone else's mask, etc? How will it work for kids to participate in small group assignments/work? How will it work for teachers to sit side-by-side with students who need the one-on-one attention? I worry about the safety of my son, my family, myself, and for the teachers and staff at Lincoln. I also believe that we have not yet seen the effects of the virus on the younger population, as many parents have kept them sheltered at home, limited contact with friends, and restricted their circle of exposure.</p> <p>It would have been helpful in these past few weeks to have had specific examples of a "day in the life of an elementary student". I don't feel confident in the plan for remote learning, yet, due to the lack of detail. Unfortunately, this is the option we had to buy into. According to the 7/31 survey results, only 10% of Lincoln families opted for full remote. That leaves me with many more questions and worries, and time is running short. School starts in 19 days on 8/24. From my understanding, teachers will not even begin their professional development for this school year until 8/17. Transparency in these times is key, and what information we have received has been trickling out. Educating our teachers for this transition and informing parents should be the priority. I do not see any urgency on the part of the BOE or administration to move forward with engaging the teachers or with sharing more details with parents. Maybe there is more in place to make this year successful...PLEASE, start sharing it ASAP. School starts in 19 days. Now, with the results of the 7/31 survey, there are new scenarios that have to be managed and decisions to be made, and made quickly.</p> <p>Teachers REQUIRE the support of the BOE and administration. They MUST know that there is a solid plan and to be given the tools to enact that plan. With the information shared by the ETC, and the disparaging reply from the BOE, I do not have confidence that we as a district are prepared for school to start in 19 days. Teachers now will need to be ready for in person AND remote, in addition to the other safety concerns, in a VERY SHORT period of time. School starts in 19 days. I support the ETC's request to begin the school year with remote learning. I would also support a delay to the start of the school year. I acknowledge that I am in a place of privilege in being able to state that, but I am also speaking from a place of concern for my community.</p> <p>I have had a good discussion with Mrs. Barnabee, and feel confident that she and the Lincoln staff will support us to the best of their ability. She knows of our struggles this past spring and has assured me that our son will not get lost in the shuffle.</p> <p>I have 2 requests from you: 1. Support the ETC, as they are on the front lines. 2. Support the families by sharing more information ASAP, those who opted for in person, but especially for those who opted for remote. Put our minds at rest, and you will then see the community settle down too. SCHOOL STARTS IN 19 DAYS.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and attention. Sue Campbell</p>
8/6/2020 9:24:48	Wes Trainer	<p>If teachers union does not open our elmhurst schools I expect a full a refund for my tax dollars so that I can send my kids to a private or charter school of my choice. Not opening the schools is absurd political behavior that goes against science. The absence of school in the children's lives is doing untold damage on their education and mental health. All studies prove this. Stop messing with our children's lives!</p>
8/6/2020 9:25:31	Lindsey DiTomasso	<p>My name is Lindsey DiTomasso and I have been teaching Social Studies at York since 2000. I was the head varsity soccer coach for 6 years and have been privileged to sponsor the EMPOWER Club since 2010. Thank you for all of your hard work during one of the most incredibly trying times in our country's history. The last 5 months have been a whirlwind of emotions as we navigate a public health crisis like no other while trying to maintain the high quality teaching and learning in Elmhurst.</p> <p>As you will hear numerous times tonight, all stakeholders want to be back in the classroom this fall. I miss my students so much! And everyone is craving normalcy in the times of crisis and uncertainty. But given the current COVID circumstances in DuPage county and surrounding areas, the reality of a successful hybrid model is not going to come to fruition. Just yesterday DuPage County Board Chairman Dan Cronin reiterated those comments saying</p> <p>"We need everyone to work together to help us stop the spread of the virus....as these case counts creep up, we need to remind the public that their actions will impact the decisions health leaders make to protect our communities. We each play an important role in this fight."</p> <p>I am urging the Board to please start the year with remote learning so we have enough time to have more answers than questions and gradually and safely return our students and staff to the classroom for in person instruction. The current hybrid model at York High School will have 1500+ students and staff each day. While we are told to bring a mask and socially distance, I am unable to cite any companies in the area that are successfully following this same in person model. However I can cite from NBC news on August 5th that there is one death every 80 seconds in America. That is the grim new toll were are facing in this fluid situation with no coordinated national plan.</p> <p>While children have been found to survive COVID at much higher numbers, in hot spots like Florida, children have a 31.1% positivity rate according to The Hill. So what does this mean for schools? The number one indicator of student academic success is physical and psychological safety. Each teacher goes above and beyond to ensure the safety of your child every day. But we are human and we are mothers and fathers and sons and daughters who are scared for our lives.</p> <p>And we hate being away from your students. No teacher enjoys writing sub plans which will never replace that time with your students. But the truth is teachers will get sick. Students will get sick. I am also a mother of a sophomore, 8th grader and 6th grader. I don't want any student going without their teacher(s) for weeks a time. That is not a formula for consistent and engaging learning. Neither is navigating the collective community trauma of a student or staff member passing away from this awful virus. And so it remains, if we retain the current hybrid model, we put all of our families at grave and unnecessary risk. But if we start the year remote, we create space for teachers and students to build relationships and consistency with our learning and assessment.</p> <p>This will end. Everything ends. But we don't want to look back a year from now and say I wish I had... or we should have ... instead let's lean into meaningful and instructionally sound remote learning with even greater expectations than the state issued in the spring. Let's avoid disruption for our students and families. And when we can confidently and safely bring students and staff back to the building with improved and safe ventilation, quick testing, and contact tracing, we will be ready!</p>
8/6/2020 9:25:34	Tanya Chwojko	<p>Our children need in person learning. Please consider having this option and give the teachers the supplies and tools they need to teach safely</p>

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8/6/2020 9:25:58	Jennifer Wehman	Please let these kids attend school in-person. By taking the appropriate safety measures it can work. I've seen first hand how the YMCA has operated camp with a ton of children for months. You have my support!
8/6/2020 9:29:31	Gina Filosa	Teachers are one of the most important essential workers that we have. I believe that it is in the best interest of student's health and well being to go back to in person instruction. Kids have been gathering around town and have been playing organized sports such as basketball and baseball all summer long. It is time that they go back to the classroom. I encourage others, as I have done, to sign up as a substitute teacher to help facilitate the possibly of in person instruction. Kids need the stability and structure of going back to school, and those that don't believe so, can learn from home.
8/6/2020 9:29:57	Adam Kotlarczyk, Ph.D.	I am a teacher at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy and my spouse teaches in District 205. We enter tonight, after six months of data on the pandemic, with overwhelming evidence that remote learning, which my school has also chosen, is the safest course for the health of students, staff, and faculty. This fact is indisputable.  Across the country, schools that have already opened with face-to-face options are failing. The Gwinnet County District in Georgia had to send home over 260 staff after one day. Corinth School District in Mississippi has sent home over 100 elementary, middle, and high school students. Five districts in Tennessee have sent students and staff home.  As a Board you have an opportunity to lead – to do what your teachers work hard to do every day: to educate. You can say to the community: we hear you, and we also understand that the ruthless mathematics of virology has spared no school or institution in the country, and will not spare ours. You can say to the employees and children entrusted to your care: it is our duty as leaders to make the hard decisions that make your lives our top priority, even if those decisions are sometimes unpopular in some circles.  Whatever other considerations and community pressures it is your responsibility as a Board to consider, we must ultimately acknowledge that the course of action that will keep the greatest portion of those young people and adults who are in your charge healthy and alive is clear: remote learning.
8/6/2020 9:35:24	Chris Brunner	My children want to go back to school and I agree with them. Please maintain the hybrid model.
8/6/2020 9:36:41	Anne Dennett	I support in person learning for the 20-21 elementary school year. E-learning is not school.
8/6/2020 9:38:51	Sharon Emmi Santos (formerly Emmi-Iovinelli)	I have been an educator for thirty years, twelve of which have been in D205. We need to work together to provide the best instruction that includes a minimum risk of exposure for all children and school personnel. The current plan does not provide enough protection. Specialists who are asked to go into multiple classrooms a day at the elementary level are at a level of risk that is unacceptable (100+ kids a day). Spacing is impossible with the large class sizes. I have dedicated most of my life to teaching and now it seems that "life" is at risk. I don't understand how we got here. I have read detailed plans from other districts that provide a safe path to instruction while supporting families that may need childcare during the day. Details of what remote learning will look like that calms the fears of parents should have been ready early to show it will not be the same as the spring, emergency instruction. The community must come together and help each other, not live in the past and berate teachers for instruction that they were not prepared for at all, and who also had their hands tied in many aspects of the emergency plan. We can do better to prevent any loss of life or long term effects from this illness. We can do better with preparing our teachers and families on how best to teach and learn remotely. Let's get specific and clear about any plan moving forward, but as our administration has said numerous times, health and safety of students and staff (along with their families) must be the first priority. Are the decisions that were made for in person or hybrid instruction following that principle? I have to say from the information I have been provided, the answer is no.
8/6/2020 9:39:35	Jen Gallagher	This virus is terrifying and the thought of going back to my elementary school full days with full class loads terrifies me. I'm afraid to bring this virus home to my family. I do not feel it is safe for The students and staff to go back at this time. I would feel much more comfortable starting remote and working towards getting back to schools. I know With proper training and support, the teachers can do an amazing job with remote learning. We just need to feel supported. Please support us.
8/6/2020 9:40:06	Amy Wellman	I'm a parent of an incoming first grader at Hawthorne and fully support her returning to school for an in person education. She is very young and did poorly in the spring learning at home. She doesn't have the maturity to understand that mom and dad are her teachers and she doesn't have the attention span to spend the day learning independently. While I support elementary aged children back in the classroom every day I do understand a hybrid model may be needed. I do NOT believe the solution to this problem is the 100% remote learning model that the union is demanding. Are there other options? Could the children spend a shorter day in school? Could they go before lunch or after lunch and learn the most basic subjects while eliminating some of the specials? We chose to live in Elmhurst because of the schools and the community. Now is the time for the community to come together and do what is right for our children. I'm pleased the Board is taking the time to hear from parents and I look forward to its decision.
8/6/2020 9:42:13	Katie Balke	My children need in person instruction from a teacher who has a background in teaching, not from me who is a parent with zero background of teaching. Safety is a priority, yes absolutely but I am confident with with precautions in place they will be safe as will the teachers. My 1st and 3rd grader won't benefit at all from schooling at home.
8/6/2020 9:43:46	Kalina Giannakopoulos	For the emotional and social well being of our children, I believe that full time in person is the most beneficial to our children. Our children crave being in and around their teachers and peers and benefit from hearing each other's questions and comments and working together as a large class or small groups in their lessons. Please consider in person instruction for the school year. Thank you
8/6/2020 9:44:23	Jennifer Byrd	I have 3 children who will be attending York, Bryan and Lincoln. I implore you to stay the course with opening up our district. All 3 of my kids have slipped academically, emotionally and socially since we closed schools in March. I worked very hard last spring to supplement my kids education but alas, I do not have the skills or influence of a professional teacher. My eldest, who is entering freshman year has been struggling socially and has developed severe social anxiety this has been deeply exacerbated by school closings. Having conversations with several parents I have been made aware that this unintended consequence of closings is prevalent.  The CDC posted a white paper 2 weeks ago, entitled "The Importance if Reopening America's Schools this Fall." Everyone should read this before making a fear-based decision. We have trusted the CDC to provide leadership and guidance on Covid-19, we should continue to trust. Our kids continue to lose critical elements of childhood in the way of academic, social and emotional growth. Please, in the interest of our children, stay the course... let's have district 205 be a leader in doing what's right for our children and our community and get these kids back to school!
8/6/2020 9:44:59	Paula Walega	I feel strongly that kids need to be learning in person in the fall, NOT remotely

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8/6/2020 9:46:15	Sarah Garcia	<p>First, I would like to express my disappointment in District 205 administration for the way they responded to the Elmhurst Teachers' Council. As the Board of Education and Superintendent, the buck stops with you. If something was not satisfactory during the Spring Crisis Learning, please look at what guidelines were being set by Dr. Moyer as interpreted from the ISBE Remote Learning Plan. I know that at several times teachers were asked to not stress out the parents and to cut down the work. That was extremely prudent at the time, given the situation we were all going through. But to get criticism for spring learning and then use the excellent teachers to take the blame for the shortfall in rigor is just wrong.</p> <p>Also, the lies told by Dr. Moyer to parents and the community about the ETC has led to a lack of trust in the integrity of the District. Dr. Moyer sent out communication stating ETC was not willing to meet to discuss their concerns, which was a blatant lie.</p> <p>Going forward, what has the District done to ensure that everyone is prepared for the reality that at some point we will be remote learning? Has the district spent the summer offering PD to teachers on the platforms that will be used this year? Has the district clearly communicated the expectations for teachers who are remote teaching? Unfortunately, my guess is no, since a full remote learning plan has not been released to the parents of District 205.</p> <p>The Elmhurst Teachers Council brought some very real, very valid concerns to you. In addition to that, the following districts in DuPage county have all decided to do remote learning, after previously releasing some form of in-person instruction plans. These districts are located in Bensenville, Villa Park, Glen Ellyn, Carol Stream, Bloomingdale, Wooddale, Lisle, Lombard, Glendale Heights, and Naperville, both unit districts 203 and 204.</p> <p>I encourage the Board and Dr. Moyer to truly work with our teachers, instead of engaging in combative tactics that distract the community from the real issues at hand.</p> <p>Last, I would also like to express my concerns about this meeting not being in person AGAIN. Yes, I read the explanation that the Board provided about this. You cited "great difficulty in maintaining appropriate social distancing in the meeting room and nearby spaces." The Board room and "nearby spaces" are most likely bigger than most elementary classrooms. Yet, your plan as of today expects that those elementary classrooms will be able to maintain proper social distancing between students without reducing class size.</p>
8/6/2020 9:51:32	Leuzzi	While online/ remote learning is fine. I am so angry that principles and supers and all authority have zero plan in place to go remote with a live teacher. Nothing has been done or worked on for months.
8/6/2020 9:53:30	Kelly Smith	I am on the side of kids being given the option for in person classes. What about having the option of shortened days in school just focusing on the core subjects of English, Math, Science, Social Studies. The other subjects such as stem, UA, health and world language can be done at home with E-learning. Families who choose to keep their kids at home can have the option of doing so with either e-learning or homeschooling. The CDC and many physicians recommend that kids go back to school. Extended school closures can be detrimental to some children, just not academically, but socially and emotionally, and for children with disabilities they won't be provided their needed therapies and services. I believe our community will be able to keep it safe for all teachers, staff and our kids to go back to in person learning this fall.
8/6/2020 9:53:43	Carolyn Doherty	If there is any form of remote learning it absolutely must involve a teacher who is LIVE. Please supply all necessary equipment to make this happen. It's a very fair compromise on the issue. Our children simply will not learn if we repeat the Spring remote model.
8/6/2020 9:53:52	Kristin Codilis	I am 100 percent for in person learning for my three kids in first and second grade. One of my children has an IEP and ELearning was a complete joke. My kids have all regressed. There was zero accountability for teachers, zero modifications made, and virtually no feedback on the lessons. I witnessed no collaboration between special education and classroom teachers. The majority of the work was busy work that did not focus on my children's needs. Other districts have been taking Elearning courses and preparing for this. Our district has not even begun to prepare for this type of learning. There are plenty of teachers that will come in and take the place of those that don't feel comfortable in the classroom. Based on how the district has handled this entire situation, I don't feel confident that the kids will receive a quality education with elearning they will continue to regress. Grammar school children need in person learning for their social, emotional, and mental well being. If we go to elearning the teachers should be required to be at school all day actually teaching the lessons from their classroom and providing feedback for all lessons. They need to be adjusting and modifying lessons for kids. If teachers want remote learning then they need to be in the classroom and conduct a normal school day. What is going to happen, and is already happening, is that parents are starting to pull their kids from public and put them in catholic schools. We are currently looking into Timothy Christian. Other parents are looking to hire additional Teachers to come teach at their homes. Who knows long this will be going on. If we go to full Elearning in the grammar schools I will be pulling my three kids from the school. What are the teachers going to do when they are let go because the numbers are down? It's a slippery slope. After last year I have zero faith on elearning and once again it looks like we are going to be throwing together a curriculum at the last minute. I understand there are certain teachers that genuinely are at risk. Those teachers, the ones with severe underlying conditions and who are pregnant should have the option to teach remote. Not to be harsh, but Liston obesity as an underlying condition is unacceptable. That is something that is in your control. I feel there is a vast majority of teachers that are for going back but are too afraid to speak up against the union. If we go back to elearning my kids will be leaving the district and I can assure you that many people will follow suite. If a teacher doesn't want to come back then that's there choice, but I will gladly step up and go back to teach because I will do what's best for the kids. In the long run I don't think teachers are thinking about the long term repercussions for their jobs. We are less than 3 weeks out from school. I hope we can figure this out because I need to pull my kids from the school of not
8/6/2020 9:54:38	Marie Skotty	Please consider the health of these kids mentally. My children need to be around other kids. Doing remote is not good for these kids. My oldest daughter is depressed and I'm seriously worried about her. I would sacrifice to help these kids if I was a teacher. My cousin works in the Pediatric ICU at advocate. She's not taking care of covid patients in the ICU (because there are none) but she is taking care of attempted suicide children. This is the real epidemic not covid for these kids. Let's wake up.
8/6/2020 9:59:39	Brooke Koop	The Kooops are in favor of in-person instruction based on the recommendations by the CDC and AAP.
8/6/2020 10:02:14	Kimberly Ericksen	I fully support the districts decision to provide the option for in person learning. It is essential for my high score to be in front of a teacher in order to get any meaningful learning accomplished. Please keep in person learning an option for your families!
8/6/2020 10:02:29	Kim Hinrichs	My family supports in-person learning for our two children who are going into K and 2nd grade. We are following the guidance of our pediatrician, who has said the scientific data supports this for children of this age. I trust that D205 can make things safe for the teachers and children so that this is possible.
8/6/2020 10:03:22	Matt Johnson	<p>My name is Matt Johnson and I am a teacher and instructional coach at York. I grew up in Elmhurst and am blessed to have the opportunity to work with the students and families in this community. I love my job and I love these kids. However, among so many legitimate concerns regarding returning our students to school, I have this burning question:</p> <p>What is it that Elmhurst 205 has seemingly figured out about how to safely go back to school that nearly every other district in the area has decided is impossible? Do we truly trust this plan over the collective leadership and wisdom of all the other surrounding schools?</p>

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8/6/2020 10:03:36	Kyle Danielson	<p>It is of the utmost importance that children of all ages are not shortchanged and have the opportunity for IN CLASS LEARNING this coming school year.</p> <p>Specifically considering my daughters who fall into the elementary years, it is imperative that they are able to attend a PHYSICAL CLASSROOM EVERY DAY in order to continue to grow both academically and socially. I also want to note that we are fully in support of masks, faceshields, classroom isolation, contact tracing on steroids, and any other common sense policies that will be necessary to make this happen.</p> <p>Additionally it is important to consider working parents in this equation and the unintended consequences of shifting backward to even a hybrid approach at these younger grades. If school follows a hybrid approach, instead of our children mixing with the same 20 children every day in controlled classroom environment, those same children will mix with their classmates one day and some other 10-20 children the next. For most parents the search for an alternative support system on "remote" days will not be a choice.</p> <p>Today's situation is unprecedented. We are ALL dealing with additional risk in our lives. Let's work together to manage that risk for our children, our teachers, and everyone in our community while not hiding in our homes or choosing the convenient route for a few. I am confident that we can all work together and make smart MEDICALLY SOUND choices that mitigate all of our risks while still MOVING FORWARD with our lives. Respectfully, Kyle Danielson</p>
8/6/2020 10:05:20	Kristin Morrow	<p>Our family is advocating for in-person instruction based on the recommendations of the CDC and the AAP. Children need to be in school, learning alongside their peers. Please allow our children this opportunity.</p>
8/6/2020 10:06:06	Mindi Honken	<p>We are in favor of in-person instruction based on the recommendations by the CDC and AAP. We support everyone's right to make the best decision that works for their family- remote, hybrid, or in/person. While we understand that in-person learning creates some challenges many other organizations that are essential (like education) have modified and created work environments that have been safe and effective. The classroom will look different than previous years but that should not impact the benefits of in person learning. The best option is one where parents can choose what is best for their family, full remote learning will not be best for my 4 children.</p>
8/6/2020 10:06:48	Ann Dakins	<p>Thanks!</p> <p>I have dedicated myself to teaching middle school for 18 years, the last decade with the wonderful students and families of Elmhurst. Why? Because what I do is a calling; one that I knew from the age of 5 that I would answer. There is something incredibly special about watching the "light bulb" illuminate when a student has a profound learning moment, in watching students work together to turn what they have learned into something new, in watching students support each other when there are struggles, in hearing "Thank you for helping me" from a student... I miss that. I wish we could go back in time and recapture all of that, but this new reality has determined that we cannot right now. As a mother of four, I am sad that school, right now, can no longer be the safe place where they learn, grow, and interact with peers and teachers. However, I am dedicated to teaching and building relationships with students remotely in order to keep safe what we all cherish most... our kids and families. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 10:07:10	Regina Rotermund	<p>As someone who grew up in Elmhurst and graduated from York in 2001 living in this district was very important to me. We stretched our budget to be here because these were the schools I wanted my daughter to attend. I always had fantastic teachers and had a fantastic education. I wanted the same for my daughter. I have known for some time the district has suffered from a lack of foresight for some time starting with selling so many schools in the 70s. But the educational plans were always solid so we moved here to raise our children. However the lack of planning in this time of crisis is infuriating. The original plan that was released was so full of half plans and unanswered questions. The district blatantly ignored state mandates for covid leave and teacher evaluations. As well as CDC recommendations. What was released last month felt like at best half a plan with no consideration for how teachers would make this work just assuming they would. As a parent in this district I have questioned many things that have happened under this superintendent, wondering if he was really here for the kids. The lack of thought and preparation I have seen in the last month, combined with the complete disregard for your staff has me very concerned about our students.</p> <p>As a teacher in a different district, if the teachers feel ignored, unsupported, and are fearful for their safety our children will feel that. We are the only district in the immediate area opening with a full time in person plan for grade school and quite frankly you should all be ashamed for ignoring everyone's safety.</p>
8/6/2020 10:09:08	Lexie Hughes	<p>I feel strongly that District 205 schools should be open for in person class as planned on August 24th. The district has developed a plan to allow for the safe return of students and staff to the classroom. They have implemented guidelines to limit the number of students in classrooms/passing periods and established safety guidelines based on recommendations from our scientific and medical leaders. It is absolutely impossible to deliver the same level of education that our students deserve in an online format. This was evident when assessing the online structure in the spring. Our students need to be able to engage with their teachers and fellow students in a classroom setting. This is an extremely important part of the learning process, and cannot be achieved online. Experts have stated that the spread of this disease can be controlled with appropriate safety measures. Our schools will have these safety measures in place. This virus is not going to disappear, and we are going to have to take steps to carefully and cautiously live in a world where it exists. The fatality rates for children and adults under the age of 50 is almost 0, recognizing that people with co-morbidities have a great risk. In those cases, we need to allow for online learning and teaching capabilities. An overwhelming majority of the Elmhurst community has requested in-class room learning for our schools. A large portion of our taxes are dedicated to supporting our schools. We cannot continue to make the assumption that our children are receiving the same level of education in an online format. We need to focus these tax dollars on ensuring that our children and their teachers return to the classroom safely. There is currently no endgame. At what point will it be safe for teachers and students to return to the classroom. If we continue with this strategy, our children will be out of school indefinitely. That is unacceptable!</p>
8/6/2020 10:09:40	Heather Herbst	<p>I can not believe the Union President and 41 teachers were part of this committee and now they are pushing to not open schools. The plan was extremely thoughtful and was prepared with a lot of research and a very diverse committee. Teachers and staff are very much essential workers - essential to show up and ensure these kids have proper classroom instruction and engagement with their teachers and other students. These kids will be at a major disadvantage from a diligence and interest in learning if they have to do it all through a screen. Essential workers today are working for \$15/hour at grocery stores. Teachers have a decision to make - resign and find a new career while this is going on or go back to work.</p>
8/6/2020 10:10:22	Courtney Hesch	<p>Highly support in person for school</p>
8/6/2020 10:10:50	Erin Danielson	<p>Simply put, D205 should proceed with the current, safe plan that has been presented. Private sector schools and care centers feel confident in a similar return plan, and will be proceeding. This allows our children the best opportunity for learning, maintenance of mental health, and continuity in a world that has been turned upside down in the last 5 months.</p> <p>Elementary age children will not thrive via e-learning- it is not the same as school- and there is not interest in forcing this to become the norm for young children- from parents OR children. The amount of screen and solitude time is excessive for young children to learn via computers only.</p> <p>If we need to adjust plans once school starts due to circumstances, and to ensure safety, so be it. But we have to at least try to resume normalcy, and accept that there will be SOME risk in our day to day lives. We must try to move forward.</p> <p>Also, we need to understand that many people will be forced to take matters into their own hands when it comes to their children's learning during this time, whether it's switching to private education, investing in "pods," etc. which creates a blow and inconsistencies to the public education system.</p> <p>Parents/taxpayers have overwhelmingly voted in favor of in person instruction, and this must be factored into this decision.</p> <p>Best, Erin Danielson</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 10:11:26	Michelle Carlson	My 3 kids are headed to Lincoln, Kindergarten, 2nd & 3rd Grade. We are pro in person learning per the CDC and AAP guidelines and believe with the precautions that the District has 5 months to put in place, the teacher, admin staff and children will be safe and their educational and emotional needs will no longer be neglected. My Orange Theory Fitness has conducted 100,000 classes and with social distance and masks, not one transmission took place. I also saw a study of 2 hairdresser who were found positive but had zero transmission due to mask wearing. Teachers can wear the same precautions as doctors, dentists so that the child's needs are met. We would ask our doctors to stop caring for our physical health, so we can't keep putting off caring for the next generations mental and educational health. I get that parents feel differently and they can choose to home school or do e-learning. I feel I pay more than \$15,000 in real estate taxes and would have my career at jeopardy, my income potential severely decreased and have to pay out of pocket expenses to hire someone to educate my children and then daycare to watch them pre-post e learning. The school system is exactly why I live in Elmhurst and at this pace I should move if I am not receiving this benefit for my insane tax bill.
8/6/2020 10:15:50	Anne McPartlin	For many reasons, I feel strongly that our children need to start in-person schooling. Remote learning does not provide the same individual intensive teaching experience and our children will miss out on the very necessary beginning of the year curriculum foundation. I know from experience that the spring e-learning was not beneficial to my kids in any way. Also, the social/emotional impact on students will be negative, especially for my incoming 6th grader who will be entering a new school. And the impact on working parents will be devastating. I understand the concern of teachers, but it is my opinion that they are essential workers. In the same way that our doctors and nurses, grocery store employees, and nursing home staff are essential, so are teachers.
8/6/2020 10:16:51	Renee Dizillo	I am greatly disappointed at what the ETC has done. The district surveyed parents and teachers and came up with a solid plan based on the results that would allow for a choice on remote, hybrid, or full day in person for elementary students. It is shameful that the ETC isn't preparing for the school year and is instead ignoring the CDC recommendation of opening schools. The CDC director has stated that suicides and drug overdoses will take more lives of teens than COVID. I can't believe the needs of the students are being ignored. The ETC is failing our children. Please do the right thing, stand up for our children and follow through with the plan set forth by the district. I support the district 205 reopen plan that allows for parents to make a choice for what is best for their students. Education is essential. Sacrifices are hard but many workers have been making sacrifices for months and months, and many of them are getting paid significantly less than teachers.. Are their lives less worthy? The district must make sure teachers are protected, while giving our kids the best education possible. Thank you
8/6/2020 10:20:11	Jennifer Gaeto	I urge the board and teachers union to find a resolution that meets the needs of the students. Some form of in person learning is critical to student development. You guys have had 4 months to figure out a solution that meets the needs of our students, for the teacher union to be scrambling at the last minute and bringing up issues which could have been resolved 3 weeks before school is supposed to start is disappointing. I am in support of some element of in-person education and hope that a resolution can be agreed.
8/6/2020 10:20:13	Katie Feodoroff	Thank you Dr. Moyer and Board so much for all of your hard work during this tough time. I have always had the utmost respect and admiration for teachers. My 3 children have benefitted greatly from some amazing teachers here in Elmhurst. Teachers are at the top of the list of most essential workers. During the last 5 months, Doctors have cared for the sick, police officers have continued to protect our community, grocery store clerks have kept our families fed, and now it's time for the teachers to rise to the occasion and educate our children. Please stay true to what you already outlined as the best way to start the school year and don't be pressured by large groups to change to remote learning. That is a disservice to our children and our community. Let Elmhurst lead the charge and show that kids can go back to school safely!
8/6/2020 10:23:25	Joelle Kellam	While the teacher's union is putting pressure on the board for remote learning, I was told about multiple union teachers who are planning to take paid positions with private families to facilitate their kids' elearning. This MUST violate their contract. It also contradicts their complaint that they don't want to be in a classroom with our children.  Our kids needs in person learning, even in a hybrid format. PPE in schools will protect teachers and children and keep our economy alive. If teachers aren't willing to physically be in schools, they are saying they don't care about keeping the economy going. What about healthcare workers, factory workers, food service workers, etc? Should they also stay home for fear of getting exposed? Safety measures must be put in place and these kids must get back to in person learning. The negative impact of remote learning for our families and this country will be lasting and detrimental.
8/6/2020 10:23:40	Jennifer Composono	Let's take fear out of the equation for a moment. My junior at York and his entire group of friends had Covid this summer. Only one of them had a mild fever and none of the parents contracted it from the kids. What is detrimental to these kids is sitting home for another semester or maybe a year. Remote learning for those children that want to be in school is not the answer. For the emotional and physical well-being of these children many of them need to physically be in school. As a mom to three boys in the public school system I will tell you that the risk of catching Covid far outweighs the risk of them spending a year at home doing remote learning.  With the right precautions in place why can't they be in school with teachers who want to be there also? This virus is not going to disappear nor are we going to have a vaccine this year that's readily available for everybody. How can we sit home and watch our kids fall apart physically and mentally? Find teachers who want to be in school, the teachers who don't can work remotely. Do not let our kids fall through the cracks, which is exactly what's going to happen for a good majority of them!!  We are losing this generation of kids, I've been watching what's been happening to them since March, and none of it is positive. They need school, they need their teachers and their counselors, they need that mentorship. Don't take this away from the ones who want to be in school. Thank you!
8/6/2020 10:26:07	Megan Howrigan	I am proud to be in a district that is doing in person 5 day school. We must try. It's already sad that the in-person school day will not be normal and breaks my heart they have to wear masks, socially distance when possible, and feel some anxiety about the weirdness. I understand the teachers are nervous about it. Can we get the plexi glass partitions used in grocery stores? I have 3 young kids in D205 and they need in-person learning. The spring elearning worked and we made it through those last couple months but that is not a situation I can repeat as a mom of 3 young kids. Please consider these young kids and their need for something to feel like "school". And there has to be a way to make teachers feel as safe as possible. Praying for everyone involved because I realize its a lose/lose situation.
8/6/2020 10:27:57	Yvonne Glodz	Recommended by AAP: "The pandemic has reminded so many what we have long understood: that educators are invaluable in children's lives and that attending school in person offers children a wide array of health and educational benefits. For our country to truly value children, elected leaders must come together to appropriately support schools in safely returning students to the classroom and reopening schools."
8/6/2020 10:29:06	Brent Becket	I support the hybrid model. Please give it a chance. Thank you
8/6/2020 10:33:01	Maureen Egan	Dear Elmhurst Board of Education,  My husband and I feel it is important for our 3 elementary children to go back to school for in person learning this fall following the CDC recommended guidelines for a safe return to school.  Thank you for your efforts on working toward safe return to in person learning.  Maureen and Kevin Egan
8/6/2020 10:38:05	Leuzzi	While online/ remote learning is fine. I am so angry that principles and supers and all authority have zero plan in place to go remote with a live teacher. Nothing has been done or worked on for months.
8/6/2020 10:38:16	Marianne Rehfield	We need to work collectively as a community to help our students in this difficult time. We need to come together as a community and not blame and shame those who have different perspectives than we do. I hope we can find some empathy for everyone's situation and be curious about ways that we can help each other during this very challenging time.
8/6/2020 10:43:27	Anne Contant	I would ask that you please consider allowing the students who have IEPs to attend school (in person) in some capacity. I have three children who have IEPs and they desperately need some form of in person learning, especially because of the services and minutes provided for them in their IEPs. I am concerned that if we go completely remote again that there will be significant regression. They need to be in person, even if it is a hybrid situation. Thank you.

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8/6/2020 10:44:47	Andrew Bendelow	<p>Good evening board members. My name is Andrew Bendelow, and this month marks my 27th year teaching in this district--as a French, and primarily English teacher at York Community High School. As an Elmhurst taxpayer, I was happy to educate my three children in our schools, and they have each gone on to satisfying, productive careers. At York, I moderated the French, Circle of Friends, Garden, and Amateur Musicians clubs, and I have been the coach of York's Scholastic Bowl team for the last ten years. (Incidentally, our team was both conference champion and regional champion in the truncated 2019-20 season). No one familiar with my career can call into question my commitment to the well-being of our students--a teacher's job #1--or my loyalty to the district's mission.</p> <p>Over the past few weeks I've read the posts of D205 parents who are eager to get their kids back into schools. And this is entirely reasonable. Kids need interaction. Also, the way that we did online learning in the Spring--under strictures that demotivated many students--does not inspire confidence. Children, like everyone in our community, were disoriented. Given an "easy out" by the state, many chose the option to absent themselves from courses. And the economic context cannot be ignored. In the biggest crisis since the Great Depression, many families are hard-pressed to deal with childcare, so opening schools seems imperative.</p> <p>But our community is in an entirely new place, where lives are in the balance. Please understand that 205 teachers are not the selfish people portrayed in social media posts, where we are disparaged as selfish monsters who want to get paid for staying at home. We want to do the job we've been trained to do, the job we've done so well that Elmhurst schools are a major draw for homebuyers. All we're saying is that under the current pandemic conditions (temporary conditions that will pass if we can get infections under control) it is dangerous to students, their families, and those of everyone in school buildings to open up in-person learning.</p> <p>My colleagues and I want to teach your kids in person and develop their potentials. But not when this virus is among us, endangering everyone, including Elmhurst parents and grandparents. This is an extraordinary time in our community, like World War II or the Great Depression, and new times demand new thinking. And fortunately, free of the strictures that eliminated motivation in the Spring, the dedicated professionals of D205 are learning how to engage students remotely for the start of the school year. It will not be a repeat of last semester's unsatisfying implementation.</p> <p>Please, Elmhurst parents, community, and board members, proceed with prudence. Wait until it is safe to get us back into buildings. The entire community's well-being is behind our determination to start safely, and remotely.</p>
8/6/2020 10:44:47	Andrew Bendelow	I sincerely thank you for your thoughtful deliberation.
8/6/2020 10:45:15	Jessica Meza	Hello, My name is Jessica Meza. I grew up in Elmhurst and graduated from York in 2000. I am very proud to serve my hometown as a teacher at Churchville. I am addressing you today because I am worried about my safety and the safety of our community. I do not believe that our safety plan can be implemented in a way that will keep everyone safe. It was made in good faith by good people, but it was made in June when the information at hand was different, and therefore it is unfortunately already outdated. There is much this virus that we don't yet know, including the long-term effects. We have approximately 8000 students. Even if only 1% of them contracted the virus, that would be 80 kids. Some of them may be hospitalized. Some of them may not live. In my opinion, 80 sick kids is a 80 too many. The loss of even one student or one staff member is too many. Keeping each other safe should always be our number one priority whether it is with this virus, an active school shooter, or any other dangerous situation. I know that remote learning can be vastly different in the fall compared to this last spring. Teachers are always willing to learn new things. We put our hearts and souls into everything we do for our kids, and we will put our hearts and souls into remote learning. We are ready for remote learning, but we are NOT ready to teach students in person and online at the same time. Please approve full remote learning to start the school year as many of our neighboring districts have already done. Our number one priority should be to take care of one another; students and staff alike, because one life taken is one too many. Thank you.
8/6/2020 10:47:39	Daisy Bono	I prefer the choice for online learning. I understand the online learning is different and not as same quality as in person learning. I just cannot offer my son to have COVID due to his underline health issue. Thank you!
8/6/2020 10:50:04	Whitney Curcio	I respect the decision of the board, administration and teachers. My request, if possible, is a safe hybrid part-time environment where staff and students can learn while practicing safe social distancing measures. If this is not possible and the district moves to e-learning, I ask that students with speech IEPs and other needs are able to attend in-person.
8/6/2020 10:52:51	Ellen Stein	As a resident of Elmhurst, public health worker, and an alum of District 205, I am horrified that the school board is considering in-person learning for Fall 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken the lives of over 150,000 Americans, the positivity rate in Illinois is rising, and there is no evidence whatsoever that you can safely conduct in-person school when community spread is so high. In a recent MMWR from the CDC, a summer camp in Georgia which used most recommended precautions still had a high attack rate for COVID-19 in spite of their efforts. This issues not only affects the safety of the students, but also their families, teachers/staff/administrators, and the community at large. Public safety should be of utmost importance to the district. While there is some evidence that young children may be less likely to spread COVID-19 and less likely to have severe outcomes, children do not live in a vacuum. Every day they will be exposing themselves, parents, grandparents, teachers/staff/administrators (and consequently their families), as well as anyone else any of their contacts encounter. There will be few people in our community who will be untouched given how infectious COVID-19 is. In addition, we still do not know the long-term impacts COVID-19 has on the human body, so children who don't get very sick now may suffer long-term consequences we cannot anticipate. It is incredibly irresponsible to put children back in classrooms based on what we know now. This time before the school year begins would be better spent planning for a fully remote school year, equipping teachers to be most effective in that medium, and planning how the district will still provide its social services to students in need during this confusing time. Every effort should be made to make that remote experience the best it can be from the beginning, and to educate parents and community members not accelerate the spread of the virus in our community. If you choose to move forward with in-person learning in spite of this, the consequences will be your responsibility.
8/6/2020 10:53:30	Anne Lotito	Please allow in person learning especially for K-5. These younger kids cannot learn in front of a computer they need to be with a teacher and their peers. Even if it has to be a half day please allow them in person instruction at school everyday!!!
8/6/2020 10:54:33	Laura Olson	<p>Good evening, my name is Laura Olson and I am a Social Studies teacher at York. I have a couple of logistical questions in regard to the new school year that starts in one week.</p> <p>-Where will you find the teachers to take more than 100 potential leaves?</p> <p>205 administrators pride themselves by hiring the best and the brightest. You brag that there are 100 applicants for every position. Now we will need to hire ALL comers--the best, the mediocre, and those rated "Needs Improvement." Perhaps we will hire many new graduates. That's always a nice thing. Except for one important fact: many of the new graduates NEVER student taught. It's true, look into it. When colleges and universities closed in March, the students who had just started student teaching were given their diplomas without completing the program. Think about that for a moment: We're hiring 25, 50, 100 teachers who have never completed even one quarter of student teaching.</p> <p>-How will they be trained? They have missed two weeks of new teacher orientation. Who will mentor the new teachers? Will mentors receive a stipend? Who will teach them how to use PowerSchool?</p> <p>-Where will District 205 get the needed funds to pay teachers for their leaves AND cover 100 new salaries?</p> <p>-Where will you advertise these open positions? How will they be vetted? Will you call their references?</p> <p>-In six weeks when you replace 100 temporary teachers with the classroom teacher, what will the social-emotional impact be on the students?</p> <p>We all want to return to school, we do. But those with underlying medical conditions MUST stay home, that's a fact. A teacher who is pregnant is not gaming the system. Someone fighting cancer is not lazy. Primary care givers for elderly parents are not trying to abandon their students. The logistical reality is that we cannot hire 100 quality teachers by Monday. We must, at least, allow our most vulnerable faculty to teach remotely from their homes.</p>
8/6/2020 10:54:35	Dina Booth	Based on the findings of the recent Return to School Verification Survey 85% of parents want their children to go back to in-school instruction. Follow the science behind the virus and recommendations on how to safely return to school from qualified health organizations, not the politically driven beliefs of the teacher's union. The taxpayers are your clients and the board needs to give the majority what they are asking for this Fall. There's has been little communication on how a full semester of eLearning will look different from this past Spring session, which was subpar to say the least. Have the educators and staff been working on creative solutions for a meaty, straight eLearn curriculum that will motivate and educate students virtually? If so, what does that look like and entail? Children have had a lot of practice with social distancing, wearing masks and frequent hand washing when in public. This should be an easy transition for all, especially with the health and safety measures District 205 will incorporate. Our children need hands-on learning and in-school instructors ARE essential!

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8/6/2020 10:56:20	Diane Narcisi	The kids need to continue their education during this time with proper safety measures in check. This was the commitment to the students then it should be adhered to.
8/6/2020 10:56:35	Gina Callahan	There are risks in everything we do each day. Our children need the opportunity to attend school in person. It is a new school year filled with new challenges & opportunities. Our kids deserve a chance to meet their new teachers & meet new peers. Fortunately, my kids performed well with E-learning however they perform & gain confidence when being in actual classroom. They need to socialize in person & not have an electronic device be the only option. So much to consider but I think this gets my point across. I hope they get this opportunity. Thank you!
8/6/2020 10:56:53	Rob Rae	I do not envy the challenges faced here in regard to opening the school, but the District's handling of this is unacceptable to our students, teachers and community. Since the last School Board meeting, it is clear that the proper safety measures are not being applied for the students and teachers. COVID numbers are on the rise across the country. The White House expert Dr. Birks just stated that Chicago is now an area of concern, and the Teacher's Union has put forth compelling concerns as well. It is unclear that with all the information available, why the Board is still considering 100% in-person learning for our elementary school students. It is time to face reality and focus on realistic solutions that are safe for everyone. To me, this model would be a virtual start (meaning instructor led) until October. This should allow the District the time necessary to implement the proper safety measures, which include: shields between desks, shields protecting teachers, effective social distancing, better mask guidelines, lunchroom protocols and a District policy for tracing and dealing with positive outbreaks (beyond merely relying on DuPage County). Only once these things have happened should we be discussing in-person and hybrid learning. A safe return to school is possible, but not in the plan as you have currently presented it.
8/6/2020 10:58:02	Sharon Delury	Per CDC the kids all should have in person learning. My Children didn't get anything out of E learning it didn't help them at all
8/6/2020 10:58:03	Chris Darling	I support the district's plan for in-person schooling for elementary grade levels. The safety protocols outlined by the district are similar to what we have been using at my place of work where I am an essential worker and have been working in person since the pandemic began. We see no reason why, with the existing safety protocols and appropriate personal protective equipment for teachers and staff, in person school plans should be abandoned in favor of remote learning.
8/6/2020 10:58:12	Paige Pontrelli	Teachers and school are essential! Not being IN school will negatively affect the students academic growth as well as their mental health. If there are any staff members that feel it is unsafe for them to return in person, they should use FMLA for this school year.
8/6/2020 10:58:54	Kelly Ferriola	I feel that the children should be in school at some point. I don't think 100% remote learning is advantageous for the students education wise or for socially. I think it's bad for them to be secluded to their homes for so long both of my children have IEP's and the learning process for them through the remote learning is horrible. They are not receiving any of the accommodations they are suppose to be receiving. There is no way the online forum is sufficient for any of the children in need of special services. If we will be going to 100% online learning I know several parents will be looking for lawyers against the school board. My children, as many other children are in need of their accommodations. They need to be in school. The school board has had plenty of time to figure it out.
8/6/2020 10:59:26	Gina Incandela	I'm very worried about my child with autism, for both his mental health and his ability to learn without in person instruction this year.
8/6/2020 11:05:21	Rhonda H Stein	I am surprised by the decision to have in person instruction for the children of district 205 this fall. It seems irresponsible in the middle of a pandemic. There is so much we do not know about the disease in children, how they spread it and even whether we can say with certainty children will suffer no lasting effects. In addition, District 205 students do not live in a bubble. There are so many others to consider, teachers, staff and the families these children go home to. Resuming in person instruction will lead to increased community spread. The governor's COVID 19 task force still recommends masks and social distancing of 6feet. How will that work with a 5 year old? I believe too much time has been wasted on this plan to return students to the classroom. This time would have been better spent assisting our teachers prepare to teach remotely to the best of their ability. And to be honest, sports are not a priority when you consider what participation may cost in human lives. This is deadly serious, more than 150,000 of our fellow citizens have lost their lives to this horrible disease, and many many more will never recover full health.
8/6/2020 11:08:15	Aubrey dAgostino	Our kids need to be back IN school. All that is lacking through E- learning is going to be so hard to catch up on.
8/6/2020 11:10:31	Kimberly Ericksen	I fully support the districts decision to provide the option for in person learning. It is essential for my high score to be in front of a teacher in order to get any meaningful learning accomplished. Please keep in person learning an option for your families!
8/6/2020 11:11:01	Clarissa Palermo	It has been rumored that district 205 may be going completely remote. If this is the case, what has changed in the past few weeks to cause this? Also, what resources will be available for students with IEP's?

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		<p>I have followed the information on school opening very carefully. I appreciate the time and effort put into creating the plan and the difficulty inherent in all of these decisions. There are no good options.</p> <p>I am, however, very disappointed with the substance and roll-out of the plan. The plan as it sits today is very high-level and lacks any detail. Answers to follow-up questions are equally vague - leaving the impression that the details of the plan do not exist. The Board of Education and the administration have not been responsive to parent or teacher concerns.</p> <p>I was very disheartened to read the Board's response to the ETC initial communication outlining their concerns. Many of these concerns are shared by parents, particularly at the elementary level. Teachers are people who pay taxes, have children in school who were engaged in e-learning, have spouses who have lost jobs or are working 18 hour days trying to keep their businesses afloat. To characterize them as them as money grabbing do-nothings is shameful. It is clear from your response that you do not view teachers as professionals or partners in education.</p> <p>The Board's response also completely absolves itself and the administration for any failures related to e-learning. Many of the issues regarding e-learning tie directly to leadership - a lack of standard tools across the District, limited tech knowledge/PD for some teachers, inconsistent and uneven communication, no e-learning standards for teacher/student "face time", and no standard parent communication protocol. E-learning was an emergency situation for which NO ONE was prepared - there is plenty of blame to go around. I am not sure what the Board's purpose or goal was in this response - but it certainly was not to engage stakeholders in open dialog about opening schools safely. Many other districts in the surrounding area have navigated these decisions in a more open, honest and collaborative way - with teacher and student safety at the forefront.</p> <p>I, like most parents, have requested in-person learning. I would love for my children to return to school - even on a part-time basis. I will not, however, feel comfortable sending them as the plan sits today. Many parents chose in-person because there is no information regarding the remote learning curriculum and very little detailed information upon which to make an informed decision. We are all familiar with in-person learning - so it was a default for many of us. We can also opt out of in-person at any time - so again, a default. Further, for the District to characterize the "survey" as indicating full support for in-person learning is disingenuous, particularly at the elementary level. With no information upon which to make a decision and no clear answers from the District, many parents probably do not realize that there will be no physical distancing in elementary schools at all. Why would the District even offer full in-person learning at the elementary level as an option when that option does adhere to best public health practice?</p> <p>The OpenD205 plan does not follow best public health practice by ensuring 6 ft of physical distance within the classroom, limiting high risk activities such as lunch, appropriate filtering of air through HVAC systems, limiting time indoors, and providing PPE to teachers. This is especially true for elementary students, but it should be noted that the D205 plan does not ensure that any of these best practices will be followed for any grade level. Why not? These practices should be the baseline for all decision regarding in-person learning. Communication from the District continues to be vague and non-responsive. Why? It is difficult to be a partner in education when the Board and administration is so dismissive of the concerns of parents and teachers.</p> <p>There are many other models of hybrid learning that mitigate risks more effectively than those laid out in the OpenD205 plan, particularly at the elementary level. Rather than having students attend all day, why not use a half day model (math, reading and writing in-person and specials remotely)? Half of the students in-person in the morning, half in the afternoon. This would allow for appropriate distancing, providing better protection for teachers and students. It would allow teachers to focus on core subjects intensely. Managing 12 students for 3 hours with masks and distancing will be much more productive than 25 students for 7 hours. It would also eliminate the need for lunch - which will be very difficult for schools to manage safely. There are families for which this option will not work - but like many districts, 205 can work with the Elmhurst Park District and other providers to develop options for those families who need more intensive supports, lunch and childcare. While this is especially true for elementary students, a shorter in-person school day would be better for teachers and students in all grade levels.</p> <p>Whatever plan the District moves forward with, when it comes time to implement in-person learning, an incremental approach would be best. Flinging the doors open without adequate safety measures is not in the best interest of students, teachers, or the wider Elmhurst community. We would all benefit from a phased approach - to see what works, what doesn't, and what the health ramifications are for teachers, students, and their families. We do not have to go rushing full force - especially with out a detailed plan that has been clearly communicated to parents, students, and teachers.</p> <p>I hope the Board of Education will consider the feedback it has been given carefully and look critically at the approach presented by the administration. There is no solution that will make everyone happy. The goal should be to craft the safest plan possible - regardless of public outcry or cost.</p>
8/6/2020 11:14:04	Mary Lou Eisenhauer	Thank you.
8/6/2020 11:15:24	Michael Grosso	As a passionate and dedicated educator at Sandburg Middle School, I implore the board to start the upcoming school year with remote learning. I miss my students dearly and wish so much we could safely return to the classroom, and as a single parent of a disabled, non-verbal child, I understand and have experienced ten-fold the parental challenges posed by remote learning. That said, hybrid learning can not and will not be future-focused, and at best, it will subject our children and families to possible health and educational disruption all so they can participate in a classroom straight out of the 1950s. Additionally, I have seen what cohesive, respectful support of educators and proper planning can do for remote learning in my home district. Planning, adjustments, and firm decisions were made early on, consistent and in line with the ever-evolving data. As a result, my son's virtual ESY program this summer was a joy and a success. It was not perfect, but I did not expect nor require it. I expected respect, safety, and care for my son, and that's what teachers deliver when school boards and the communities they serve embrace science and collaboration. My son's disability, like many Elmhurst students, renders him unable to speak for himself, so I will do it on his behalf -- don't send students back into school buildings until a safe and equitable classroom is a 100% certainty.
8/6/2020 11:24:10	Tara Kjome	Good evening. I am a parent of a York high school rising senior and I am also a principal of an elementary school in another district. I have seen as a parent and as an educator the negative impact of remote learning. Last Spring, educators were given the mandate to quickly shift their delivery of instruction with minimal prep time and little professional development. They did the best they could with the monumental task that they were given. That being said, we have to move forward from last spring as I believe that the loss of learning and the social emotional effects of remote learning have negatively impacted our young people in ways that we may not even know at this time. I truly feel that they need to have time in the classroom, collaborating with their teachers and peers, and engaging in rigorous tasks. In addition, my daughter has played competitive basketball this summer against girls from all around the country and we've heard of one case of COVID. She has experienced great joy being back on the court. The thought of her not getting to return to the York basketball court as a senior is heartbreaking. I understand the concern for staff safety but I trust that Elmhurst Public Schools will put the necessary safety measures in place like requiring the use of masks, deep cleaning the schools, and practicing social distancing in order to protect students and staff while providing a well-balanced educational program for the students.
8/6/2020 11:24:20	Jenny Somner-Witruk	The majority of parents in our community want in person learning as a result of rational reasoning that is supported by the CDC. Analyzing the scientific data along with proposed protective measures and mitigation efforts and weighing that against all the other negative psychological impacts a rational conclusion should be that the risk ratio does not warrant the closing down of our kids' education. Elearning is not an effective educational tool and honestly if the school can't provide the proper education our kids deserve they should shut down until they can provide the services our tax paying dollars fund.
8/6/2020 11:24:28	Joseph Qualtier	I want to thank the school board for putting together a comprehensive program that will allow our children to return to school in a hybrid format. While the health and well-being of the community at large is paramount, the impact of a decision reverse course to go back to a remote only learning environment will have significant impact on their mental health and academic development. I want to reaffirm our decision to send our son back to school this fall. Regards, Joe and Liz Qualtier
8/6/2020 11:25:40	Sandy Rende	District 205 shouldn't be bullied now into changing the decision that was already made. Children belong in school.
8/6/2020 11:25:50	Brent Becket	I support the hybrid model. Please give it a chance. Thank you
8/6/2020 11:34:03	Laura Wise	Thank you so much for considering In person learning. We feel very strongly that in person learning in some capacity is extremely important and we will be sending our daughter to school. I personally have a chronic lung disease and am considered high risk - but we still feel as a family that based on all the information that is out there - in person learning for elementary school children is extremely important. Thank you!

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 11:37:49	Jennifer Kramer	I am in favor of in-person for students, especially the younger students who need to learn the fundamentals of reading and writing as well as lessons on social awareness. This is very hard for them to comprehend remotely. I believe that my 7th grader will be successful in a hybrid learning situation, but if we go fully remote I fear there will be a lack of engagement, willingness to do their best and increased chance for depression.
8/6/2020 11:39:08	Sheri Styczen	I can't thank you enough for everything you have been through. As an Administrator (in District 29) and an Emerson parent, I feel very strongly that in-person learning is so crucial to a child's cognitive development. Our District is going back in person as well. The numbers show that kids rarely contract the disease. This is absurd... Please, please, please continue to offer in-person learning. Thank you so much.
8/6/2020 11:48:19	Matt Feodoroff	Hi - I am speaking up today to put my support behind the current operating plan that ensures our children have the option to go back into school buildings this fall. This pandemic has taught me that everyone has differing levels of comfort in how they manage through C-19. It gives me great pride in being an Elmhurst resident that our school board has found a way to be respectful to how each of us are managing through C-19. For those families that are uncomfortable sending their children back into a school building there is an option for at home e-learning. For those families, like mine, who feel passionate that the kids need to be in a school building, that options also exists. I am aligned with the numerous organizations that have touted the importance of in person, in school learning. The e-learning experience my family had in the Spring failed my 3 kids and having to do that again this coming school year will put my children further behind their peers. Let's keep the plan as is so we can respect those families who prefer at home e-learning while allowing those families who are comfortable sending their kids back into a school to do so as well. We need to try. This country was built upon the principle of keep moving forward and adjust as necessary. We need to do that. If we don't, we fail our children, our community, and the future of our great nation.
8/6/2020 11:53:20	Robyn Tsacoumangos	I want our kids in school & am preparing for that; also preparing for the high possibility of a remote start, or a change to full remote in a matter of weeks.  I am hearing from 205 teachers that the district has no literacy curriculum. This TRULY frightens me! PLEASE purchase a literacy curriculum! Teachers will need it if we go remote, and it will be vital to parents & kids if we go remote. I have 3 elementary aged kids - we CAN NOT handle another round of piecing together literacy, via having kids read random online journals & toggling screens from reading, to entering information on seesaw and/or google slides. They need continuity: workbooks that they can write in & textbooks for reading!  My kids were Never able to be independent & WE ALL (schools/kids/parents) were putting in 120% efforts to have kids learn 10% of what they need to know.  Also - please enable the students technological devices to be networked to home printers! This is vital, so that the many PDF's and attachments can be printed by the student WHEN they need it, otherwise kids/parents have to stop/start all day long to print from a parent's phone, which takes way too much time & is too interruptive.
8/6/2020 11:57:23	Allison Cirullo	It saddens me that we are at this point but I understand why, as this is new territory for everyone. It's very difficult on our teachers, the district and our community. Everyone is doing the best they can. While I'm supportive of teachers in our district who I believe are the best teachers in the state of Illinois and I understand the valid concerns around safety, I'm pleading with the teachers and the district to come to an agreement that allows our children back in the classroom. At minimum I ask that you consider a hybrid approach for elementary students, that many people believe could be the best solution. While the risks around COVID-19 are very present, so are other risks around mental health, social isolation, lack of focus during remote learning, and more, as outlined by numerous pediatricians and medical professionals. Educating our children is a top priority, and Elmhurst residents pay high property taxes to ensure our children have the best education. It's time to use those dollars to invest in any and all ways that keep our children and teachers safe during an in-person school year. If nurses, doctors, camp counselors, retailers, store owners and more are back to work using masks and serving the public, I believe we can find a solution for our teachers to do the same. Nothing is normal, and nothing is perfect but this is our new reality. Please keep in-person learning a focus, even if that means we get more creative. Thank you!
8/6/2020 11:57:33	Gretchen Boerwinkle	I have been fortunate to be an elementary educator in Elmhurst for the past 16 years. Like my colleagues, I pride myself in the relationships I build with my students. I want to be in school with our students, but current CDC guidelines will essentially have teachers and students being alone together. I cannot imagine a school where I can't comfort a child with a pat on the back, celebrate them with a high five, greet them with a smile, provide them with hand over hand assistance or hold their hand when they naturally reach for me. How will I comfort the inevitable first day tears? Telling a child 'it will be ok' from 6 feet away while wearing a mask seems unimaginable to me.
8/6/2020 12:01:45	Katie Turnbull	I have been the AP Psychology teacher and bowling coach at York High School for the last 8 years. I was a District 205 student for 13 years prior to that. From Lincoln, to Bryan, to York, I know and trust the teachers in this district, they made me who I am today. I respect their expertise and believe that teachers are the leaders we should be listening to. I care for my students and athletes more than I can truly express. I will do whatever I can for my students. I have been working from morning until night for weeks on end this summer, filming videos to relay essential content in psychology, making interactive notes for students, creating digital assessments and resources to make sure my students can access them and receive timely feedback wherever they are, at school or at home. I know from conversations with my colleagues that I am not the only one working harder than ever. As a teacher of psychology I study and teach about human behavior. I fear for my students walking in crowded hallways, riding buses, eating lunch, and meeting friends in bathrooms where social conformity and group pressure may lead them to pull down their mask, ignore social distancing, and place themselves, their teachers and their friends and families at risk. I am concerned for the first fire alarm going off or other emergency where social distancing rules will be thrown out the window. Speaking of windows, there are none that open within 100 feet of my interior classroom. Without proper HEPA filtration, my students and I will be constantly breathing each other's air, and as most of our classrooms are shared spaces with only one teacher desk, my colleagues and I will be experiencing the same increased risks. I know there are efforts to address these safety concerns, but as of August 6th, they have not been communicated to teachers. I believe that necessitates increased planning by those in a position to create the safety guidelines. Please know that teachers overwhelmingly want to return to in-person instruction under safer guidelines. I would not be a teacher if that wasn't my ultimate goal. However the inability to answer questions as of today necessitates increased planning by those in a position to create these guidelines. Whatever happens, I will be prepared to educate my students effectively with the same enthusiasm and passion I always put forth on August 24th no matter where we are. I have already been planning the start of the school year under both a remote and a hybrid model. As a psychology teacher I feel keenly aware of the emotional impact of what both hybrid and remote learning will have for our students. In exploring the options, beginning remote does in fact have some advantages as it will not only give our administration time to answer pertinent questions regarding safety and health, but it will also allow teachers to see each student's full faces, form connections, and build relationships before entering a building where fear and anxiety may be high. It will help me to know and meet my students' needs. Despite public perception regarding the challenges of the spring, starting remote in the fall can be highly effective because I can meet my students live in real time. There will be opportunities for students to collaborate via breakout rooms, I can conference with students one on one as others move to independent demonstrations of learning, and there are many opportunities to differentiate instruction, not to mention to check in with students' well-being. Remote learning is not a permanent state of affairs. It will provide time for increased safety measures, and preparing students for what to expect in a masked, hybrid classroom where verbal communication may be less effective than when we are remote and unmasked. By the time questions regarding staff and student safety are addressed, we will have class procedures in place to run a hybrid classroom effectively, and returning to in person will allow us to meet first and foremost with those that rely on services only in-person instruction can provide. I understand community members who want the schools to open for that exact reason, I do not disagree that it is a role that schools partake in. I am just concerned that there are more questions than answers and after a long period of waiting for those answers I do not feel any more comfortable about reporting in person in two weeks time. Please take the time with remote first to create a safe plan that teachers can believe in as strongly as we believe in our ability to effectively educate our students. Teachers will teach, it's what I do, and it's who I am. We need our leaders to lead. Not to follow public pressure, but use science and data and lead with student and staff safety first and foremost in your mind. Thank you for all your hard work during this challenging time.
8/6/2020 12:02:08	Kate Melzer	For all of the same reasons that parents have already mentioned, I am in favor of in-person school for my 3 children. I have a 6th and 7th grader at churchville and 1st grader at Emerson. I have faith in our district that a safe plan will be put in place for our teachers and our children.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 12:02:21	Rich Edgley	<p>Good evening</p> <p>My name is Rich Edgley and I have been a teacher in the District for 21 years. I am concerned with the Districts decision to remain open while most other districts have thoughtfully decided that the safety and wellbeing of the students and faculty outweighs in person learning. Listen, we are in unprecedented times. I miss my students, I miss teaching and I am the first to say I am sick of being quarantined from my family and friends. We do not get to decide when we are done with this virus. Only it does. We are an educational institution. We rely on science and critical thought to make decisions. Why is it that most districts are calling for remote learning? Because the science shows that this virus is not done with us. They are also aware that the procedures necessary to be safe in school are nearly impossible to achieve and that the thought of lost lives of children or staff is too much for the school community to endure. I will end with the quote "What's right isn't always popular. What's popular isn't always right." Please keep us safe and spare us the trauma that will inevitably come by opening to in-person instruction and opt for remote learning instead.</p>
8/6/2020 12:02:44	Lindsay Forsberg	<p>Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 12:02:44	Lindsay Forsberg	<p>Our children deserve to receive the best education possible. The only way that can happen is to be in front of a teacher. It's imperative these kids go to school for their educational, emotional and social well being.</p>
8/6/2020 12:04:28	Alex Messina	<p>I don't think it's safe for the district to be having in person teaching this Fall semester. While the science might still be out on how kids are affected by the virus, every one of the teachers and staff are at risk of catching it when an inevitable outbreak happens at one of the schools.</p>
8/6/2020 12:04:53	Robyn Pretzie	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>I understand the Board is in a very tough position right now and I feel for those of you that have to make this decision for all of our children in district 205. I think it's very important to get these kids back in school, of course for the families who chose that option. I am more concerned with the mental health issues such as anxiety and depression along with suicide rates. If we can go even 1/2 day everyday to get in major subjects. I have a sixth grader new to middle school along with a freshman new to high school. I think it may very important these kids Get to see their new schools and meet their new teachers and have classes face to face even if it gets shut down in the fall like is expected. Covid 19 is not going anywhere, we need to learn how to teach and get these kids back to school in some form and learn to live with this new virus.</p>
8/6/2020 12:06:36	Laurie Nourse Buzzell	<p>Hi, I have an incoming (Bryan) 6th grader and incoming (Lincoln) 3rd grader.</p> <p>My concern is that jumping into Remote Learning is a mistake. School must try to be open at first...for the teachers and students to get to know one another.</p> <p>If the teachers don't meet the kids in person and teach them for a while as a "get to know your unique needs, habits, strengths and quirks," how are teachers going to be able to recognize each child's progress and struggles? How will they see when children's needs are changing? Teachers need to know their students, and students need to form personal relationships with their teachers and classmates.</p> <p>I support 100% In-School learning- a half day, AM or PM, five times a week. Focus on Math, Science, English. Less students per class and no lunch needed for students. Put up a plastic screen in the front of the classroom and at the teachers desk. Students wear masks (they have successfully done so during all-day camps.)</p> <p>It might even make sense to offer last year's teachers with the same students. A relationship has already been formed. This model has been used successfully in many schools across the country pre-COVID.</p> <p>I would like include a personal note- Our daughter has an IEP that includes in-class accommodations for Sensory, ADD, and Slow Processing. She is also gifted, considered 2e or Twice Exceptional. I am not a teacher, and I know I cannot instruct her uniquely to reach her potential. My daughter works best in a routine classroom setting and at a certain pace. She's really witty and recently sarcastically said, "Oh, Remote Learning- I'm truly focused and do my best work." I nervously laughed. I'm not only concerned about structure for her, but I don't understand how her IEP benchmarks can be understood. I would like my daughter to learn in-school. The District needs to meet IEP requirements.</p> <p>Lastly, please don't only follow the lead of other surrounding communities. Elmhurst is Elmhurst, Not Villa Park, not Naperville. Continue to listen to our community, our Elmhurst. Listen not just to our working parents and not just families with a parent traditionally at home. Don't listen only to Remote advocates (even teachers), and don't just listen to those that have similar thoughts as our family does. Please take the time to consider our input.</p> <p>Yours Truly, Laurie Nourse Buzzell</p>
8/6/2020 12:11:39	Sheila Fleming	<p>Good evening. My name is Sheila Fleming. I am about to start my 37th year teaching and my 27th at York High School. I have had a wonderful career with only four more years to go.</p> <p>As I reflect back over all of my years at York, I recall only two truly horrible experiences: the death of a brilliant junior girl from an undiscovered medical condition and the death of an amazing senior boy as a result of a tragic accident. My heart broke when his grieving mom embraced me and said, "I can't imagine how hard it must be to bury one of your students."</p> <p>There is nothing that the Board of Education could have done to prevent these tragedies; however, now, we are in the midst of a global pandemic. The numbers in DuPage have climbed in recent weeks, and as time goes on, more DuPage residents will become ill from the coronavirus, and some will die. This time, D205 and the school board CAN do something. You have the power to assure with 100% certainty that no one will carry COVID-19 from District 205 classrooms to hallways to buses to homes. The only way to do this is to start the year with fully remote learning. I know that you have surveyed both parents and staff members, and that the results were very different for the two groups. I plead with you to remember that you were elected to the school board to make the tough decisions, not the popular ones. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 12:14:48	Diane Brisk	<p>How will the elearning be aligned with the inclass students? If the in class students are forced to go to elearning will there be any change for those 5hat already are elearning?</p>
8/6/2020 12:20:07	Dina Higginbotham	<p>My name is Dina Higginbotham and I am a special education math teacher at York High School. This will be my 27th year teaching; 20 of those years have been at York. I would love for nothing more than to return to school. I have a new caseload, new students, and new administrators and I am excited for this new year to start. When I think of not making the personal connections with my students, it upsets me. However, through social distancing and wearing a mask, I will not be making those personal connections in a classroom regardless. The safety of my students, my friends, my colleges, myself, and all of their families is too important to not address. I read an article on social media by Christine Stevens. It was meant to be humorous but really hit the nail on the head. It was a letter to teachers from a principal letting them know that there would be a loose lion (Covid) in everyone's classroom. It will make things hard to concentrate, may hurt some staff and may hurt some students. They are not sure what attracts the lion to particular people but it most likely will happen. They are putting a smaller number of students in each class to lessen the number of students that may distract the lion and will instruct them to stay 6 feet away from the lion all times. The principal doesn't know exactly how the lion will react so it is a day by day learning curve. I for one, wouldn't want to teach with a loose lion in my classroom that could hurt everyone in it. If colleges and universities can give college credit through remote courses, the teachers from Elmhurst 205 can achieve proper remote classrooms as well. We need to do what is right for students and keep them safe. It's not safe to put students back into the schools yet. Thank you for your time.</p>
8/6/2020 12:22:55	Melissa Finley	<p>My son is entering Kindergarten this year, and he is an only child. We appreciate your decision either way, but we would like an alternate choice so that as 2 working parents, we have options for our son. He is currently at the YMCA summer camp, and he is thriving. If schools do not open their doors, we would like other options provided by the school district for our son to socialize and learn with other children. Oak Park has many alternate programs, and there are other ways that districts are making this happen, for example, to use learning PODS. There must be more options that are being provided by the district. Thank you!</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 12:26:32	Eric and Anna Feldmann	Thank you school board and teachers. Though we don't all yet agree on approach, we know everyone has the students, teachers and faculties' safety as the top priority. We believe that students should have the option to return to school to receive on-site instruction with the appropriate safety protocols. The hybrid model of school a couple days a week, social distancing, masks, temperature checks, enhanced sanitation processes, contact tracing, etc. though not easy, will mitigate the risk of transmission. It also reinforces the importance of safety measures to students when not in the school. Onsite attendance at school provides much needed structure in the lives of students and helps avoid other risks and challenges outside of school. Please keep this hybrid/return to school approach.
8/6/2020 12:26:51	Kelly Carpenter	COVID-19 is not going away. Our children can not stay out of the classroom for the foreseeable future. We need to be creative and unorthodox in our thinking, but most of all, we need to be safe. As the minimum, students and staff must wear masks. This may not be the choice for every family. Each Elmhurst family has the right to choose for their own family. The choice for mine is to prioritize mental health and education for my first and third grade children. I full support the Open D205 plan to open schools in a safe manner.
8/6/2020 12:28:11	Jennifer Edgley	Dear District 205 Board members and Administration,  My husband has been a teacher at York High School for 20 years. He loves his job, his students, and his co-workers. He wants to be back in his classroom, to be teaching art to students who love it, and helping them discover a talent they sometimes didn't know they had.  But my husband is terrified. He is terrified to go back to school when it feels like there is no plan, just vague guidelines. His classrooms have no windows. The ventilation systems are fraught with problems. There is no way to properly circulate air in the interior classrooms like his. How can he disinfect the computers properly between classes, in the short passing period? The CDC tells us that this virus spreads the easiest in indoor, poorly ventilated spaces, like schools.  You are asking the teachers and staff to put their lives at risk, and the lives of their families at home. We have the choice to keep our 11-year old son home for e-learning this year, and we are taking it. The teachers should have the same choice. They signed up to teach, and what you are asking them to do isn't teaching. It's being a custodian, being responsible for cleaning classrooms all day each day, without proper cleaning equipment or personal protective gear. It's being a mask and social distancing enforcer. It's making sure kids are never within 6 ft of each other. What happens when students refuse to follow the rules? When students start pulling their masks below their noses, like so many people we all see in the stores? When they say this virus is a hoax and politicizing this? Students will do this. When asked to leave a classroom for not wearing a mask, they will refuse. What is my husband to do when this happens? Remote learning would eliminate these problems and allow the focus to be on learning.  As of last night, Dupage County is at a warning level from IDPH, as its covid cases continue to rise. Other schools in close proximity to York are choosing to start their school year remotely, and transition back to the classroom when things are safe. These include Willowbrook HS and D45, Glenbard D87, Naperville and Indian Prairie D203 and D204, Leyden D212, Schaumburg D54, Batavia High School, Palatine D211, Oak Park River Forest, and several others. Not to mention Chicago Public Schools.  Are you prepared to announce the death of the first teacher, because you didn't want to start remote? What about the first student? What about the first parent, when their child brings it home? How many teachers, students, and staff will have to be hospitalized, ventilated, or die, before you switch to safe remote learning? If you do this now, those numbers go to zero. Do you want to have a yearbook page dedicated to those who lost their lives because of a rush to get back into the classroom?  Make this decision to start remote today. Give the teachers some time for remote training. So many questions are unanswered about this in-person, hybrid, and remote combo. Do remote and do it well.  Sincerely,  Jennifer Edgley
8/6/2020 12:28:15	Sandy Stiltner	As a parent of two kids raised in Elmhurst who attended District 205 schools, I am shocked that District 205 is considering in-person instruction at this time. As we know most students by nature can't or won't social distance & wear masks once they become comfortable being with their classmates again. Not doing this effectively for long periods of time in class is not only dangerous, but the teacher will spend more time "supervising" this task especially with elementary students. We all want kids back in school, but back in the classroom right now may mean sacrificing the lives of some kids or their family members or teachers and their families. Going back to school right now won't be normal school by any means, it will be traumatizing. It will be kids sitting at their desk all day with a teacher spending more time enforcing safety measures than actually teaching. With remote start at least everyone can feel safe in their own homes.
8/6/2020 12:30:17	Jessics Cowger	My name is Jessica Cowger and I teach music at Lincoln Elementary. I'd like to tell you about my previous district. In the 4 years I worked there, I experienced the deaths of 2 students and 2 staff members. The first staff member was early in my career and I didn't know her well, but I watched students miss her intensely, and coworkers break down in their classrooms when students didn't understand that death meant forever. The students were both children that I loved and knew well. Myself, my coworkers, and most of my students attended their funeral. It was a moment of bonding and healing for the entire community – but these experiences will not be afforded to us in the time of Covid. I struggled to comfort my students when they didn't know who to play with at recess because the person they always played with passed away. I watched them realize their own mortality in 3rd grade. The last coworker was someone I was close with. Her death filled me with so much anxiety and sadness that it overshadowed my love for the community I worked in and I began to apply for other jobs so I could move on.  I want to protect the students I work with, the families they are part of, my coworkers who I love, and the community who has supported me since I began teaching in Elmhurst. Please consider a new plan for opening our district to avoid the trauma that will inevitably occur if we do not. Thank you for your time.
8/6/2020 12:31:07	Clarissa Palermo	It has been rumored that district 205 may be going completely remote. If this is the case, what has changed in the past few weeks to cause this? Also, what resources will be available for students with IEPs?

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8/6/2020 12:33:05	Robert Nimitz	I'm a parent of two kids who have been through the Elmhurst schools. Schools went remote in March when Illinois cases were rising. Cases are at least twice that amount now and rising again and we plan to send kids and teachers back to school? Remote learning is the only way to keep kids and teachers safe. Anyone who can work remotely now is, so why would we ask kids and teachers to risk going back to the classroom in person?
8/6/2020 12:36:41	Sarah Garcia	<p>I am wondering why the District seemed to skew the survey data that was sent out to parents by including the percentage of "No response" to the percentage of people who chose "in-person" instruction. While I am not arguing that many families opted for in-person instruction, and while I understand that people who did not fill out the survey were defaulted to in-person instruction, the way the information was presented made it seem that a larger percentage of families chose in-person instruction, when this is not the case.</p> <p>I am also wondering how the district made the survey equitable, since an email blast was the only communication parents received on filling out the survey. Why wasn't the auto-call also used to ensure all families had this notification, therefore giving all families time to access this important survey? One would hope that the district would do everything possible to ensure that all stakeholders had a chance to have their voices heard.</p>
8/6/2020 12:37:00	Nancy Wolski	<p>Good evening, my name is Nancy Wolski and I am a science teacher at York. As educators, our number one responsibility is to care for our students and to keep them safe. I, like my colleagues, love what I do. I love teaching and most importantly, I love my students. We love our students. The love and responsibility I have for my students compels me to voice my serious concerns about the upcoming school year. It is indisputable that we all want to get back to "normal". For many of us, including myself, "normal" looks like 'school' being conducted the way it has always been conducted, in person. But we are in the midst of a pandemic, a health crisis that demands our attention and action to ensure the health and safety of our students and their families. We must be innovative with our plans for the start of the 2020-2021 school year in order to accommodate the changing landscape and keep the students under our care safe. Starting the school year remotely will allow us to put in place appropriate safety measures, including appropriate ventilation, contact tracing, and PPE, that will keep our students and their families healthy.</p> <p>As a science teacher, I encourage, guide, and challenge my students to use data. To explore the data critically through thoughtful analysis in order to interpret meaning from the data. I compel students to use their critical analyses of the data to uncover/discover the underlying scientific principles that explain and drive the phenomena being explored. To discover the universal drivers of scientific principle and theory. I challenge students to use data analyses, informed by the underlying scientific theory, to make recommendations and propose solutions to the problems before us.</p> <p>The many metrics being used to describe IL regions, including current positivity and hospitalization rates, in both DuPage and the surrounding counties, have been steadily increasing. We are learning more, and more, about COVID-19 - how it is transmitted and long-term consequences of infection - everyday. It is now known that children ages 10-19 can transmit COVID just as well as those over 19. We are learning that those who recover from COVID infections are likely to have long-term health consequences due to it. And a recent article in JAMA explores the potential for long term peripheral and central nervous system damage caused by COVID-19 infection in children.</p> <p>It is also indisputable that the 2020-2021 school year will be anything but "normal". I believe we all share the expectation that starting school in-person will result in eventual remote learning episodes. Students and staff will become infected. Even more students and staff will be required to quarantine as a result of exposure during in-person learning. Depending on the spread within our community, we may need to move to full-remote at a moment's notice. Frequent changes to the delivery of education to our community will result in uncertainty and trauma.</p> <p>We can, and should, use data to inform our next steps. We can, and should, leverage the data in order to keep our students from experiencing unnecessary trauma by committing to a remote start for the school year. Because I have worked alongside many of you, I know that student health and safety is of paramount concern to you. I trust that you would agree that if even one member of our community becomes gravely ill, or suffers serious long term health consequences, as a result of starting school in-person, it will be one too many. I implore the board and district to keep students healthy and safe by beginning the school year remotely. Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to ensuring the health and safety of our students, their families, and the entire district community.</p>
8/6/2020 12:39:32	Brooke Koop	The Koops are in favor of in-person instruction based on the recommendations by the CDC and AAP.
8/6/2020 12:40:53	Mary wagner	You made a good plan, stick with it. These people wanting only remote learning - they get remote learning as a choice. We choose to go to school,, it is unhealthy at home everyday- not good for the kids mental health. If you have to go all remote In a few weeks because of outbreaks, we will be prepared because York is doing two days only as it is. Thank you!!
8/6/2020 12:43:15	Sean Stephens	Please proceed with hybrid model for the start of the school year. Thank you.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 12:43:20	Serena Briggs	<p>I am commenting tonight as a York teacher and as a parent of an adolescent myself though she is a student in D214.</p> <p>Last night her district announced a remote start. Yet again we had to grapple with the effect of the pandemic on her. She has been social distancing and keeping to a very small group of family and one friend since March. She is, I would say, like a flower wilting under the conditions of too little attention from peers. It is painful to watch and hard to help, and with all parents, I sympathize.</p> <p>But, I told her that the e-learning of last spring is not the e-learning that can be. And the in person experience cannot be what it should be. We have to take care of each other in new ways now. We have to get educated in new ways right now. We have to grocery shop in new ways. Have wedding receptions in new ways. Funerals in new ways. Even a restaurant meal in new ways. This is a fact.</p> <p>And so. When we do these things I just listed, we try a version that feels safest. A version that makes people the most comfortable. And we try to do them in a way that makes it worth the risk. The hybrid model put before us does not feel safe, will not be comfortable for kids (or staff), and to many staff members and students will not worth the risk. It is not worth the risk because that risk is too high and because the instructional model for the hybrid is farther from the ideal than remote learning is.</p> <p>I make that statement as an experienced educator and as a parent. If you want to know why the hybrid is not safe I'm sure others have been more eloquent. If you want to know why it's not as instructionally sound, you'd just have to ask me why. No one has as yet. Though I have told anyone who would listen anyway.</p> <p>Kids won't be able to hear me or each other with masks on: no investment in amplification has been forthcoming. I am looking into buying my own.</p> <p>The synchronous piece in hybrid is inequitable for kids that are at home with weak internet or in charge of siblings. In addition, it is a poor use of class time for the in person group as we do not have the right equipment, nor adequate training in it, and no one has been even able to try it from the building at York.</p> <p>In addition the requirement of teaching all groups the same thing at the same time lowers my options for equitable and accurate assessment and my options for how to best structure the week's lessons and experiences.</p> <p>Many teachers such as myself have taken classes such as the D205 course and others to learn to provide quality remote instruction. In addition many of us have focused on social emotional learning in anticipating our students needs even remotely. None of us were even told to prepare for hybrid set up this way nor even knew it was coming.</p> <p>I hope the board reconsiders the hybrid model as a start, goes back to the drawing board on it, and for now, lets teachers who have worked very hard this summer to prepare for caring and engaging remote instruction take the lead in providing quality education for our kids.</p>
8/6/2020 12:45:52	Maureen Egan	<p>Dear Elmhurst Board of Education,</p> <p>My husband and I feel it is important for our 3 elementary children to go back to school for in person learning this fall following the CDC recommended guidelines for a safe return to school.</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts on working toward safe return to in person learning.</p> <p>Maureen and Kevin Egan</p>
8/6/2020 12:50:57	Gillian Collons, Churchville Middle School teacher	<p>I am writing to share my concern about going back into the classroom in person. As a teacher at Churchville, the thought of not starting in person is heartbreaking. However, the thought of a preventable illness, or even death, within one of my students' families or my own family is even more heartbreaking. For many reasons, I believe remote learning is the most instructionally-sound and meaningful method to start the school year. I can, and will, prepare creative, meaningful lessons for remote learning and find ways to connect with students safely. I will be able to better meet their social-emotional needs remotely rather than in an awkward, socially-distanced &amp; uncomfortably-masked environment in which I'm constantly thinking about the virus. Even if we open in-person, shifting to remote instruction at some point is inevitable, and avoiding the disruption of a sudden and drastic change in instructional delivery will benefit students.</p> <p>I am aware that there is no perfect answer for everyone, and having a toddler at home, I empathize with parents who will have to balance working and monitoring children. I also understand that some families and children have specific learning or emotional needs, and I believe that, together, we can problem solve to meet those heightened needs. There is nothing more important than keeping our loved ones safe, and I'm confident that I can provide a great academic and social-emotional education remotely.</p>
8/6/2020 12:51:12	Julia Nichols	<p>I feel very strongly that remote learning is the safest option for our school community right now. We are in unprecedented times, without enough knowledge of the effects of this disease on children. I just finished teaching remote summer school, and my incoming 1st grade students all showed excellent progress in reading and math. While we all want to be back in school, remote learning is a safe and effective temporary solution.--Julia Nichols, EL Teacher, Fischer Elementary School.</p>
8/6/2020 12:55:49	Payton Romano	<p>I really need to go back to school because I can't learn on e learning, it makes learning so hard and it isn't efficient at all. Plus kids in high school are less likely to get even sick from corona and we would probably actually wear masks. The school is even not letting the full classes go so even 2 days in the school is more effective then none. Get us back in school</p>
8/6/2020 12:56:18	Lisa Sullivan	<p>I am a parent of two students at Hawthorne.</p> <p>In light of the evolving data, the increases in COVID rates locally, and the recent decisions made by equivalent school districts such as District 203, I strongly urge the board to reconsider its elementary school reopening plans. In the short-term, in-person schooling should be limited to, first, children with special education needs; second, children whose parents both have jobs out of the home; and third, if, and ONLY if, capacity exists, the youngest learners (Kindergarten through 2nd grade). In-person learning should then be reevaluated for potentially beginning Oct 1, Nov 1, or Dec 1 depending on the status of COVID rates.</p> <p>Further, in taking into consideration the recent survey data, the board should recognize that many parents, such as myself, chose in-person learning solely because the board dictated that the choice would be irrevocable until 2021 if e-learning was the choice, but not vice versa.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 13:01:34	Kristen Bartholomew	<p>My name is Kristen Bartholomew and I am an educator at York. As you read this comment I am in the middle of prepping for a morning procedure to identify another autoimmune illness. I LOVE my job. I come from a non-traditional corporate career where 15-18 hour days were typical. I have harnessed that work ethic into my role as an educator and TSI course instructor planning for the repair of all 7,000 Chromebooks in District 205. I go the distance in everything I do, especially when it comes to helping students. I am typically not open about my personal health. I battle daily with multiple chronic illnesses. I have had an asthma attack unabated for over 4 weeks straight (as of this writing). I have been tested twice for covid in those 4 weeks because symptoms are so similar to Covid. I have spent every day since February worried about whether my symptoms are "typical" chronic illness or something more, getting tested regularly "Just in case."</p> <p>To note, There is nothing typical about having trouble breathing.</p> <p>In the Spring I worked more hours than I do during a typical school day, despite my immense anxiety about my health. I rarely miss work. I power through. But this virus is different. I don't feel safe being in a place with 1600 people whose actions I can't be sure are all working to the benefit of the whole community to keep one another safe. I voice these fears not just for me, but for all the students like me who fight silently with chronic illness and are concerned about being back in School. Those very students who are choosing remote learning to reduce their risk of severe illness but then worry they are getting left out by choosing to learn from home.</p> <p>If we start remote until we can be more assured of safety for all, students and colleagues like me will not have to worry about their health at the expense of learning. We would all start at the same benchmark. If we act now to go remote, just as many other districts have chosen, we can build equity for those who need greater support and allow educators to dive into planning the best possible lessons your children deserve while removing the spectre of fear of illness or death. If you are already thinking, "What about those needing special attention and assistance" please also consider those of us with chronic illness among those you are fighting for. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 13:06:31	Stephanie Hiffman	<p>Please allow me to begin by saying thank you for allowing us this opportunity to share our comments and concerns. I would also like to thank you for the time you have put into trying to keep our community safe. No doubt, this has been a Herculean effort and it can't be easy to be met with constant criticism and complaint from every side.</p> <p>That being said, while I do appreciate that you are trying to best represent the community in position, I do believe it is valuable to listen more carefully to the experts in any field when making a decision. In this case, the experts on how effective these plans will be in each of the buildings are your building staff, specifically your teachers. People who don't spend the majority of their waking hours in a classroom do not have the same ethos when telling the community that these plans can't be executed feasibly in our schools. Having spent the majority of my professional career in classrooms, I am also largely unconvinced of the efficacy of these plans, and furthermore, the restrictions will not allow for pedagogically sound best practices in the classroom; therefore, it is not currently worth the risks involved with beginning the year in person.</p> <p>I know you feel you have the community interest numbers for in person instruction on your side, but that data is skewed. Many of us, myself included, chose that option because we don't wish to have our kids instructed by someone random, and we don't wish to be locked into virtual learning all year. I would prefer to keep my kids at home, but I want them to be in a class with their true peers and with teachers in their home buildings. Please reconsider your plan to start the school year in person and start all of the district remotely until you are better prepared to execute quality safe plans in person. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 13:09:58	Basia Rudy	Stick with original plan for in person. Kids learn nothing with e-learning. Our kids deserve better. Teachers need to be in schools teaching.
8/6/2020 13:20:51	Trisha Fisher	I urge you to make in person learning available for the benefit of all the younger kids, kids with IEPs, and those less fortunate in our community!
8/6/2020 13:23:24	Chris Nardella	I want my children back in school. They need to be in school. Thank you!
8/6/2020 13:23:38	Elise Fulara	<p>Members of the D205 Board of Education,</p> <p>I am contributing comments tonight not only as a concerned parent and community member, but, most importantly, as someone who has had firsthand experience with COVID-19. In early July, we had the unfortunate experience of a positive diagnosis within our family. To say it was "educational" would be an understatement; we are thankful that it was a truly mild case that remained isolated to one family member, sparing our children (ages 10 and 14) and myself.</p> <p>The experience distilled for us how very different than other illnesses this virus is from other illnesses, how much science still has to learn about COVID-19, and, while we have opted for the remote option for our family because there is absolutely NO WAY we are going to risk going through that again, I am very concerned with the D205's current decision to proceed with both in-person and remote classes. I urge D205 to revise their current plan and move to a remote-only format.</p> <p>What if one of my child's remote teachers, who may also be teaching in-person classes is exposed in an in-person class and then must quarantine/isolate at home for 14 days, or worse – becomes ill and may be out for longer than 14 days? How many subs will my children have in a year? My children's education this year is ALREADY chaotic, why, why, why, start off the year with the potential for this additional level of instability? They deserve more than this.</p> <p>I urge the BOE to embrace data-driven decision making grounded in epidemiological and staffing realities rather than popular parent opinion from surveys to make decisions that impact our kids' futures and select the option that will allow for the LEAST disruption and instability. And, that option, even if it is unpopular with the individuals that responded to a parent survey, is a remote-only start.</p> <p>Thank you, Elise Fulara</p>
8/6/2020 13:28:16	Emily Walton	My name is Emily Walton and I work at Lincoln. If we are a data-driven district then we need to use data to make our decision about reopening. Illinois' case numbers are going up. Dupage County's positivity rate is going up as well. The Patch just had an article saying that Elmhurst's case numbers are rising. This virus is highly contagious and can spread through asymptomatic people. Scientific studies are finding that although children may not, on average, get as sick as adults, children carry high amounts of the virus and can transmit it easily. All it will take is one child who is asymptomatic to show up to class and children and adults will start getting sick. As a specials teacher, I would be going from classroom to classroom. If I become infected, I would come in contact with the whole student population in one week and I would bring it home to my family. We also do not know about the long term effects of coronavirus. There is no decision that will make everyone happy but remote learning is the decision that will keep everyone safe. Remote learning is not forever. It allows students to continue to learn from our excellent teaching staff and keeps students and staff healthy while we monitor case numbers and learn more about the virus so we can eventually bring students back to in person learning.
8/6/2020 13:31:39	Gail Weerts	My husband and I are retired school teacher/administrators. We had worked in education for over 30+ years before retiring. Opening a school building now would require numerous safety measures that we do not believe that the District has in place. We highly discourage the board in the reopening of in person teaching. Everyone wants the kids back in their school building, but at this time it is just not safe.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 13:31:43	Laura Felde	<p>My name is Laura Felde, and I have been an 8th grade teacher at Bryan Middle School for almost 20 years. I can tell you that teachers want to be in the classrooms. Teachers want to be with their students. That's why we do what we do. As an 8th grade teacher, the end of the year was as disappointing for me as it was for the students. I truly enjoyed the group of students I had and hated that I couldn't say goodbye. I even recorded my own goodbye video and sent a handwritten graduation card to each of my students, 90 plus students. I have been a teacher in this district a long time and believe we have some of the most dedicated professionals in the field. We are talking about protecting "our kids" because, yes, teachers do refer to the students as "our kids". We are invested in them and want what's best for them, and right now, that is remote learning because anything else is simply not safe. Believe what you want about Covid 19 and whether the numbers are misrepresented, but it does exist. Our medical professionals and scientists are still learning about it. The death rate may not appear to be as high, but every day new side effects are being discussed. Children are not immune. While they may not get as sick, we are learning they may carry a higher viral load. Children may be asymptomatic. They may spread the virus to other students or adults who may then get sick themselves or carry it home and spread it to family members. Teachers can teach remotely, and it can be effective, but we are wasting precious time that could be used to better prepare. Teachers agree that the E-Learning in the spring had its challenges, but not for lack of trying. We all did the best we could with what we had at the time and look forward to improving our online instruction. Looking at schools that have opened in other parts of the country, it is only a matter of time, weeks, maybe even days, and there will be Covid cases in at least one of our schools. This will require shutdowns of schools, quarantines, basically disruption of learning, potentially multiple times, which will not be good for students or staff. If we start in a remote setting, we have a better chance of returning to the classroom full time. An in-person school setting in any form right now will not keep students and staff safe. Albert Einstein once said, "What is right is not always popular and what is popular is not always right." Teachers understand that the popular opinion among parents and community members is that there should be in-person learning. Please trust and have faith in the staff you have hired, the ones who are in the schools and classrooms every day. We cannot keep the children, our students, our kids, safe in the school environment. Please do what is right, and let us begin the year with remote learning.</p>
8/6/2020 13:36:39	Thomas Chavez	<p>In most situations the way employment works is that the employer (District 205) decides the best course of action, based on feedback from their clients (parents, 85% have voted for in classroom) and the best available evidence/information. There are many, including Bill Gates, who believe in classroom learning is essential to children's wellbeing, and that the "benefits outweigh the potential costs". If other essential workers, such as doctors, nurses, hospital staff, grocery and retail, among many others can go back to work, so can teachers. Online learning this spring was an absolute bust, and I've seen no hard evidence that the remote learning process has been vastly improved, in spite of a 7-month lead time to prepare. So, the district and their constituents need to take a stand against the Teachers Union and do what's right for the kids. If the employer has determined a hybrid model is a good compromise, and the district constituents are advocating for the hybrid model, then the employees should be expected to return to work. In the world of work, outside of teaching, this is how things work. Teachers are essential workers, and in-classroom learning is essential to the wellbeing of the children of district 205. Facts, not fear, should be driving the discussion surrounding in-classroom learning. In this regard, and according to the DuPage Covid-19 information site, near 80% of Covid deaths in the county have occurred in long-term care facilities. Teachers and children with compromised immune systems can and should remain home. Everyone else should be back on campus to start the fall semester.</p>
8/6/2020 13:41:13	Roberta Elliott	<p>As the Grandma of 2 grandkids who have attended Elmhurst schools since kindergarten I must admit to being a bit shocked that consideration is being given to in person attendance in the classroom. The situation is worse now than it was in March when schools went remote! Opening schools will just increase the cases and the kids and their teachers will risk bringing the virus home to their loved ones. With my underlying health conditions I won't be able to risk even seeing my immediate family. At 91 that time is precious to me. All kids should be learning remotely to protect their loved ones.</p>
8/6/2020 13:42:43	Kearin Palz	<p>As a parent of an elementary student with an IEP, I cannot stress enough how important it is for in-person learning. There is no science to support the need to keep children out of school. Summer camps have run all summer long successfully. My son needs structure, socialization and to be in school. We couldn't be happier with the education he has received while in school at Jackson. I hope the board realizes the necessity of out children being in person for education.</p>
8/6/2020 13:43:47	Mia Nevarez	<p>To whom it may concern: I am asking that the school board and the District start this school year remotely to safe guard our community, families, teachers and staff. It is clear this virus is hard to control. This is apparent not just locally, but nation wide and world wide. It was clear that Covid cannot be contained properly when York's summer sports camps were shut down in just 3. It took only 3 days to shut down the entire program due to the numerous positive tests across several sports. It's alarming how fast that happened. It is an example of how quickly covid can spread and even more so in enclosed classroom settings. Given that less than 1% of kids die of Covid, that would mean about 50 students could die in elmhurst. Which 50? And will you be responsible for any deaths of any students or their family members or will you be asking parents to "attend at their own risk" and sign a waiver? And even if that percentage is wrong would anyone be ok with any student dying of covid because schools opened? Would any parent be ok if they lost their child/children, spouse, or grandparent to Covid due to a school outbreak? In addition, the safety protocols are impossible to enforce and no discipline measures have been put in place for defiant students. Will they be sent home right away and forced into remote learning for failure to comply? This is an immense and unfair amount of responsibly being put on teachers and staff. It is also clear it will be impossible to do contact tracing in a timely manner. Will entire classrooms or entire grades be forced into quarantine? This kind of panic and disruption is not emotionally healthy for our students. Students need to feel safe in order to be able to work at their highest potential. Constantly being worried and stressed about covid infections will create a high anxiety environment that will only hinder the overall well being of students. In order for remote learning to be successful students need to be in their "desk" safely at home and teachers in their classrooms teaching live for the duration of the school day. Teachers need to have access to their students throughout the day not only in live sessions but in small groups and/or 1:1 sessions to ensure students are engaged and learning through out the entire school day. In person 1:1 sessions can be considered for any high risk student. This minimizes exposure to both the student and teacher provided it is in a sanitized classroom with proper use of masks. It is much easier to monitor the mask of one student than an entire classroom. This is also an option for sped students on IEPs. These students can then have the much needed 1:1 support in core subjects of math and reading. There is a much lower risk of exposure with 1:1 sessions which is very important with students with special needs. Many of these students have high risk factors and will benefit from not having additional exposure from a full school and having to move around from class to class. In addition, these students can be served by their IEP required therapies in 1:1 sessions. As you can clearly see from the daily rise of the positivity rate, and the fact there are no clear measures on how to handle outbreaks or how to deal with day to day discipline or exposure, and the fact that York's summer camps shut down within days of opening, it is best at this time to start this school year by remote learning. Please make the right decision and safe guard elmhurst families and teachers by going to remote learning this semester and reevaluate after this semester when there is a much better understanding of Covid and a vaccine. Thank you for your time and for considering remote learning as a safe option for Elmhurst schools.</p>
8/6/2020 13:47:29	John and Jean Aubin	<p>We are John and Jean Aubin. We are longtime residents of Elmhurst, our 4 children attended district 205 schools, and 8 of our grandchildren currently attend Madison, Field, Jackson, Jefferson, Bryan, and York. Open D205 is the willful creation of potential super-spreader events five days a week for weeks on end in multiple locations around Elmhurst. According to an article by Christie Aschwanden in Scientific American, "...as few as 10% of infected people can drive up to 80% of cases in specific types of situations." Sending large groups of children into the schools not only compromises students' and teachers' health, but it also compromises the collective health of the community. School children are in the stores where we shop, in the library we use, the green spaces we share, the doctors' offices we visit. We have not hugged our grandchildren since March. We have not attended their birthday parties. We have not been inside of our children's homes. We've done our part to be socially responsible to ensure that the schools would be able to reopen in August. Unfortunately, many of our neighbors have neglected to follow the Restore Illinois and IDPH Coronavirus guidelines regarding wearing face masks and maintaining social distance. Because the district is failing to focus its energy on providing a robust and rigorous remote education plan for all, our grandchildren will suffer academically and we will suffer physically and emotionally. We are requesting that you consider the data that it is statistically impossible to guarantee the community that no teachers or children will contract COVID 19. We ask that you don't gamble with any teachers' or students' lives. We ask you to quit pouring time and energy into an unsustainable hybrid model which will eventually need to be shifted to remote instruction regardless. Remote instruction for all keeps students safe. Remote instruction for all keeps teachers and staff safe. Remote instruction for all keeps the community at large safe. Please reconsider your Open D205 plan and commit to full remote learning for all.</p>
8/6/2020 13:53:00	Gina Callahan	<p>There are risks in everything we do each day. Our children need the opportunity to attend school in person. It is a new school year filled with new challenges &amp; opportunities. Our kids deserve a chance to meet their new teachers &amp; meet new peers. Fortunately, my kids performed well with E-learning however they perform &amp; gain confidence when being in actual classroom. They need to socialize in person &amp; not have an electronic device be the only option. So much to consider but I think this gets my point across. I hope they get this opportunity. Thank you!</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 13:53:24	Julie Arneri	<p>Our children deserve the opportunity to thrive in an educational environment with face to face learning where they can interact with their teachers, without this option there will be a human disconnect for both students and teachers</p> <p>With all the complaints being aired I have yet to see the statistics on how detrimental it would be for our students to be educated behind a computer 100% of the time. I believe students need to thrive intellectually, cognitively with human interaction.</p> <p>District 205 you have given everyone choices; educators, unions, committees, parents and students so I hope you are able to set aside all the rhetoric and base your decision for in-school/hybrid learning as the right option. Your decision should be based on education, student learning, the rest are individual personal choices one needs to make for their own wellbeing.</p> <p>Be well &amp; good luck</p>
8/6/2020 13:53:28	Rachel Mikula	<p>The decision to go to strictly remote learning will continue to have negative consequences for our children and adolescents. Academically, e-learning was not appropriately rolled out to provide engaging, challenging and interactive (live, online student teacher) experiences for our children across the board. My middle school student this past spring said she only had one of her 6 teachers ask how she was doing, and if she was following the new way of learning. She has admitted that she was basically asked to teach herself lessons and did not learn anything because she thrives off of live teacher instruction and assistance. Children need to start getting back in the classroom at least a couple of days a week. Not only do I have 4 children in 3 District 205 schools (Edison, Sandburg and York) but I am also a practicing Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice focusing on children, adolescents and families. The social, emotional and mental health affects of e-learning are astounding. Our children are becoming more isolated, less motivated, more anxious and depressed. Our children are suffering mentally with a lack of structure, security and positive use of time. I see more and more of our children losing direction, drive and asking "what is the point?" We as parents are trying our best to balance and adapt, but for those of us fortunate enough to have a job and/or business to run are also working to hold onto those too. Times are traumatic and everyone in every profession is being asked to find creative solutions to meet the needs of the communities they serve. Our children have been the ultimate pawns in all of this. Let us all work together to meet the immediate needs of the children and adolescents of District 205 by rolling out a safe, in-person instruction model for the 2020-21 school year.</p>
8/6/2020 13:58:37	Ruth Miller	<p>My name is Ruth Miller and I teach French at York and Churchville. This will be my eleventh year teaching in Elmhurst. This time of year is always full of emotions: excitement, apprehension, and hope. Fear should not be one of those emotions. I love the freshness of a new school year and meeting all of my students for the first time and building those important connections from the start. While doing so remotely will have its challenges, I believe I can still do it! And in doing so, we can be assured we aren't unnecessarily risking the lives and health of our students, ourselves, or our families. I would rather have a less-than-ideal start to this year so that I can be around to start many more school years to come! I have four children of my own, but also see each and every one of my students as if they were my children too. It pains me to think of having to witness any of my children, my own or my students, suffer or watch their mother suffer, or worse lose her. I have Type 1 Diabetes which puts this at an increased risk of being a real possibility. Any loss of learning can be recovered—loss of life or health cannot. The students of Elmhurst are strong and resilient and I truly believe that they can flourish in any learning environment. I look forward to when we are able to safely all be back together. Thank you for your time!</p>
8/6/2020 14:07:13	Caroline Nero	<p>To the board members, I want to thank you for time and thoughtfulness during this difficult period in your tenure. I know there are strong feelings for staying home and going to school, but I believe if our district can follow the CDC guidelines and the recommendations of the AAP our children can safely receive in-person instruction. The beginning of the school year is so important for building community among teachers and students and sets the tone for the year. I worry about starting the year remotely and the students feeling disconnected to a teacher they don't even know. Will they participate? How will the teacher get to know them? While technology is wonderful, it limits the inclusivity and connections that can really only be made in an in-person classroom. Even if we have to go to remote learning later on, our teachers will benefit from in-person relationships with their students, which will improve their remote learning experience! You will receive many opinions from teachers, administrators and parents on the best way forward in this very uncertain time, and honestly, all of these thoughts have validity and take into concern the well-being of our teachers and students. I hope you take my thoughts into consideration as you make your final decision. Regards, Caroline Nero</p>
8/6/2020 14:08:01	Karen Toole	<p>Will York be offering an ACT or SAT for York seniors Many tests sites are being cancelled with little notice &amp; students are unable to reschedule</p> <p>University's still want test scores For example Purdue University is test preferred not optional</p> <p>York &amp; District205 should not be putting their seniors at a disadvantage by not offering a test option</p> <p>Shouldn't York seniors be provided every opportunity to be competitive in the admission process to top universities?</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 14:08:14	Michelle Reidy	<p>I am requesting that District 205 begin the school year fully remote. I cannot stress enough how very concerned I am with the lack of concrete plans for both in person and remote learning.</p> <p>When I reached out to D205 teachers, I was told there were no answers.</p> <p>When I reached out to the principal of my children's elementary school, I received few answers with little detail.</p> <p>When I reached out to the board, I was told my questions would be forwarded to the administration.</p> <p>When I copied the administration on my original email, I did not receive a reply.</p> <p>When I check the FAQ section of the Open 205 micro site, only some of my question are addressed.</p> <p>I am submitting my questions for public comment in hopes that I can finally get some answers</p> <p>I am expected to make a decision for my children that will impact them for the next six months and have been given little information to use in the decision making process. This is concerning.</p> <p>1) Why hasn't the district committed to decreased class size targets for Fall semester? Why continue with a wait and see approach? Neighboring districts have committed to plans that cut class sizes in half to reduce the spread of germs. Why hasn't D205 put this in writing anywhere? (District 44: committed to cohorts of 10-13 students for the school year; District 45: classes to be filled to half capacity)</p> <p>2) Per ISBE recommendations to adhere to social distancing when possible, has the district set a minimum number of inches/feet in which students will be in contact with each other? We've already been told it won't be six feet at all times. Will it at least be 5' 4" 3'? What is the official "line in the sand" for how close kids can get?</p> <p>3) We want specific information on how lunch will look? Leaving this decision to principal's discretion seems as if the district is shirking responsibility for problems that will inevitably arise. (Districts 45 and 48: no lunch in the building, at-risk students provided take home bag lunches)</p> <p>4) To say that remote students with IEPs and 504s should expect a reduction of service minutes or a revision of their service plan sounds illegal. Why isn't it? How soon into the start of the school year can remote learners expect their IEP team to meet, make recommendations, and enact appropriate modifications to their learning plans to accommodate their remote learning environment. The ISBE Fall 2020 Learning Recommendations does not include information on this, therefore this rests on districts to create their own plans.</p> <p>5) Per page 59 of ISBE Fall 2020 Learning Recommendations, pre-K and kindergarten are grouped together, not kindergarten and first grade. Why isn't D205 recommending that kindergarten return to an only a.m./p.m. schedule (like Madison) reducing class sizes to 12-13 students per session and eliminating up to 75 students from the building? (District 44 proposal - prior to fully remote decision)</p> <p>6) Should remote learners choose to return to the classroom in January, in which classrooms will they be placed? Will they return to their neighborhood school and join existing classes? What's the plan? (District 87; start the year fully remote - remote teacher will be classroom teacher when students return to their neighborhood school later in the year)</p> <p>7) Instead of looking to Jeffco, Colorado's opening plans, why didn't the district consult neighboring districts policies and plans, which we seem to do in every other decision we make? (Districts 44, 45, 87, 88) Jeffco, CO has since decided to go fully remote, rendering their return to school plan moot.</p> <p>8) We would like to see in advance the decision tree for the following scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-return to full remote</li> <li>-student exposure to a Covid positive individual</li> <li>-instance of Covid related death of student and/or staff</li> </ul> <p>To ask parents to make a decision without having answers to all of the above questions is negligent on the part of the district.</p> <p>The administrations lack of timely creative problem solving and critical thinking throughout the summer leaves no other viable option for Open 205 plans except fully remote at all levels.</p>

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8/6/2020 14:09:13	Jayme Forker-Schwartz	<p>Please let our kids go back to in-school instruction. I'm fine if it's a lightened schedule or 1/2 the class goes in the AM and 1/2 the class goes in the PM. Our kids need the normalcy of learning in the classroom setting. They need to get comfortable with their instructors and classmates. How scary is it for a child to ask a question or ask for help when they are in a situation that's not comfortable or with a teacher they don't know? How can we set them up for success right off the bat? We let them develop that trust, comfort and safety in the classroom. Then if virtual learning must take place later in the year they at least have a solid foundation.</p> <p>How behind are they from missing valuable instruction last year? How far behind will we let them get? How do teachers even get an evaluation of where kids are currently and teach to their individual needs?</p> <p>My kids are begging for in person instruction and the CDC is saying we can do this in a safe way. Do we think that the CDC doesn't have the best minds out there vetting options all while having children's best interests in mind?</p> <p>I know it won't be easy for teachers but can't we at least try for our kids?</p>
8/6/2020 14:11:47	Maria Vavrinchik	<p>I would like to remind the board that we are in a pandemic. This is not the like Influenza A or B or Meningitis or Lice. Those have healthcare protocols that our medical community can help with. COVID19 has not been contained. The method to address it is to mitigate. Minimize transmission so that we can keep as many people from getting the virus until there is a viable, approved vaccine. That vaccine is not coming this year. We all know this. We need to get through this fall safely.</p> <p>It seems to me that the plan you have in place is a disservice to the students, the district staff and teachers, registered nurses, social workers, counselors and staff.</p> <p>How does this plan provide for the approximately 50% of teachers that are at high risk and/or have families that are at high risk? The CDC recommendation for those people in our community is to stay home as much as possible, stay away from high risk carriers. Nothing in the 35 page plan delineates that out.</p> <p>What legal counsel has the board sought when putting the 35 plan together? for addressing the likelihood that this 35 plan has gaps and that the board is willfully and knowingly putting students, staff, children at risk to hospitalizations, or worse?</p> <p>Will you be providing COVID19 sick days? Do you have staff ready to fill in? Have you considered the mental health stressors your plan brings to children and parents by each day being a potential last day of school?</p> <p>How is it that major corporations are not returning their workers to the office, yet this incomplete 35 page plan is going to work? What have you got that is better? Do you have N95 PPE for teachers? Are you supplying chlorine wipes? what hand cleaning requirements are in place for students? School physicals are required, vaccines are required. How many students are behind in vaccines? Are you requiring students be tested? Is the district providing testing? Has the district asked staff and teachers to be tested?</p> <p>President Kara Caforio - I do agree with you on at least one item you have made: "Continuing the legacy of a great education in Elmhurst will no happen by accident." However, your plan is an accident waiting to happen.</p> <p>It is clear to many school districts that this community respects, like Naperville, Oak Park, Villa Park, and many, many others that remote learning is a temporary plan that needs to happen so that students are safe and their district employees and their families and our community is safe. We should do the same.</p> <p>I urge the board to replan and take seriously the health and well being of our teachers and our student body and their families. Please begin working with the union of teachers. I urge the district to provide the platform for our teachers to provide the excellence in learning activities and lesson planning that we all know doesn't happen by accident. Pre-COVID19 teachers worked after hours, weekends, and late nights and we all know that didn't change last spring and of course will not now.</p>
8/6/2020 14:12:43	Zarate	<p>Remote learning and have hybrid learning starting oct or nov</p>
8/6/2020 14:12:50	Carol Ruff	<p>Elmhurst BOE - first, I appreciate all the time and thought that is going into these highly sensitive discussions surrounding the back to school plan. As represented by the majority of parents surveyed, I support the decision to offer in-person learning as an option. I have the utmost respect for the teachers in our community and believe all parents highly value their contributions. I hear their safety concerns and do not disregard them. I also certainly do not discount my own child's safety, but I believe we can open safely, as recommended by the CDC and AAP, with the right measures and some creativity. As evidenced by local daycares and camps that have been operating safely for months, it is possible. Look into additional space options (park district?), allow teachers at higher risk to take on those families who choose remote, hire more teachers to accommodate smaller class sizes, require families of children who refuse to wear masks to switch to remote. The devil is in the details.</p> <p>As a single, full-time working parent with a first grader, I can tell you firsthand that e-learning has no chance of being effective for us. It wasn't about the structure of the teaching, or the teacher, who was wonderful. My child simply refused to respond to it and needs the structure of the classroom and live instruction. From speaking with other parents, I was not alone. Also how do we consider those parents who do not have the ability to instruct their child's e-learning during regular business hours due to their jobs? Is the expectation for them to lose their income? Even for those that can afford it, outside instruction help is looking to be in short supply. Will our children be evaluated the same way?</p> <p>And perhaps the biggest question- at what point does everyone become comfortable- a certain level of safety measures, a vaccine, or for the virus to be non-existent? I honestly have not heard the answer (perhaps my own fault), but to me, ongoing e-learning for young children is not a viable option. We need to adapt in whatever way necessary to make in-person education possible for those that need it, recognizing that all families are in unique situations.</p>

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8/6/2020 14:13:08	Laura Ryan	<p>Members of the Board, Administration and Elmhurst Community,</p> <p>I have been teaching for 25 years in Elmhurst at Edison School. As well, I am part of 3 generations of families, two of which who are current residents of Elmhurst, and all have been educated in the Elmhurst Schools.</p> <p>There are indeed tough choices to be made regarding the opening of school. Safety is and should always be our first priority. The only choice to protect the safety of students, families and staff and community, in the beginning of this school year, is remote learning.</p> <p>Dr. Anthony Fauci states: "The default position is you should try, to the best of your ability, to get children back in school, but you've got to put the however in there," Fauci said. "The however means you have to be concerned always about the safety, the health, and the welfare of the children, the teachers, and the personnel."</p> <p>According to current enrollment, I will welcome 27 in person students into my classroom and care. We will be sharing 750 square feet of space for 6 hours each day.</p> <p>How safe will that be? It is NOT safe.</p> <p>Socially distancing 6 feet apart in a school containing 323 K-5 children while wearing masks will prove to be impossible. Without any doubt,</p> <p>It is NOT safe.</p> <p>Please know, I am anxious to be with my students, but absolutely not at the expense of their health, my own, my family and community.</p> <p>A remote learning model to begin the 20-21 school year is the only safe and appropriate plan for our community.</p> <p>Thank you for your service to Elmhurst schools and your consideration.</p>
8/6/2020 14:16:43	Andrew Sherman	<p>Please allow our children to return to school in person under the hybrid format. I strongly believe it is essential to their education, socialization and emotional well being. I am a critical care physician with a lot of experience with COVID. I believe with appropriate planning and precautions in person education can be done safely. Thank you</p>
8/6/2020 14:18:28	David Grelecki	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>My name is David Grelecki. I grew up in Elmhurst, attending Jackson, Bryan and York. My mom taught in Elmhurst for over 20 years at Emerson. I am going into my 27th year as an Elmhurst teacher, having taught at Edison and currently teaching 5th grade at Jefferson. I started my career in Elmhurst as a 1st grade classroom assistant at Hawthorne.</p> <p>There has never been a "normal" in education, but never before have we been asked to start a school year with no answers on how we can keep our students safe. We don't have a plan in place that creates a safe space for children or adults. Never before have we been asked to put the lives of our students at risk.</p> <p>Being in a classroom this fall will not look like it did last fall. Children will not be working in small groups for math, they won't be able to walk over to a friend's desk to borrow a pencil, and they won't be meeting with the teacher one-on-one to talk about what they are reading. Checking in students and scheduled bathroom breaks will cut into curriculum time. We don't know what the lasting effects of this devastating disease will be--no one does--but we can imagine the effects of a teacher's illness on a student or, worse, a student's death on a teacher.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>David Grelecki</p>
8/6/2020 14:19:25	Lisa Burnison	<p>I am submitting this public comment to reinforce my support to keep schools open for in person instruction. Schools are an important part of the infrastructure of our communities, as they provide safe, supportive learning environments for students, employ teachers and other staff, and enable parents (many who are dual income), guardians, and caregivers to work. Schools also provide critical services that help meet the needs of children and families, especially those who are disadvantaged, through supporting the development of social and emotional skills. I believe our District 205 board has proposed a terrific reopening plan that takes into account the feedback from our community at large, scientific evidence behind Covid transmission (low risk to school aged children) and keeps the education, well being and future of our children top of mind while taking every precaution to protect students, teachers, staff and their families!</p>
8/6/2020 14:23:34	Marianne Boyke	<p>Teachers are essential workers and need to be in the classrooms doing their jobs just as other essential workers have done. There is no protocol. This is new to everyone. But what we do know is that when precautions are taken, transmission is slowed. Precautions have been established through the districts plan. No matter what we do there is no guarantee that you will not contract Covid and we won't know unless we try. But what we do know is that children need to be in school to be effectively taught and for their well being, mentally, socially and physically. There will be far greater harm to our children in keeping them at home in a lockdown than there ever would be to a teacher that may or may not contract Covid and not know what the effects will be even if they do get it. Why can't we try with in -person and see where it leads. Why should teachers dictate what is the right choice for the greater good. Especially in light of the fact that there are far fewer teachers wanting remote than the 85% of families that want in person teaching. This is their job! They are essential and they need to do their job just like everyone else has.</p>
8/6/2020 14:25:03	Carolyn Doherty	<p>If there is any form of remote learning it absolutely must involve a teacher who is LIVE. Please supply all necessary equipment to make this happen. It's a very fair compromise on the issue. Our children simply will not learn if we repeat the Spring remote model.</p>
8/6/2020 14:28:24	Justin Allen	<p>Our family would greatly prefer in person learning.</p>
8/6/2020 14:32:21	Courtenay Zurenko	<p>I wholeheartedly believe our children, especially those at the elementary school level, can go back to school in-person safely. While I don't want anyone to be at risk, I believe doctors, grocery store workers and all on the frontline have been able to go to work and figure out how to safely meet the needs of their patients and customers. Teachers are no different. They are essential to the well-being and growth of our children. The family unit relies on their work and virtual is just not cutting it. If 85% of our tax dollars go to education and we all have to figure out childcare and tutoring options on top of that, I view that as incredibly unfair. I also have a child with special needs who thrives on in-person instruction and extra supports. I don't believe the numbers/statistics warrant e-learning as the number of deaths and people hospitalized is low and the transmission rate from children to adults is also low. We need to consider all situations at this point, not just that of the teachers.</p>

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8/6/2020 14:33:41	Max Schoenberg	<p>This is Max Schoenberg, President of the Elmhurst Teachers' Council. At this meeting, our teachers will share their perspectives on why starting the school year remotely is necessary to protect the health of the community. I have three brief points to make.</p> <p>First, Board Policy 4:170 requires that "All District operations, including the education program, shall be conducted in a manner that will promote the safety and security of everyone on District property." It is clear from the text of this one sentence that the education program is subordinate to the safety mandate. The Open D205 plan violates the Board's own policy.</p> <p>Second, we remind the Board that any employee of the District giving a statement to the Board is legally protected by both the Open Meetings Act and the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act.</p> <p>Third, we call on the Board to read every single public comment that has been received before this meeting. This is a discussion of the utmost importance for the community, and failing to read all public comments suggests a lack of transparency which is completely at odds with good governance. All views must be heard.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 14:34:59	Dana celar	We are FOR in person learning and it is important for our kids to be in school.
8/6/2020 14:39:34	Jill Conrad	<p>My name is Jill Conrad, and I've worked at York High School for 12 years, as a science teacher, an instructional coach, and the voice of many Honors Chemistry screencasts. In December, when I went on maternity leave, I had no idea that it was the last time I would see my students. When I returned in April, it was heartbreaking to see how COVID-19 and the closure of the school building had affected my students and my colleagues.</p> <p>Over the summer, I worked with several other instructional coaches to facilitate a D205U class on remote learning. The teachers who took the course generated genuinely impressive products during the 8 week summer course: educational philosophy statements for remote learning, critical reflections on the spring e-learning, get-to-know-you activities for class Zoom calls, innovative synchronous lesson plans, and highly rigorous and relevant assessments that can be completed remotely. If and when we do have to move to full remote learning, I am confident that it will look very different than the spring's emergency e-learning due to the change in guidelines from the state and district, the tech tools we now have access to, and the training we are providing to our teachers.</p> <p>Unfortunately, I have serious concerns about starting the year in the proposed hybrid model. Many of the details are still being worked out due to ever-changing health and instructional guidelines. Additionally, I wonder how teachers who are still getting familiar with new tech tools for teaching remote learners will be able to simultaneously interact with both groups of students (those in the classroom and those at home) while also enforcing social distancing and mask-wearing in the classroom. I wonder how well students participating in class remotely via Zoom will be able to hear conversations occurring in the classroom between people wearing masks. We are asking our teachers to learn and apply so much, in such a short period of time that I fear it is impossible to do it all well, and our children's education will suffer as a result. Instead, I believe the best way to provide engaging, rigorous learning experiences for our students, right now, is for teachers and students to first focus on developing the skills required for remote learning, and then gradually roll into the hybrid format.</p> <p>A gradual return would also give us time for the scientific community to conduct more research on best practices for preventing and treating COVID-19. Right now, we don't have enough data, but more research gets published every day. By waiting a few weeks to see if a scientific consensus emerges, on which precautions are most effective and affordable in the school environment, we can avoid spending time and money implementing precautions that later prove ineffective. Let's see if they can narrow down the risk factors causing one young person to end up on a ventilator fighting for their life while another merely gets cold-like symptoms, so that our families can better determine the risks to their child. Let's wait to learn what works best from other schools that are opening in other areas of the country -- rather than using our own families as the test subjects.</p> <p>As a mother, I recognize that parents here in Elmhurst want the best for their kids. These are not easy decisions. Schools provide so many important services to our children - not just education, but also a place to socialize appropriately with peers and a safe place to be during the day. However, as the person being asked to provide that care, I don't feel confident that I can safely offer education and socialization to my students within our current plan. I would love to be able to welcome all of my students into my classroom, but I feel compelled to prioritize their health and quality of education over their physical presence in my room. The best way to educate our Elmhurst District 205 students right now is by starting this school year fully remote while working out the details of a safe return to the classroom.</p>
8/6/2020 14:41:57	Tracey Hagelin	I want my daughter to return to school, no more home learning.
8/6/2020 14:45:37	Mark Golebiowski	My name is Mark Golebiowski (pronounced goal-uh-bee-OW-ski) and I've been a science teacher at York for the last 21 years. Every year, my students and I discuss data trends and their meanings. Every last one of my students would tell you that the scientific data suggests remote learning is the safest option for our schools. For the health and safety of our students, staff, and families, please consider switching to an all-remote option. Thank you.
8/6/2020 14:47:21	Ken & Stephanie Nurczyk	We prefer in-school instruction for our two middle-school kids. We chose the hybrid option on the parent survey, but are open to more than two days a week if that becomes an option. We respect that not all parents want in-school and prefer fully remote. Parents should have the choice to send their kids to school or to keep them at home. Truly hope district can accommodate both options and make a decision ASAP.
8/6/2020 14:49:37	Tom Canale	Thank you for your effort, thoughtfulness & time. We are all in this together & I'm sensitive to everyone being at risk, everywhere. Children should be afforded the option of a high quality In-person education. Teachers & kids can wear masks like everyone else is. I wear a mask when I work, so do wait staff, doctors, plumbers, etc. Teachers need to teach, like every other essential service who has adjusted their manner of work. This is our new normal till we have a vaccine. The kids need to be offered an opportunity to be in school if their parents are comfortable. Thank you.
8/6/2020 14:54:01	Shane and Leonore Kranov	We are desperately hoping that district 205 fulfills their commitment to serve our kids in person for the hybrid schedule for 2020-2021 school year. I have personally seen A decline in both of my kids work habits, social habits, and physical well being during this time. As a parent it makes me anxious to think that remote learning will foster the same excitement and passion that a student can only get from a classroom setting. I signed both of them up for the hybrid schedule and only see this option as a positive outlet after months at home. Please allow those who are comfortable and healthy to go back to school.
8/6/2020 14:56:29	Shelbie Detzler	<p>District 205 is following CDC guidelines Private sector businesses have been back for months doing the same. Public sector jobs shouldn't get an exemption just because they are public sector.</p> <p>During the spring term, we found remote learning to be unevenly applied, ineffective at best and counter productive at the worst. Access to teachers was inadequate. Teachers were observed doing personal activities unrelated to teaching during school hours Right now, teachers can be seen frequenting restaurants, retail stores and many other private businesses If it is safe for the teachers to do these things, than why isn't it safe to go back to school?</p> <p>It's time for the long spring break and summer vacation to come to an end</p> <p>Life goes on, we know much more than we did in March All the developed protocols that allow businesses and institutions to be open will be put in place</p> <p>The employees and students of D205 need to get back to work!</p> <p>Let's go back to school!</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 14:56:53	James Schroeder	<p>I am a community member, the parent of 3 York graduates, and 2 of them are current teachers. You don't stop being a parent in this community when your children graduate.</p> <p>Parents in District 205 want to keep their children safe and are free to request protection and answers regarding their children's education and safety. The complete failure of leadership at the district level to respond to the current health crisis and properly plan and prepare teachers for the fall clearly means teachers need advocates right now.</p> <p>Despite public perception, Teachers have a much harder time advocating for their own safety. They must often wait for union approved messages, and wait until other efforts of bridging the gap between the board, the district and the union have been attempted before their leadership makes statements. While they are quietly working on lesson plans, learning new technologies and waiting for the next steps, the board and administration are free to disparage teachers and the union in emails and communication to the community. These lies and misconceptions are rampant on social media channels and the teachers hear it, they take it in, and then they have to wait for the slanderous comments to be addressed. The treatment of this board and the administration towards teachers during such a challenging time is completely disrespectful to their profession. It is demoralizing. The issues of the spring were not for lack of teacher effort. It was leadership. Teachers did what they could to meet the needs of their students and with data, such as AP testing scores as high as they were in years past, you can see they helped students be just as successful as they have in previous years, and to insinuate otherwise is insulting.</p> <p>The teachers I speak to, including my own children, want to be in the classroom, but they want to be safe. They do not want to become sick or spread Covid-19 to their families and loved ones. The issues such as shared classrooms, cleaning policies, air filtration, sick leave, lunch supervisions, and other questions have not been answered clearly enough for teachers to feel safe. They start in two weeks and leadership cannot address the most basic pieces of in-person education. Take the time to figure it out properly by beginning the semester with remote learning, and then slowly phase students in, starting with those who need services the most, as it becomes safe to do so. Do not put "public desire" over public health.</p> <p>Leadership is not a popularity contest, nor is it about appealing to those that are most vocal, it is about doing what is right, even when it is difficult. Every other administration in the area has recognized the risks and made changes. Your refusal to do so will be marked as your greatest failure in your leadership career. The death of a single student, teacher, or their families, will be your legacy.</p> <p>My daughters are teachers, and despite the lack of a concrete plan, they have been working all summer, they have seen the safety concerns firsthand, and they have been working tirelessly planning and preparing for the fall, doing work on their own, seeking out resources and adapting their lessons. Teachers in District 205 care, and many work throughout the summer to improve instruction at no cost to the district. They want to do what is best for their students.</p> <p>Do not make teachers villains because of your lack of leadership. Do not shame them for asking for basic safety measures in the time of a pandemic. Address teacher and student safety concerns and school can resume in a modified version in person. Fail to do so and teachers requesting remote learning until these issues have been addressed is no one's fault but leadership.</p>
8/6/2020 14:58:26	Jeff Romano	<p>As a York alumni, I respect our 205 teachers and facility members tremendously. That is why I was so proud to hear of the measures taken to protect faculty and students in a hybrid model for this school year.</p> <p>To be clear, my kids suffered mentally and physically with at home learning and I am not in favor. Based on CDC recommendations, 85% of parents responding to your surveys for hybrid, and the fact that essential workers have been protected, I don't see any reason why the teacher's union would enforce a lower level of education and mental well-being.</p> <p>People across the world are doing all they can to go to work with what we now vs what we knew in March. Experiencing an entire profession trying to avoid doing their job is unacceptable. Tell that to our police, medical profession, grocery clerks, cabbies, waiters/waitresses, and all first responders. I don't think this would be an issue if the union did pay full salary for remote vs in class.</p> <p>Bottom line is that I support 205 and want only the best of health but with what we know today, there is no excuse for going to work in a well thought out environment for safe learning. Businesses and industries across the globe are doing it without political influence.</p> <p>Thank you sincerely and go Dukes.</p>
8/6/2020 15:04:26	Anne-Marie Gustafson	<p>I am a parent of three children attending district 205 elementary and middle schools. I would like to encourage the board to reconsider their plan for reopening and start the school year remotely for the safety and well being of students, teachers and staff. Our family chose in person learning the day of the deadline with the knowledge that we could opt out, but not opt in. We believed that things would change as the number of cases increased in our community, and we hoped that our kids would have the chance to begin remote learning with familiar teachers and classmates from the schools they attend. We feel that in person learning should be prioritized for at risk and special needs students; therefore, our family would have to consider opting out if the district plan remains the same. We appreciate the commitment and dedication of the Elmhurst Teacher's Council, and we ask the board to continue working with them to find solutions that will keep everyone safe and healthy. Thank you!</p>
8/6/2020 15:07:27	Brienne Kennedy-Brooks	<p>Good evening, members of the board and the Elmhurst community. My name is Brienne Kennedy-Brooks and I am an English teacher and instructional coach at York High School. Elmhurst has been my home away from home for the past 13 years. I, like many of my colleagues, have invested wholeheartedly in thousands of students over my tenure here at District 205. So first and foremost, I want to assure you: I love my students, I love my job and I work tirelessly year round to provide the very best I can for them. And while I have not lived the lives of each of my colleagues, I believe I can say the same for each of them. Like the rest of the nation, the spring was a struggle. The Covid pandemic brought up unique situations and triggered trauma for our students, their families and for my colleagues. As a teacher, I had candid conversations with my students about their fear, their anxiety and their loneliness. Similarly, as an instructional coach, I learned my colleagues were dealing with the same AND were trying to figure out how to best continue educating their students. My fellow coaches and I answered panicked emails, text messages and phone calls at all hours of the day and night as teachers were eager to learn new ways to support their students. The mandates provided from the state and from our building and district leadership (items such as no required, real-time, in person instruction, no graded work, etc) made them feel as though their hands were tied about how to effectively reach every student. I watched as building and district leadership struggled to keep up with the near daily changing guidance from the state and did what they could to implement policies that would protect our most at-risk students. This isn't about pointing fingers or placing blame about who should have done what; it's about showing grace and compassion to each other. We are living through the unimaginable and what we truly need is to band together, show each other some grace and work toward solutions...SAFE solutions. Putting over 1500 people in a building with a myriad of shared spaces, crowded hallways (yes even at half capacity) and optimistic, but unrealistic, safety protocols is just not safe. Believe me, if there were a way to return to the building safely, I would do it in a heartbeat. But, I cannot, in good conscience, stay silent and pretend that we will be returning "back to school" as usual. I cannot in good conscience let my students and colleagues have their fears exacerbated by the very real threat of a virus that we just don't know enough about. This is not a matter of preference or even a matter of convenience; it is quite literally an issue of life or death. You trust us with your kids every day. Trust us when we say...it is not safe for us to be back in person yet. So rather than pointing fingers, making excuses, or insulting people who were doing the best they could with the resources they had, I'd like us to take a step back and invest instead in helping our students and our staff to engage more purposefully in the only safe option: remote instruction.</p> <p>We are educators. Our job is to learn and to educate. The state now has more structured guidance about how we are permitted to engage with our students. Our instructional coaching team has been working all summer long to offer professional development to help our staff more effectively teach remotely. Teachers, on their own unpaid time, have invested in reading books, attending webinars and taking courses to improve in their craft. My colleagues and I practice what we preach. We take risks, we learn, we get better. We are excited to share what we've learned with our students this year.</p>

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		<p>The D205 Teachers Union refusal to education our children in person is unacceptable. Elementary students, by every measure, are the safest population to be around. Studies show that children from ages 0-10 are the LEAST likely to contract the disease. All other professions (doctors, nurses, store clerk's, delivery men/women have been on the forefront of pulling our country through this crisis for 5 months. If they refused to attend their job, they would be out of a job. Now that the beginning of school is upon us, they are pulling back and demanding they work remote. This is unacceptable. We have been billed over \$10,000 for D205 education. If full time education is not occurring, then teachers should not be getting full time pay. That would be a good way of recoup some tax payer funds. The teachers are compensated by the communities taxes and if 85% of parents want their children back in school, that should happen. Our own children are dying to get back to school as they thrive on that. They love being with their friends, learning from their teachers and being a part of a larger community. Please don't allow the teachers union to change your mind.</p> <p>Remote Learning is not a replacement of in-person learning. Elementary school students are not capable of self-taught learning. Parents who are not teachers, are not trained to educate children, nor are we capable of doing so while working our own full time jobs.</p>
8/6/2020 15:09:44	Nick Styczen	<p>What Dr. Moyer announced last week was wonderful. He offered a choice... Don't make 1 person's choice the choice for everyone. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 15:14:41	Fisun Biberoglu	<p>For sure this virus is airborne last update from doctors 20 mins in any area is enough to get exposed without mask so if mask will be on all the time I send my kids but they will remove it at lunch and gym so it is not necessary to go to school all day!They can go couple hours and will be better especially for trachers who are old abd for kids parents who has elder people in their families!</p>
8/6/2020 15:16:30	Melanie Canale	<p>I would like both of my children back in school for in person learning. I would appreciate having the option to send them back and am frustrated that we may not have that option available. I understand every family feels differently and everyone needs to make the choice that is right for them and what they feel comfortable with, whether that is in person, remote or hybrid. Both of my kids are face to face learners, and both have had IEP's and 504 plans, being in school gives them access to the help they need when they need it. They also benefit greatly from the structure and accountability. Remote learning in the spring was incredibly difficult and frustrating for them as well as parents. I don't think much was learned and I saw huge decline in their motivation and drive. I think the benefits of going back outweigh the risks for us, and we need to give our kids a little more credit, they are very capable of wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing. We have been doing it for months. Being in school and learning and growing academically is essential for them, let's not take that away from them and have them sitting in front of a screen all day.</p>
8/6/2020 15:20:33	Mariann Mapes	<p>I am 100% in favor of in person learning. At the high school level, these young adults can adequately utilize PPE, maintain social distancing and frequently wash or sanitize their hands. As with any commercial facility, rules must be adhered to. My biggest concern with remote learning is a repeat of the spring semester. There were no measures of accountability, curriculum was not synchronous and most times self-taught. I have heard many comments regarding the anxiety placed on students with starting and stopping in person learning. I have experienced remote learning through my children, one, the last semester at York (rising Junior 3.886 GPA) and the other two at two different universities (rising Junior &amp; rising Senior). The anxiety that builds not being in an institutional setting, the ability to meet directly with teachers and having little to no accountability is more than these young adults should bear. Students need to attend a class with a teacher teaching the curriculum, not attend google classroom.</p> <p>Respectfully, Mariann Mapes</p>
8/6/2020 15:20:46	Scott Rouzer	<p>Coronavirus is unfortunately a matter that our community needs to deal with and manage. It continues to disappoint me and my family that D205 and York HS administration so far refuses to take a leadership position by making decisions that recognize that reality and move on to creating education value for our students. Our students need to have a quality interaction with faculty and peer students along with healthy social interaction. The District or York specific survey results is supported by CDC guidelines so let's move on. That means conducting classes in person with masks and social distance requirements being met. Its appreciated that the whole community and every families personnel situations need consideration but that is considered in the D205 options available to families.</p> <p>The whims of Illinois and local unions of certified professional educators who seem to be more concerned about being in control at the expense of children's education must be secondary to the education of our students. If a professional educator feels that their personal circumstances make them too vulnerable than they should be give the opportunity to withdraw from the faculty, just like any other professional may make that choice in the business community. The education of our children must not be held hostage by a collective bargaining agreement that does not contemplate our unique times.</p> <p>I urge the York administration and D205 leadership to forge ahead without delay with the "Open D205" plan.</p>
8/6/2020 15:20:59	Ramsay Brown	<p>District 205 should have full traditional classes with no remote learning.</p> <p>The CDC director, Robert Redfield, while testifying in Congress, as recently as July 31st, 2020 said...</p> <p>"I don't think I can emphasize it enough as the director for the Centers for Disease Control, the leading public health agency in the world — it is in the public health interest that these K through 12 students to get the schools back open for face-to-face learning."</p> <p>"I want these kids back in school," he said. "I want it done smartly but I think we have to be honest that the public health and interest of the students in the nation right now is to get a quality education and face-to-face learning. We need to get on with it."</p> <p>Addressing the danger to teachers....</p> <p>The Times of London reported on July 21st, 2020...</p> <p>"There has been no recorded case of a teacher catching the coronavirus from a pupil anywhere in the world, according to one of the government's leading scientific advisers.</p> <p>Mark Woolhouse, a leading epidemiologist and member of the government's Sage committee, told The Times that it may have been a mistake to close schools in March given the limited role children play in spreading the virus.</p> <p>Not all, but many European countries schools are, and have been open since April, the risk posed to teachers, is less than the "regular" Flu.</p> <p>Addressing the danger to children...</p> <p>In 2018, pre-COVID, the CDC showed 618 nationwide school age child deaths from the flu, there are 25 recorded deaths attributed to COVID, if the deaths of normal flu were 5x, no school district in the nation would most likely even be aware, and certainly none would have closed. Children's immune systems are very strong as they are frequently ill....regular exposure to colds and viruses strengthens their immune systems.</p> <p>Teacher's are essential workers, schools need to be open.</p>

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8/6/2020 15:22:02	Molly Hermes	<p>My name is Molly Hermes and I am a teacher at York. Among some of the many joys of teaching is becoming a part of a community. While I live in a different town, working with the bright and beautiful young people of D205 has made me a stakeholder in your community, a role I do not take lightly. As a stakeholder, I feel a tremendous responsibility to keep the D205 community as safe as my home community. This is perhaps my greatest concern in returning to in-person instruction at this time: the risk of significant community spread.</p> <p>We are seeing marked increases in cases throughout the state, disturbing numbers in DuPage County, as well as case after case of outbreaks in reopened schools across the country. We can look to our very own D205 community this summer, when sports camps were promptly shut down after several confirmed cases, making it very clear that the D205 community is not immune to this risk and that despite a great deal of effort on the part of the athletic coaches and staff, this virus can easily overpower even the strongest precautions.</p> <p>Our students, even and especially if they are asymptomatic carriers, will put all of the older population of the D205 community, both in and out of school, at risk of an extremely dangerous disease. I strongly believe we can help mitigate the risk to the D205 community by starting the year with remote learning.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
8/6/2020 15:26:47	Terry Neigel	<p>My name is Terry Neigel and I am an elementary art teacher at Jackson School. I have worked in the district for 16 years, for many years calling Field School my home, but as an itinerant teacher, I have worked in all the elementary buildings but two. Here's what I know about being in those buildings:</p> <p>Elmhurst educators are dedicated professionals who go above and beyond to support the children in our care. In my time here, I have witnessed teachers who out of their own pockets buy food and clothes for students, go on home visits to meet with parents of special needs students, who spend endless hours extending their learning to become better teachers and who work countless hours after school to make sure that student needs are met. Why do they do this? Because collectively we view the children in our care as not just our students, but our kids</p> <p>There is not one educator who would flinch at returning to school if they were confident that every student and staff member would be safe from contracting COVID 19. But that's just it, there is no guarantee and the thought of endangering our students, their families, ourselves and our families, and our community at large is the driving force behind our desire to start the year in remote learning. All the current data points to an uptick in Illinois and more importantly in Dupage County. The experts have a great deal to discover about this virus, including the way it spreads in younger children. However, there is one thing that they do agree upon, the fact that it is going to get worse before it gets better.</p> <p>Whose child, which teacher, whose elderly grandparent is it okay to sacrifice, when we have a viable option that puts no one at risk? Remote learning can be done well if we focus our energies now on making it engaging, effective, and emotionally supportive. Please choose the safety of our students, staff, and community and begin our school year with remote learning.</p>
8/6/2020 15:27:34	Jean Hogan	<p>Good evening . Our community meets the Phase 4 requirements for in person school set forth by our Govenenor. Furthermore, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends in person schooling for children age 13 and below. There is a risk in everything we do but the education of our children is essential and is most effective with in person school. However, if the teachers will not agree to in person school for all grades K-5, what about in person school for grades K-2 and students with required services delivered in school? Effective remote learning for all students is simply not realistic. There are too many students that will fall behind, especially the younger students and those with IEP's. Thank you for your time.</p>
8/6/2020 15:28:11	Jill Pettorelli	<p>Dr. Moyer &amp; the D205 BOE</p> <p>First let me thank you for the months of hard work you have all put in trying to come up with a solution for our children's health and education.</p> <p>Though I realize opinions change as quickly as the data comes in from the multitude of sources, I wanted to express my continued support for in-person learning during the 20-21 school year. It is so important to get these kids back to some form of normalcy both in their education and social interaction. My child is not a REACH student nor is he on any specific IEP plan, but he does struggle with his day to day learning. We need to be cognizant of those kids that need teacher interaction that remote learning can't and won't provide them.</p> <p>Please get these kids back in school!!!!</p> <p>Thank you for your time &amp; consideration.</p> <p>Jill Pettorelli Bryan Middle School parent</p>
8/6/2020 15:31:34	Sheri Styczen	<p>I can't thank you enough for everything you have been through. As an Administrator (in District 29) and an Emerson parent, I feel very strongly that in-person learning is so crucial to a child's cognitive development. Our District is going back in person as well. The numbers show that kids rarely contract the disease. This is absurd... Please, please, please continue to offer in-person learning. Thank you so much.</p>

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8/6/2020 15:33:38	Randy Fulara	<p>District 205 Board Members,</p> <p>As a father of Lincoln and York students, and as someone that has had a thankfully mild case of Covid, I ask that you please cancel the planned in-person classes and instead switch to entirely remote learning for the beginning of the school year.</p> <p>Watching the rising positivity rates in the area, it seems clear our community does not have this virus under control. Our Region 8's positivity rate has gone up a full percentage point in the last two weeks. We're almost at the 5% that the CDC director last week called the threshold for being considered a hotspot. Intentionally bringing together students into settings such as our schools, even if everybody is trying their best, just seems likely to further spread the disease as those students bring it to their homes and it spreads deeper into our community.</p> <p>While I understand the desire to have a normal school year and that the majority in our community still want to have classes in person, making that happen simply isn't practical, as can be seen by the district's overly complex plans and the many gaps involved in those plans that have been pointed out by others.</p> <p>Of those gaps, the biggest one I see is how to continue operating when teachers and staff catch it, which some will. Having gone through the required self-isolation period, with the rest of my household also quarantined to our home for two weeks, I have trouble seeing how the district will reliably obtain enough substitutes to keep things going in any kind of coherent fashion where students would actually be learning at all. And this is under the best case outcome where all those teachers have non-life threatening cases. It honestly seems foolish and cruel to ask our teachers and staff to knowingly throw themselves into such an environment when the obviously far safer and simpler alternative of remote learning is right in front of us.</p> <p>In short, the district's proposed experiment with in-person education during a pandemic seems destined to fail. My assumption is that, if the district really goes ahead with their plans, that we'll be reverting back to totally remote learning within a few weeks anyways. I sincerely hope the illnesses that end up shutting down our schools are not fatal or permanently damaging to those individuals, whether they be students, teachers, or other staff.</p> <p>It'd make far more sense to just devote your time and planning efforts to improving remote learning. That way, teachers can plan accordingly and our students can have a known, stable environment in which to learn. By being responsible and choosing all-remote learning, and giving our teachers the necessary tools and time, the board can provide our children with the safe, quality education they deserve while teaching them the critical life lessons of both personal and shared responsibility that will serve them well in the future.</p>
8/6/2020 15:34:30	Ann Lasn	<p>I believe our kids will do best being in class versus remote learning. We should push back the start day until after Labor Day in order to prepare properly for having kids in the class. Proper safety measures should be taken. Testing on all students and staff should be required prior to school. Once back to school, temperature checks/daily intake health forms/etc should be required as the experts would see fit. We need these kids back to a proper learning environment. Our schools should be preparing for this!</p>
8/6/2020 15:38:27	Dana Kircher	<p>Thank you to the school board and the committee members for working so hard to provide safe options for our children to return to school. As the conversation continues we ask more consideration be given to the mental health of our children. Several studies have shown that the majority of students in middle school and high school are at a much greater risk for mental health issues if they don't return to school than physical risks if they return with reasonable safeguards in place. The option for students to participate in 100% remote learning is a wonderful option for those students or their families who have higher health risks. We implore the teachers to spend less time on social media airing all the reasons they don't want to go back to school and more time working with the administration on how to maximize the students in-person learning experience.</p>
8/6/2020 15:42:49	Lara Bogenrief	<p>If we cannot safely send elementary kids back to school full time with the support of the teacher's union, our family supports a hybrid model - whatever that looks like - as long as kids get some kind of in-person interaction with a teacher on a regular basis, weekly or monthly. The district needs to list more specifics on how and what will be disinfected in between class groups and other measures they are going to take to limit the spread of germs and ventilate classrooms. I also think students should have the chance to see their classrooms and meet their teachers ahead of time, before the first day of school. This can be done in small groups for a short period of time but would be extremely beneficial, especially for new students and incoming kindergartners.</p>
8/6/2020 15:43:01	Nada Sherman	<p>As a physician, I recognize the anxiety that can surround the unknowns of this novel virus. I felt much the same way in March of this year when the virus had just began to appear in our hospitals. We are now four months into the virus and as a physician, I have become much less anxious about it because we have learned so much about the disease process, transmission, treatment etc. We have learned that the transmission rate from children to adults is very low. While the teacher's union might site articles showing campers transmitting the virus when together, these are all situations in which masks were not properly worn. If masks are properly worn by all bodies in the building, there should be no transmission within the school. In fact, there was an Australian study in a population of 8.1 million people which revealed a child-to-child transmission rate of .3% and the attack rate for child-to-staff to be 1%. The rate of staff-to-child transmission was 1.5%. The largest transmission rate was from staff to staff, which we can only speculate may have been secondary to lunch breaks together, teachers lounges etc. With proper mask wearing and social distancing, this number would be quite a bit lower. If the one testing site that had an outbreak was excluded the rates of transmission were actually .2-.7%. In addition, we know that the mortality rates are quite a bit lower than was initially feared. In children the mortality rates are 0%-0.3%, in contrast with influenza which has a mortality 10x higher. In fact, children are more likely to die by being struck by lightning- true fact. While the mortality of adults is slightly higher, it is still only .5%-1.5%. Adults are far more likely to die of an accident than COVID.</p> <p>This medical data is all in contrast with the mental health implications of social isolation in this "at-risk" group of teenagers. Multiple studies have evaluated the impact of isolation on students and have found isolation to increase the incidence of anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide. The same holds true for the isolation of our teachers and staff. As a physician, I can take care of the physically ill, as that is what I have sworn by the oath of Hippocrates to do. But as a mother, I cannot repair the damage that has been done, or may continue to be done, to the mental health of our children. I implore you to allow the children in our community to attend in-person schools for their social and emotional well-being. Our teachers are such a vital part of our children's lives. Each one of my own children can name an influential teacher that has impacted their lives in immutable ways. Please allow these precious relationships of mentor-to-students to continue in our community.</p> <p>A community which has always stood for the education of our youth.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
8/6/2020 15:45:40	Benjamin King	<p>I find it hypocritical that the board is meeting virtually while returning students and requiring teachers to perform in person instruction. This clearly shows the board is aware of the dangers of in person spread. They only care about their own safety and well-being, not those of students and staff. Furthermore by continuing to hold virtual board meetings I fear they are putting the district taxpayers in a position to have to cover future liability costs due to this. The board is acknowledging the danger of Coronavirus by not meeting in person. Taken with their rushed decision to conduct in person learning in classes where social distancing will be impossible due to the size of the schools and numbers of students. This board is now failing the students, teachers and taxpayers of Elmhurst.</p>
8/6/2020 15:47:12	Michelle Polach	<p>As working parents we have opted for in-person learning, but I do have a couple of major concerns. One being that students temperatures will not be checked as they enter the building. Certifying that they were checked at home is not enough of a safety procedure to keep students and staff safe during a pandemic. The second being that there has been no specific information on the remote learning. Daycare providers cannot be expected to be involved in elearning with multiple children so I sincerely hope they are going to be flexible on timing and deadlines for young students that will certainly require more assistance (I have a 1st grader and a preschooler). This may be after parents can get home from work in many instances and less than five hours will be available.</p>
8/6/2020 15:50:48	Shane and Leonore Kravov	<p>We are desperately hoping that district 205 fulfills their commitment to serve our kids in person for the hybrid schedule for 2020-2021 school year. I have personally seen A decline in both of my kids work habits, social habits, and physical well being during this time. As a parent it makes me anxious to think that remote learning will foster the same excitement and passion that a student can only get from a classroom setting. I signed both of them up for the hybrid schedule and only see this option as a positive outlet after months at home. Please allow those who are comfortable and healthy to go back to school.</p>

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8/6/2020 15:53:22	Laura McElligott	This coming school year will be unlike any other any of us have ever experienced. This pandemic has created challenges for all of us in our everyday lives in how we interact with each other socially, how we must behave to stay safe, and the need to adapt to changes quickly. I worry about our students, families, and our teachers-support staff in District 205. Our students have struggled emotionally to understand and grapple with the consequences this pandemic has placed upon them. Our families have been faced with tough choices emotionally, physically, and financially. The positivity rate has been increasing in DuPage in the last several weeks. I worry about the safety of my students, their families, my colleagues, my family and myself. I miss my students and I want to see them and teach in person, but I am concerned and worried about the consequences of doing so. I don't want to see one student, one parent, one staff member sick. One is one too many. That is why I feel our district should be starting the school year remotely and develop a plan to bring students and staff back to the classroom in a graduated safe manner. In the meantime, our teachers and support staff are eager to bring students lessons that are rich, meaningful, and engaging through remote learning.
8/6/2020 15:57:57	Chris Nardella	I want my children back in school. They need to be in school. Thank you!
8/6/2020 15:58:58	Michelle Zorovich	As a parent of 3 school age children (15, 12 and 11), I am writing to the school board to ask that you implement the in-person/hybrid school option. Our kids need interaction with teachers and classmates. Full-time remote learning was extremely challenging as my kids lacked any kind of structure or motivation. I understand that going back to school 5 days a week may not be an option but i ask that you please consider a hybrid approach.  Thank you, Michelle
8/6/2020 16:04:07	Tanya Chwojko	Our children need in person learning. Please consider having this option and give the teachers the supplies and tools they need to teach safely
8/6/2020 16:05:26	Jennifer Frahm	I am writing to request that students start school in person, even if we end up remote learning within a few weeks. Both of our kids (9th and 5th grades) have a diagnosed learning disability, which adds an additional layer of complication to remote learning when compared to other kids.  Teachers need to get to know these kids (at least a little bit) to understand their attitudes and work ethic. With the anonymous nature of full remote learning, low grades can look like the student is just being lazy or not caring, when it's largely the learning disability getting in the way.  These differences are hard to detect when technology is the only connection between the student and teacher. Having at least a few weeks of getting familiar with each other will make a substantial difference in the education of our kids.  I am not as concerned with these differences at the elementary level, where there are just a couple of teachers to get to know, and the focus is more on learning than on GPA. Remote learning is more problematic at the high school level for kids with learning disabilities. All of a sudden, learning and grades have a substantial impact on their futures. The accommodations put in place through 504s and IEPs aren't really there to help under fully a remote scenario.
8/6/2020 16:06:54	Justin Allen	Please let the kids go back, even if just for a few weeks, to get this semester off to a solid start.  Our family would greatly prefer in person learning.
8/6/2020 16:08:07	Jen Rice	As a mother of four boys in district 205, a junior and incoming freshman at York, an incoming 6th grader at Bryan and a 5th grader at Lincoln I feel compelled to share my family's need for in person learning. Before Covid-19 hit last winter I was fortunate to sit on a subcommittee for Thrive D205. I witnessed how new and ongoing decisions that were made involved a rigorous process. I have the utmost respect for the Superintendent to the Board Members to the parents and staff that dedicate their time for best practices for our children. We were gaining momentum and the excitement of focusing on wellness for our students, staff and community was a buzz.  That went away in March when our lives changed abruptly. Students, parents, teachers and administrators were faced with unimaginable shifts in schedules. Routines fell apart for most and that continues today. IT CONTINUES TODAY. Five months later and the thought of reversing time and not progressing has been a cause of stress and anxiety to so many. We need to progress and move forward.  Our kids and families need a wellness plan and support more than ever before. Mental health issues, anxiety and depression are skyrocketing in every community and we have to do more to make sure our kids don't follow suite. Those currently suffering need in person help through all the resources D205 can provide. They need experts in guidance, psychology and teachers who should have trained thoroughly to see them through this pandemic academically. Do not ask these kids to do this over Google or Zoom? Parents are not equipped to handle this while working to put food on the table and taking care of all the outside of school needs for their families. Parents need to be a source of strength, love and comfort not looking over their shoulders and helping them whittle wood or learning yet another new and amazing way to teach math.  Last spring, the abrupt change to remote learning without a solid structure brought missed assignments, rushed work and comments like "it doesn't matter" or "my grade won't change" and the love of learning evaporated, at least in my house. In person learning demands attention, responsibility, cooperation and collaboration to be successful. That is not just for the core English or Math class but most definitely for your life readiness classes. Parents cannot and should not be expected to fulfill the role of teacher. Even in this hybrid model we are expected to 3 days a week and remotely you are asking us to do 5? That is not a reasonable or feasible plan when 2/3rds of our taxes go to education.  At the end of May, our kids fell flat, our teachers fell flat, parents fell flat and everyone agreed it was a complete waste. It is easier now more than ever for families to move to areas that are progressive and not subjecting themselves to Unions, politics and sky high taxes. Please do not ruin this wonderful community by sending families packing.  The experts in the field are telling us we should be back in school. Can we please listen to science and stop letting fear cloud common sense. We can be a leader in Dupage and for the whole state of IL. Please start the school year with in person learning.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
	Kim Lampa	<p>Hi. My name is Kim Lampa. I'm a parent of D205 students and a teacher at York.</p> <p>So, needless to say, return to school is at the forefront of my mind and the main topic of my conversations.</p> <p>Most parents I speak with regularly would much prefer their students begin the year in the classroom because they're hopeful it will be safe and that it will be more beneficial (academically, emotionally) than remote learning.</p> <p>Similarly, I cannot speak for every teacher, but I can say that I have not spoken with even one teacher who is looking forward to possibly teaching on a computer all day, to meeting students for the first time in a virtual setting, to not collaborating with colleagues in person -- that's not what we signed up for, that's not why we entered the profession.</p> <p>As a parent, I want my daughter to have a safe, fulfilling senior year. But I need to know more whether the benefits of her returning to the school building will outweighs the risks. I'm still not sure.</p> <p>As a teacher, I'm responsible for students' learning, behavior and whereabouts; however, I'm not confident (at least not yet) that I understand exactly how to meet that responsibility.</p> <p>I'm sure administrators are trying to develop more specific plans, and some are probably doable. I can also imagine that sometimes, as administrators flesh out a seemingly good plan to overcome just one of their many safety obstacles, they all of sudden run into a brick wall of reality.</p> <p>I do understand, but I (we) need more information.</p> <p>Here are just some of my questions --</p> <p>With the changing number of students/faculty in attendance (after final survey results and leave requests), will my schedule change last minute, and will I end up teaching a class I've never taught? Will I find this out a week or a few days before school starts? Sure I'm a professional and need to rely on years of experience, but there are books to read and lessons to plan.</p> <p>What exactly is the expectation for how I should deliver instruction to A &amp; B groups? Will I have another computer with a camera for remote students to view class while I'm using my laptop for presentation slides and instruction?</p> <p>Can I combine in-class students and remote students into Zoom groups? Can I require synchronous attendance from remote students, so I can plan ahead and intentionally organize student groups in a way that differentiates, enriches, supports, etc.? If we are unable to require synchronous, hopefully teachers will not be once again be blamed for lack of engagement/learning.</p> <p>I'm pretty sure the district is planning to purchase masks -- will that be for all students and teachers or just extras for those who forget at home? Will teachers have extra masks in the classroom if a student's breaks?</p> <p>What procedure do we follow if another student thinks it's funny to yank off a friend's mask as a seemingly harmless joke? I would like to hand that kid another mask immediately. What's the discipline protocol? Do I call the dean? I normally avoid removing students from class for behavior reasons (definitely not the best tone for a positive classroom community or the social emotional health of students), but that behavior can be dangerous.</p> <p>How will we manage/social distance classes that are not evenly divided across the alphabet or loaded with students on one end of the alphabet--for example, 20 students whose names begin with A-L and 10 whose names begin with M-Z?</p> <p>What is the protocol if one of my in-person students is showing symptoms? I don't want to overreact to a kid who looks a little tired and has the sniffles, but I also don't want to ignore a potential problem?</p> <p>How/when will I be informed if somebody in my class tests positive? What's the protocol/time frame for informing a teacher if they're exposed to a student/staff member who's tested positive?</p> <p>If I test positive but I'm asymptomatic or have light symptoms, will I still be able to teach my classes from home maybe with a sub in the classroom?</p> <p>What are plans to improve air quality/flow in building? Filters? Fans?</p> <p>Is self-certification the only answer?</p> <p>If we go remote, will some students be able to come to school for extra help, needed resources, leadership meetings, etc.?</p> <p>If we're remote, can we meet with students outside while weather permits?. I've seen some remote plans that still allow students to come to school.</p> <p>I really just want to know if this will work well (or at least somewhat well) or if we're risking safety for what could end being an even more stressful situation for students, staff, parents, etc.</p> <p>***** If out of time, you may stop here, but I think the rest is important to Remind our community that this is difficult for everybody involved. *****</p> <p>Please know these are similar to the questions/concerns of so many of my colleagues. Despite comments that either directly state or indirectly imply that teachers are being lazy along with the spreading of false, but still very hurtful, narratives, we really do want to be in the classroom. From my experience, when we're not dealing with all the safety protocols and social distancing, teaching in the classroom is more fun and MUCH more efficient than teaching on the computer.</p> <p>I will always prefer a classroom full of student energy, but I'm also much more confident about remote learning now than I was in March--especially if students are REQUIRED to attend classes synchronously and given resources to do so.</p> <p>Most parents, teachers and administrators are trying their best, but they're torn between so many bad choices. Unfortunately, some have made claims that are unsubstantiated, sometimes politically biased, and often unfair.</p> <p>I'm usually an eternal optimist; however, the divisiveness of the past few weeks has become wearisome. It's difficult and disappointing to read some comments on social media and in community correspondence. But what really breaks my heart is to see adults refusing to model the research-based, critical thinking and rhetorical skills we work so hard to instill in our students. And let's not forget empathy!</p> <p>Please be compassionate, constructive and collaborative. We're all in this together!</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 16:13:52	Don Williams	<p>I have been a third-grade teacher at Edison for 10 years, and at Conrad Fischer for 2 years before that. The last time I addressed the board, I was serving as Chairman in the last of my 6 years on the District 205 Foundation and had the honor of presenting the grants for approval. I am proud that this school district provided a great foundation for my daughters that went through the entire system from Hawthorne to York. I was proud of our staff last spring when Dr. Moyer sent us messages praising our hard work and flexibility. He even said that he was proud of our commitment to the students and that he loved us.</p> <p>I do not envy your current position as decision makers for our community. There are some very difficult options in front of you and you are constrained with limited information. I know that you are keeping your own children in mind when making these choices. I am happy that I have had the chance to meet and teach a few of your kids in my classroom. I am looking forward to meeting and teaching a new group of third graders this year too.</p> <p>There are so many things to cover in third grade. I am responsible to cover all the academic subjects. Collaboration, communication, creativity, self-control, compassion, grit, and perseverance are just as important. But, my most important responsibility is to get my kids home safely every night.</p> <p>Teachers are reminded of that ultimate responsibility every fall when we participate in active shooter drills. You understand that responsibility because you have invested thousands of dollars to improve the safety of our buildings. Together we have prepared for such a tragedy.</p> <p>In our building we are faced with putting 17 to 27 grade schoolers together in a classroom. Although our building leadership teams have been working for days on how to keep our students safe, there are clear gaps in our ability to follow what are currently the best recommendations from health professionals. There are also gaps in our current plan about what we will do if students begin to get sick and what the next steps will be. Let's work together to solve these concerns.</p> <p>I have purchased my masks and face shields. I am ready to dig in and help my students and their families during these challenging times. It's possible that I will give my life for my kids, but the kids should not have to put theirs at risk. You tell your children to listen to their teachers. Maybe it's time for you to listen to your teachers too. Please work with us and keep our children safe.</p>
8/6/2020 16:15:51	Michelle Barclay	<p>It is essential that our students return to school. Even if it's for a half of day. I am sure the district can put together many precautionary measures to make it safe for teachers and students. We need and want in-person learning. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 16:15:58	Jennifer Flessner	<p>I'm incredibly supportive of my children having the opportunity and option to attend school in person this year. Despite the inherent risk of any public environment during this time, the importance of face to face learning, socialization, educational support and mental health is vital to my children's ongoing development. I urge the Board to stay the course on the hybrid approach allowing our parents the right to choose and weigh risks for our children individually. Thank you to the Board and the leaders for their ongoing contribution to our community.</p>
8/6/2020 16:16:01	Tom Canale	<p>Thank you for your effort, thoughtfulness &amp; time. We are all in this together &amp; I'm sensitive to everyone being at risk, everywhere. Children should be afforded the option of a high quality In-person education. Teachers &amp; kids can wear masks like everyone else is. I wear a mask when I work, so do wait staff, doctors, plumbers, etc. Teachers need to teach, like every other essential service who has adjusted their manner of work. This is our new normal till we have a vaccine. The kids need to be offered an opportunity to be in school if their parents are comfortable. Thank you.</p>

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		<p>Dear Board of Education, D205 administration, and principals,</p> <p>I can't even imagine the stress you all must have in the new world we live in. The decisions that rest with you, collectively, to ensure our students, teachers and other stakeholders are safe while providing the best education for our community is certainly an immeasurable task. I had hoped that the process you took to get to the D205 plan would be sound and we would be able to get our children back to school. Unfortunately, the recent activity I'm seeing in social media by the ETC, the community and others forced me to step into an area that I wish we could let, you, as experts decide. I believe the D205 plan you have set forth to the community is sound. I believe you have taken into consideration the needs of our community by providing options and flexibility. However, it appears that certain stakeholders appear to be in violent disagreement with the plan. Its difficult for me to put it in words how disappointed I am with the ETC for not voicing their concerns earlier. This seems to be a massive failure on their point. To not have issues with the plan during the 6 week process and not speak up, to then all the sudden make a 360 turn is simply unacceptable. To say they didn't realize cases or things changed its simply silly.</p> <p>We have many working families in this community that need our children to go back to school. For the mental well-being of our parents and students, we need to make this happen. I appreciate the fact that when teachers walk into the buildings they might feel less secure and safe as they would pre-Covid. However, this is the world we live in. I also feel the same way when I walk into a grocery store and when my husband and I walk into the office to go to work. This isn't going away overnight and to think that we can jeopardize our children's education let alone causing academic disengagement, isolation, anxiety, depression, loss of social, emotional development and academic in-school support system – all leading to mental health and destructive behaviors. Additionally, IEP students cannot get the needed services they need through google and zoom meetings. It does not work.</p> <p>While I support the plan laid out, you might need to consider alternative plans if you can't get the teachers support. I have started a petition for a shorter in-person school day in hopes this could be a viable alternative to the current plan. Please don't just move to all remote like many of the other districts have done. Think about ways to modify it with still allowing some flexibility to get into the building. In a short few days, I received over 90 families who signed my petition and I don't have easy access to families outside Jefferson and Bryan. See petition here for an alternative approach.</p> <p>Other alternative approach includes:  -half day focusing on reading, writing and math</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rotate the A/B schedule am/pm</li> <li>- Rotate the A/B weekly or every other week.</li> <li>- Make all specials remote</li> <li>- Use gyms and lunch rooms as pop up classrooms</li> </ul> <p>I can't stress enough that full remote learning is not the answer. Please don't be biased by the minority of the community who want to keep their kids home and upset teachers who don't agree with the plan. The economy is dependent on getting back to work and our children are dependent on a brick and mortar return to school. I believe this virus is real – there is no doubt about it. But, with the right safety measures, we can do this. To start remote leaves very little room to face to face. Covid-19 likely will get worse in the winter. Then what? Our children won't enter into a school for a year. I can't even fathom how we can tell our children they won't go to school for a year.</p> <p>If we go to remote learning, just as I had to do last spring, I likely will be doing most of the work for my children, doing it between conference calls, submitting it after I work and only causing them more harm in their education track and harm for me at my job. Who wins in that situation? Many parents like me, with IEP students, do not have the flexibility to hope their children will dial into a Zoom meeting, do their work and submit without SIGNIFICANT assistance at home. I've been looking for a tutor/sitter for 6 weeks and there is no childcare out there who can assist in the proper way. The remote learning days will continue to be filled with tears, yelling and unsupervised screen time. Please find a way to get a plan that helps our families. I'm actively looking into private schools as well and really don't want to pull my children out of our wonderful school. We pay a lot of taxes in this town and I expect the district to find a way.</p> <p>My 8 year-old daughter has been wearing a mask all day at camp this week. She said to me this morning, I'm going to try really hard all week to wear the mask at camp so I can go back to school. Don't deprive our children of what they need for success. Kids are resilient and they will be able to adopt to a modify approach in the classroom. Teachers, like they do every day, can maintain social distancing.</p> <p>If the district feels there is no alternative approach and moves to remote, I BEG you to consider allowing IEP students to come into the building. Remote services do not work. My children will continue to struggle and be more and more behind. Please find a way to get them into the building. Also, there should be no reason why teachers do not come into the building if we are remote. They should not be teaching classes in their homes. It is expected by the community that they are in their classrooms. I think you will receive a lot of push back if they are allowed to work from home.</p> <p>Please inform us as soon as possible for updates as we need to make decision on private schooling. There are minimal spots available.</p> <p>If there are more ideas you need, please reach out. I am desperate as many of our families in the community are at this point. We need our children in school.</p> <p>Thank you for reading. Coming from a family of educators, I know you're being bombarding with feedback. I appreciate your time in reading this email and the support you have for this community.</p>
8/6/2020 16:19:06	Meredith vogel	Meredith Vogel
8/6/2020 16:19:06	Kathleen Martin	I support keeping remote learning for the first semester, in order to keep the children, teachers, other staff, and community safe. Unfortunately, safety regarding Covid is not a personal choice, as all of us are vulnerable. Thank you.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 16:20:52	Michele Bowles	<p>I have 21 years of experience teaching in person, but only a couple of months experience teaching remotely. As difficult as remote teaching was in spring, I know my students who watched my videos and actively participated in my lessons, learned what I needed to teach them. Remote teaching is much more stressful and difficult than being in classrooms and I would LOVE to be back in the classroom- however, the details for this year are NOT yet in place and safety is a big concern.</p> <p>Out of nowhere, I had to get a pacemaker last year. Just last week I sat and discussed with my cardiologist how so little is known about Covid-19 and if or how it affects the heart. As I headed home from the appointment I was alerted to a new study that showed 78 out of 100 healthy people who had the virus now have structural changes to their heart. The majority of them now have the biomarker that only shows up when you have had a heart attack! So within hours of meeting with my cardiologist things changed immensely for me.</p> <p>This is the problem we face: Every day new information is learned about side effects and long lasting health issues for people who have contracted the virus. So shouldn't we err on the side of caution for the health of our students and staff? Can we guarantee desks will be 6 feet away? Not whenever possible- but always? How many students will fit in classrooms? How will passing periods be safe? Do we have enough rooms and teachers to safely house all the children? Would half-days be better so we can skip lunch altogether and clean in between sessions? Will there be extra masks for kids who get a bloody nose or sneeze a mess into their mask? What technology do we have to help us teach remotely AND in person at the same time? Or are we not teaching both at the same time? What is really going to happen on Wednesdays? We are only 18 days away from kids being in buildings yet there are so many unanswered questions about how to truly implement this plan safely. (Principals have been given an impossible task.)</p> <p>This virus is serious. Safety is serious. Until we can guarantee desks will be 6 feet apart and masks will be worn all the time, we cannot pretend that our schools will be AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE for our community, so unfortunately we need to begin with remote learning. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 16:21:12	Tina Beckberger	<p>We strongly support the school reopening plan the D205 has proposed as it is imperative that children are given the option of returning to in person classes! While we need to consider the full benefits and risks of reopening there is strong evidence and guidance from CDC that the benefits of in person instruction outweighs the risks, as children are very low risk for contracting and transmitting COVID and account for a very small percentage of cases and deaths. We feel very strongly that the lack of in-person education will continue to put students behind and slow the pace of academic learning. D205 has put together a very thorough plan to help meet the needs of families that would like attend in person and give the option to those to continue elearning. Please consider keeping the proposed plan in place to allow our children to return to in person education, while taking the necessary precautions to protect students, teachers and families!</p>
8/6/2020 16:22:13	Mira Spasov	<p>Our family prefers to start the school year with remote learning due to safety concerns for the students, teachers and staff. We didn't choose the remote option on the survey because of 1) the lack of information on how remote learning would be implemented and 2) we are allowed to switch to remote at any time. I understand that it isn't ideal and we shouldn't be "gaming" the system. However, D205 asked us to commit and my family was unable to make a decision based on the information provided. I expect D205 to provide rigorous remote education to my children. My children need to be held accountable, provided with constructive feedback, and expected to achieve just as much during eLearning as they would in the classroom. I hope the D205 administration and ETC will work together and focus on the real issues affecting us and the children, and prepare a robust eLearning plan, as there is a good chance all students might have to convert to remote at some point during this school year.</p>
8/6/2020 16:33:14	Patty Iverson	<p>I have been a teacher at York for 14 years, a resident of Elmhurst for 29 years and my husband and I have 2 daughters who have gone through D205 schools. As the summer progressed, I was looking forward to my last year before retirement, the last Girls Volleyball team I would lead through a season, the last round of Who Killed Hamilton? movie productions, and the final Was Jefferson a Hero or Hypocrite? discussions in APUSH, the last research papers I'd have the pleasure of reading in ACP US History. But the reality of COVID 19 is that this year will look a lot different for all of us.</p> <p>Yet while I continue to plan for my students, I am still unsure of the precautions that have been taken to protect them, me, my colleagues, and our loved ones at home. Personally, I have purchased masks, shields, and plexiglass to create a bubble around my desk. What the district is doing to protect us has not been made clear. I see on the DuPage County COVID site that cases in Elmhurst continue to rise and more than 25% of these cases are linked to congregate settings. According to the Patch, the Elmhurst COVID 19 cases per one thousand make its statistically probable that we will have these same incident rates in our schools.</p> <p>I have thought back on all of the hurdles I have had to clear during my years of teaching. Never did I believe I would be asked to be in a classroom where the lives around me would be put at risk. I am now confronted with the tough choice of teaching this final year and savoring the lasts of these experiences or retiring early to ensure my health and that of my family.</p> <p>This should not be a choice that a passionate and caring teacher should have to make. It's tearing me apart.</p>
8/6/2020 16:35:04	Anonymous	<p>As a parent of children who appear to fall within the selection minority (remote learning), I am fearful they will be left behind in the District 205 administrative preparations for the start of the 2020-2021. Dr. Moyer has articulated that \$500,000 will be spent on preparing the district for in-person learning but there consistently is no mention for how the district will support our remote students.</p>
8/6/2020 16:35:14	Anonymous	<p>As a parent of children who appear to fall within the selection minority (remote learning), I am fearful they will be left behind in the District 205 administrative preparations for the start of the 2020-2021. Dr. Moyer has articulated that \$500,000 will be spent on preparing the district for in-person learning but there consistently is no mention for how the district will support our remote students.</p>
8/6/2020 16:37:33	Michelle Huber	<p>Dear Dr. Moyer and members of the Board of Education,</p> <p>We wanted to express our utmost thanks for the incredible hard work, time and dedication you all have put forth creating the OpenD205 plans in the midst of these unprecedented times. The level of detail and thoughtful analysis that went into the process was clearly evident and we very much appreciate the comprehensive and ongoing communications that continue to keep the community updated.</p> <p>We are a family that selected in-person learning opportunities and throughly support the plans presented.</p> <p>Many thanks, The Huber Family</p>
8/6/2020 16:38:34	Anonymous	<p>Will District 205 be requiring families of students electing in person attendance to sign waivers if their child/children are exposed to, contract, or become ill (even die) from COVID-19 while attending in-person learning?</p>
8/6/2020 16:39:54	Amy Pointon	<p>An elementary in-school plan that only dictates social distancing "as much as possible" is not a plan. Schools in other districts have provided parents with classroom layouts showing how the distancing will work. My son had 28 kids in his class last year. If 85% of kids go back, 6ft of distancing seems highly unlikely. I am extremely disappointed with the lack of details in our plan and with the unwillingness of the Board to work cooperatively with the Elmhurst Teachers Union. Forcing parents to commit to either in-school or remote without giving us enough information is wrong and serves no purpose. I have heard several parents who have chosen in-school knowing full well that they will likely move to remote. But as you can only change your mind one direction, it's easier to just say in-school. So know that your 85% of parents who chose in-school is not a true number.</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 16:41:39	Anonymous	What is the District's plan for social and emotional support for students who are involved in COVID exposure that adversely affects a teacher or family member's health?
8/6/2020 16:42:48	Michael Eisa	I would like to see my 3 children back in school. At least 2 days. They need the in person direction and learning. The efforts to keep everyone safe look very thought out. Thanks
8/6/2020 16:46:56	Kim Neitling	I will be the first to say that I want to be back with my students in the classroom like normal. But unfortunately it's not going to be anywhere close to normal. There are so many routines and procedures still to figure out before I have eager and ready to learn 2nd graders sitting in front of me. My everyday instruction heavily relies on small group teaching so that I can work with students who need more guided teaching to achieve the learning target. I don't see how this is possible while keeping the children and myself socially distant. The students will not get to enjoy lunch like normal when they are all sitting and facing the same direction, unable to socialize while they eat. One of my biggest concerns is not being able to console a seven year old without holding their hand or being able to get within 6 feet of them.  This is not an ideal situation for anyone to be in; administration, teachers, or parents. But together, we can make the best of this situation at hand. The students and our children our watching our every move. They will respond, how we respond.
8/6/2020 16:49:03	Chrissy LaPenna	Good evening, my name is Chrissy LaPenna and I am a teacher at Sandburg Middle School. When I was hired by district 205 I was excited to be joining such a prestigious and accomplished school district. As a teacher I have grown and worked hard to continue my education so that I could best serve the community of Elmhurst. I love my job. I come to school each and every day excited to see my students and excited to help them reach their full potential. As a teacher, I do everything in my power to do what is best for them. Sometimes, like in our current situation, that includes doing what may not be the most popular thing. I strongly believe that a remote start to the school year is in the best and safest interest of everyone in the Elmhurst community. This includes not only my students but their families, my colleagues, their families, our administrators, and members of the community. I would truly miss not being in the classroom and seeing my students as the year starts. But knowing that I was doing what needed to be done to keep them as healthy as I could, would far outweigh any negatives.  Many families have opted for in-person learning for various reasons. It is clear that some of these concerns are due to the perceived ineffective e-learning situation from the spring. I am not arguing that some may have had valid points however that situation was far different from where we are now. As a school board and administration, you have demanded excellence and rigor from the teachers in D205. As a teacher I am grateful for that. Why not start now and work with the teachers to help develop a remote learning program that is rigorous, effective, and forward-thinking? Show the community that we hear their concerns and are actively working together to make things better this time.  Please work with the teacher's council to do what is in the best and safest interest of all parties whether it is the popular decision or not. Start the 2020-2021 school year remotely and bring students and staff back when safety indicates that it can be done. Thank you.
8/6/2020 16:49:23	Sarah Bello	I am writing today to express my opinion and on how necessary it is for our kids to go back to school in person full-time. I have a first grader at Lincoln and a preschool age son at Madison. Just this week er has yearly check ups with our Elmhurst pediatrician who kindly reminded me that the pediatric associations have all said that kids should be going back to school it's the politicians in the teachers unions that are the ones who are objecting. In addition to that my sister is an ER nurse at bringham and women's in Boston has been working directly with Covid patients and her daycare for her children the other essential workers who were in direct contact with patients with Covid have been running full time since March with only one single scare of a child with a cough who turned out to be suffering from seasonal allergies. So many Americans have had to make the decision to either go back to work or to make the choice to stay home I'm unaware why teachers would be exempt from this. I very much encourage the teachers that feel that they are at risk should take advantage of FMLA. Children need to be in school. Remote learning will hurt the lower income parts of our communities who are already being crushed by the effects of Covid for so many reasons. Children are not the super spreaders they are not the ones who are becoming very ill. Our hospitals are not even close to capacity. Providing the option for e-learning is great anyone who doesn't want to go to school in person doesn't have to and any teacher who doesn't want to go to school in person also does it have to actually make the choices and deal with the same consequences that everyone else in the entire United States has to make .
8/6/2020 16:49:40	Shannon Heflin	After reading through the Board's plan regarding in-person learning, I strongly believe that the school year should start out via remote learning. It is evident that the plan was created without many details in place to protect not only our students but the teachers and faculty at the schools. There was no mention made of what procedures are in place if a child is found to have tested positive, does the entire school close down and quarantine for 14 days? What about schools in the surrounding area? This in turn could disrupt education especially if the school has to shut down immediately. Also excluded in the plan was what the board will do to assist teachers who could potentially test positive. Of major concern to me is the fact that the schools are relying on the honor system for parents to check their child's temperature at home and to have the sense to keep their child at home if their temperature is above 100.4. Everyone has known someone either at work or school who was clearly sick and should have stayed at home. How do we know that some will act any differently? The Board had the sense to shut down schools in early March to prevent infection, but now that cases are continuing to soar to the millions in the United States the Board now wants schools to reopen. How does the Board justify telling us as well as our children that schooling and education are important, but then refuse to create policies that reflects science and the voices of education people? In order to prevent and avoid major disruptions for students and families due to potential outbreaks or an additional quarantine remote learning should be put into place.
8/6/2020 16:49:57	Jeff Temple	Let the parents decide!  Elmhurst schools should be re-opened in full, with in-person learning. If parents have concerns about the risks to their children, we should be allowed the option of remote learning.  There is abundant evidence that remote learning, even as part of a hybrid plan, has significant downsides. Under the D-205 hybrid plan, kids will face an academic setback that will be hard to recover. This is happening after the spring semester, compounding the negative effects. A teacher can make a huge difference in whether a student "gets it" and is able to keep pace with the class.  There is plenty of data showing that students are at less risk of catching and spreading the virus. One recent study compared students in Finland and Sweden, two countries with different approaches to the pandemic. The study found that, "a report comparing risk of covid-19 in different professions, showed no increased risk for teachers." It further stated, "closure or not of schools had no measurable direct impact on the number of laboratory confirmed cases in school-aged children in Finland or Sweden."  In France, the Institut Pasteur published a study that concluded, "the children did not spread the infection to other students or to teachers or other staff at the schools." Studies in Germany, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, and Iran indicated similar results.  We will always have uncertainty and risk. Prior outbreaks of H1N1, SARS, and influenza have not led to shutdowns, and neither should this one.  D-205 should provide information and frequent updates to both students and parents. Too often, communications from D-205 schools are long on platitudes and short on data. What is the specific evidence is driving the board's or school's decisions? What are the actual data showing? What percent of students have sick days? What percent of teachers have sick days?  These would be among the most helpful pieces of information to provide, so that parents can make appropriate decisions for our kids.
8/6/2020 16:50:14	Katie Swiniuch	Hello my name is Katie Swiniuch and I am a special education teacher at Churchville Middle School. This year I will be starting my 13th year as a teacher, a job I love at a school I love even more. I am writing to you today to beg you to start this school year remotely and open schools gradually when the time is right. We are living in an unpredictable world facing a virus that we truthfully do not know very much about. You are faced with a tough decision. There are many factors that go into this decision, however the one factor you should be thinking about is safety. The safety of every single person in District 205 should be your utmost priority. One life lost is one too many when you have the ability to prevent this by starting off the school year remotely.

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 16:53:04	Danielle D	I am concerned that at this point we still don't have clear safety protocols in place, no way to effectively space rooms with large numbers of students, and an extremely lacking plan for remote learning. I don't even know how my child would safely walk into school and get to their classroom. The district has made it clear that if you select remote you are stuck with that, where as parents still have options if they select in person. The remote option is being made to feel like the lesser option and doesn't guarantee a grade level teacher at the child's home school. We are too close to the beginning of school to navigate all the outstanding questions and to fix the holes in the current plan, for the safety of our teachers, staff and students we must start remote.
8/6/2020 16:54:37	Laura Pfau	<p>My name is Laura Pfau, and I have been teaching English at York for the past seven years. I was lucky enough to have completed my student teaching at York, and while I was hired in another district for the three years immediately after student teaching, I chose to leave that district and return to the place where I was initially inspired by what it means to be a great teacher. I chose to give up the promise of tenure in a previous district so I could return to District 205 because I wanted to be surrounded by passionate professionals who care about best practice, delivering quality instruction, and fostering student growth.</p> <p>I love working at York, and I look forward to this coming year when I'll be teaching freshmen, freshmen honors, and senior honors ACP Rhetoric. I look forward to getting to know my students as humans, hearing what they share in our class discussions, engaging in the exciting exchange of ideas, having the opportunity to facilitate and watch as students help each other and respond to one another in meaningful conversation and thought, and seeing them glow with personal pride when they work hard to master a skill. The energy in a classroom and the relationships that are built there are so powerful, and I know I am not alone when I say that I miss this environment desperately.</p> <p>However, despite concerns to the contrary, these elements CAN be recreated via online instruction. Technology has provided us with amazing opportunities, and I belong to professional organizations that I have spent my summer investing in so that I can be prepared for the inevitable return to remote learning.</p> <p>We can all agree that the spring's e-learning presented challenges, not the least of which were created due to intentions that were focused on doing the opposite: we began with an original, insightful, and well-intentioned desire to put student social-emotional needs first. We were supported by Dr. Moyer to remember what was truly important: to focus on checking in with students and providing formative feedback, not on grading them harshly. We were reminded that we shouldn't (and, in fact couldn't) require students to log in at a specific time for synchronous learning because we didn't know what our students were experiencing at home. Those guidelines were appropriate for the spring, and I personally reached out to Dr. Moyer to express my thanks for understanding, for "getting it," as I wrote to him. While some community members perhaps felt there could have been more rigor, I believe that Dr. Moyer was right in prioritizing the need for us to be flexible.</p> <p>Today, the need to be flexible continues, and now we need to be flexible in the ways we challenge our students and incorporate synchronous learning experiences for them in this "new normal." Given the sheer number of students and staff at York — even with the hybrid model, we will exceed 1,600 people in the building: the crowded passing periods, the congested restrooms and long lines for the water fountains, the movement from room to room which results in an exponential increase of the number of contacts each person will have, the fact that not only students but also teachers move to different rooms throughout the school day, the safety concerns are many, and the risks are high. We need to embrace the fact that, while the full year (or perhaps even the first semester) does not need to be entirely remote, the beginning of the year must be.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
8/6/2020 16:55:56	Lisa	<p>I am Extremely concerned with the children with IEP's Getting their needs met to its fullest. Virtual living for children with IEP's was not successful and I don't do not believe it will be successful. No matter what changes are made to better remote learning I don't believe that those changes will be affective for children with IEP's.</p> <p>I also disagree with school registration fees being charged at full rate since we are planning to possibly go to five full remote days no matter what the time line will be!</p> <p>Grading is also a major concern for me as I am not Qualified to be a teacher.</p>
8/6/2020 16:57:04	Rick Harpster	I am writing to voice my strong opinion that in-person school must occur in Elmhurst starting with the new school year in a couple weeks. It is so important for the students to experience in person learning and all its benefits, and the teachers in our community should feel pride with how many families in our community want their children back in our schools. The e-learning experience last spring was a disappointment as my children went from 25 hours in person with their teacher per week to 25 minutes. It was an effort that owes the tax payers of Elmhurst a refund. However, we all understand how unprecedented that time was and how it snuck up on all of us so quickly, but we can't continue with an e-learning plan six months later. If we're not in school full-time in a few weeks, I feel a significant property tax refund is owed to the community's residents. Speaking of, is that not the logical solution to any opposition to opening this fall? The customers of our schools (i.e. the taxpayers of our community) have strongly voiced their desire in the recently completed survey to have their children back in school. There is no one more cared for than a child by his/her parents, so that should speak volumes as to the safety of an in-person school environment from the perspective of Elmhurst parents. And by the way, any teacher who doesn't want to teach in person can take a pay cut – the dollars saved can be returned to parents in the form of property tax credits so that the parents can use those dollars to do the job that the teachers union is reportedly resisting. Returned funds can be used for private school, tutoring, wi-fi enhancements, and other needs that would allow parents to find alternatives if the school is not providing the services we expect. It is proven that e-learning is less productive and any teacher that chooses to be less productive can be paid like a less productive employee. This will flush out who is really "fearful" and who may have other motivations because if you are truly afraid for your health, you would take a pay cut to assure your safety. Do you know why the grocery store cashier, the hair stylist, the restaurant waiter and the assembly line worker went back to work many weeks ago in work environments that certainly do not pose more risk than teaching? Because guess how much they would have gotten paid if they stayed home? I expect this School Board to stand up for the taxpayers of our community and represent the children and parents they were elected to represent. Open Elmhurst schools!
8/6/2020 16:57:47	Nicole Wolf-Molinari	If remote learning is the only option, what are your plans for special education students? Remote learning in the spring was a complete bust for kids with IEP. Many kids didn't receive services that legally should've been provided. So what will be different if our children are forced into remote learning?

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8/6/2020 16:57:48	Janet Taylor	<p>First and foremost, I request that the board and administration continue discussions with the Elmhurst Teachers Council in a respectful manner. I have seen ETC provide countless valid concerns, including recommendations from their expertise on how to resume instruction in a safe manner. In response, I have seen the board (specifically Ms. Kara Caforio) as well as Dr. Moyer respond using divisive and attacking language that is not only inappropriate but also inaccurate. In these unprecedented times, it is most essential that we all lead as adults with empathy for everyone's individual needs and concerns. The concerns that all stakeholder have expressed are real and need to be met with compassion and understanding to engage in an authentic commitment for collaboration.</p> <p>Next, there continue to be a plethora of concerns regarding full in-person learning in the elementary schools. The data that the district provided regarding preference of in-person and remote only is a skewed and inaccurate understanding of families' intentions. Many parents have stated that they plan on sending their children to in-person learning with the expectation that the school will not have space to accommodate students, pushing the district to change to a hybrid approach. Others have expressed that they will send their children to school knowing that they can pull them into remote at any time. Therefore, this poses several more concerns that bring us back to question, why are we not moving to a full remote model?</p> <p>This brings us to your recent release of the "Decision Criteria" Flow Chart. This was the chart linked in Dr. Moyer's recent correspondence that outlines how the district would determine the need to move to the various models of instruction. This flow chart appears to be more of a downline of blaming teachers should the district decide to move to remote learning. Five of the six items listed indicate a reliance on staffing instead of looking at all the significant logistic and health concerns that exist in our schools. Your language is set up to blame teachers for all issues outside of staff control. While staffing is a significant concern, ETC has provided an 8-page document outlining specific concerns with recommendations to help mitigate based on their expertise.</p> <p>A significant amount of unknowns still have yet to be fully addressed with regards to your in-person learning and remote learning plan, to which I do not have time to voice at this meeting. I respectfully urge you to push back your student start date, keep all students and staff safe by starting remote, and give all stakeholders time to make plans, support students and staff with a slow and safe transition, and monitor the cases of COVID-19 in DuPage and surrounding counties. Now is not the time to rush into decisions when information is changing daily. Instead, take the time to be conservative with our transition to keep our community as safe and stable as possible.</p>
8/6/2020 16:58:15	Jennifer Hungate	<p>As a family with only one option (remote learning) due to medical considerations, we are concerned about the significant focus/emphasis that will be placed on planning for the in-person majority and the constant adjustments that will need to be made for in-person learning. Beyond the anticipated protocols that the District will have to have in place for reported COVID exposures, what protocols will be in place for in-person students who opt out at any time. Will there be provisions in place for remote classrooms to remain stable through January? I respectfully request restrictions from adding students transitioning from in-person learning to remote classrooms that are established at the start of the school year. Will the district be able to guarantee that remote students will be provided a stable education through January? Our family has considered stability and consistency as factors in addition to selecting remote learning due to health concerns.</p>
8/6/2020 17:02:14	Sheila Fleming	<p>Good evening. My name is Sheila Fleming. I am about to start my 37th year teaching and my 27th at York High School. I have had a wonderful career with only four more years to go.</p> <p>As I reflect back over all of my years at York, I recall only two truly horrible experiences: the death of a brilliant junior girl from an undiscovered medical condition and the death of an amazing senior boy as a result of a tragic accident. My heart broke when his grieving mom embraced me and said, "I can't imagine how hard it must be to bury one of your students."</p> <p>There is nothing that the Board of Education could have done to prevent these tragedies; however, now, we are in the midst of a global pandemic. The numbers in DuPage have climbed in recent weeks, and as time goes on, more DuPage residents will become ill from the coronavirus, and some will die. This time, D205 and the school board CAN do something. You have the power to assure with 100% certainty that no one will carry COVID-19 from District 205 classrooms to hallways to buses to homes. The only way to do this is to start the year with fully remote learning. I know that you have surveyed both parents and staff members, and that the results were very different for the two groups. I plead with you to remember that you were elected to the school board to make the tough decisions, not the popular ones. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 17:03:33	Stacee Nault	<p>I am in favor of the kids going back to school in the fall. Recent studies out of University of Washington are showing significant decrease in risk with masks and distancing. Our children's education, mental health, social development and over all well-being are too important not overlook. With proper safety protocols, I'm confident that we can keep our kids in school while protecting our teachers and staff.</p>
8/6/2020 17:05:20	Brown	<p>First off, thank you to everyone putting in long hours while trying to make this difficult decision. We're truly living in unprecedented times.</p> <p>I'm writing to express a couple of concerns I have with regards to the start of the upcoming school year. I have seen reports that 85% of parents are in favor in person education. I believe this number is false for a number of reasons and should not be used by the district as an argument for starting the year in-person.</p> <p>First, I believe many parents held out for as long as possible to see if a safer plan would evolve from talks with the union. That never happened. We were told that we would be able to opt out of in-person learning but not opt in. My guess is that a staggering number of parents chose to "opt-in" hoping a better plan would be developed or the situation would improve. The situation didn't improve and a more comprehensive plan was never developed so many of these parents (myself included) may pull their children on day one.</p> <p>Secondly, at the time the survey went out the COVID metrics looked optimistic that we may return to some sense of normalcy. Many people believed things were improving and school would be able to start on time. In reality, the country and DuPage county have taken a turn for the worse. Numbers are trending upwards again and sending students and teachers back into the classrooms will only add fuel to this fire.</p> <p>All that aside, how does the board propose arranging classrooms to accommodate appropriate physical distancing? Assuming class sizes are 20 students (and I'm guessing that's on the low end) and 85% (your number) of students are in the classroom. How do you arrange the room to have 17 desks all 6 feet apart from each other?</p> <p>Lastly, a number of schools are still under construction. Will they even be habitable by the time teachers are supposed to report? Will it be safe for students to start in just under 3 weeks, COVID aside? It seems as if there is still a lot of work to get accomplished in these next three weeks. The district may benefit from remote learning to start the year in order to complete a few of these projects and make a more distraction free learning environment. Would you want to go to school in the middle of a construction site?</p> <p>Thank you for considering my questions. I trust you'll make the right decision and vote for an all remote start to the school year. The teachers and the union have my full support.</p>

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8/6/2020 17:07:42	Rebecca McKinney	<p>My name is Rebecca McKinney and I teach English at York High School. First I want to thank the board, the superintendent, the community and our union for all of their collective hard work on planning this school year. It has not been easy on anyone and we all want the same thing: the best for the students of Elmhurst. Secondly I'd like to speak to how we get to what "is best". My concern lies in the fact that the plan to return to in person or hybrid classes rests on what we desire, not on what is best for students, teachers or even for the district. We all want school to be like it has been in the past, but even if we are in school, it won't be what it was. Students will be isolated from each other, desired classes might be dropped. Teachers may have schedules changed at the last minute and find themselves teaching classes they are unfamiliar with and for which they are unprepared. How can we say something is the "best" if it will create additional anxiety in students to know that it all could change at any moment, the way it did last spring. Would it be better to plan for stability?</p> <p>As a parent of two college age children, I know what it is to want the best for children. What I've wanted for them has not always been what I've gotten, yet sometimes I've been surprised by how well things turned out anyway. I'm very sympathetic to the 85 percent of people who want us to go back to school in person or hybrid. I want to go back to school. I love my job. It is part of my identity. It is and has been a source of joy for me. But is going back to school in person what is best? Will students be interacting socially? No. Will teachers who fear for their health be the best in-class teachers? No. Sometimes, wanting something doesn't make it the best choice. I'm concerned that we are letting our desires drive our decision making, rather than the science regarding the spread of this virus. I know we collectively have concerns about remote learning, but those concerns cannot outweigh the value of student, teachers, and staff health and lives. To that end, many of my colleagues and I have spent the past few weeks researching how to make remote learning lessons that engage students. I've attended seminars and zoom meetings so that I can be a better teacher, safely. I know many of my colleagues are doing this as well. We do this because we care about our students. I want to teach well. I want students to succeed no matter what. I just want the opportunity to do so safely. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 17:12:01	Brown	<p>First off, thank you to everyone putting in long hours while trying to make this difficult decision. We're truly living in unprecedented times.</p> <p>I'm writing to express a couple of concerns I have with regards to the start of the upcoming school year. I have seen reports that 85% of parents are in favor in person education. I believe this number is false for a number of reasons and should not be used by the district as an argument for starting the year in-person.</p> <p>First, I believe many parents held out for as long as possible to see if a safer plan would evolve from talks with the union. That never happened. We were told that we would be able to opt out of in-person learning but not opt in. My guess is that a staggering number of parents chose to "opt-in" hoping a better plan would be developed or the situation would improve. The situation didn't improve and a more comprehensive plan was never developed so many of these parents (myself included) may pull their children on day one.</p> <p>Secondly, at the time the survey went out the COVID metrics looked optimistic that we may return to some sense of normalcy. Many people believed things were improving and school would be able to start on time. In reality, the country and DuPage county have taken a turn for the worse. Numbers are trending upwards again and sending students and teachers back into the classrooms will only add fuel to this fire.</p> <p>All that aside, how does the board propose arranging classrooms to accommodate appropriate physical distancing? Assuming class sizes are 20 students (and I'm guessing that's on the low end) and 85% (your number) of students are in the classroom. How do you arrange the room to have 17 desks all 6 feet apart from each other?</p> <p>Lastly, a number of schools are still under construction. Will they even be habitable by the time teachers are supposed to report? Will it be safe for students to start in just under 3 weeks, COVID aside? It seems as if there is still a lot of work to get accomplished in these next three weeks. The district may benefit from remote learning to start the year in order to complete a few of these projects and make a more distraction free learning environment. Would you want to go to school in the middle of a construction site?</p> <p>Thank you for considering my questions. I trust you'll make the right decision and vote for an all remote start to the school year. The teachers and the union have my full support.</p>
8/6/2020 17:15:19	Rebecca Harpster	<p>I am writing to voice my support of in-person instruction. Our state and region is in Phase 4, which allows for in-person instruction for P-12. Our district has come up with a plan that meets all of the guidelines of the CDC, the IDPH, the ISBE, the DCHD, and the AAP. Our community has expressed a desire to be in-person and the vast majority clearly think it's safe to do so. If the majority of parents aren't afraid to send their kids to school, why do the teachers think it's unsafe? When private schools are open and public schools aren't, what do you think will happen? The public schools will lose a portion of their federal funding because those who can afford to and feel safe will make the move to private education. An op-ed in the Wall Street Journal said this: "What a humiliation it would be if charter and private schools reopen and demonstrate that in-person education can be done with the right risk mitigation." Further, the data in the US and the rest of the world shows that we can proceed to in-person instruction with the right modifications with low risk of outbreaks. One example is the 40,000 kids across 1,100 US YMCAs throughout the pandemic where there have been no outbreaks. Why do we think the result in schools would be any different?</p> <p>I would also like to remind the Board that there is no plan that will completely eliminate risk. Every time you leave your home, you risk contracting viruses that could harm or kill you. You have to accept that there is risk in every action we take.</p> <p>I've made it a point to take small steps towards normalcy with each phase of the pandemic and re-opening. It is scary at first, but with every step you take, you gain confidence. Our community needs to proceed with the steps outlined by our state for Phase 4 and open the schools in a safe and risk-mitigated way as outlined by the Open D205 website.</p>
8/6/2020 17:15:22	Renee Pawloski	<p>I am writing to ask that the Board please keep an in-person school option, as endorsed by the CDC and AAP. While COVID-19 must be taken seriously, we are learning more and more about it weekly: how to prevent its spread, how to treat it, and how to recover from it.</p> <p>While infection rates have risen slightly recently, those cases needing serious medical intervention have sharply declined as compared to when the virus first appeared and warranted nationwide school and business shutdowns. Additionally, death percentage rates have plummeted since schools were first closed back in the Spring. The mortality rate in all age groups is very low, save for those in the elderly population. All science points to COVID not being the beast we thought it was at its first appearance months ago.</p> <p>Moreover, the virus just doesn't seem to be prevalent among school-aged children. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics website, there were 288,287 pediatric cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. as of 7/23, but only 76 deaths nationwide out of that 288,297. It is important to note that some of those 76 deaths were in older children as some states consider pediatric cases to be up to age 19 or even 24. By contrast, the number of deaths from the flu this season in pediatric patients was 188. The flu has been 2 1/2 times as deadly as COVID-19 for kids in our country.</p> <p>At this point, our children's mental, social-emotional and physical health all stand to take a far greater loss. Humans are meant to be social beings. My children craved being with their friends and teachers this Spring. Children simply can't be expected to be in front of screens, sedentary for hours on end. Science has proven the risks of loneliness and depression surge in children, teens and adolescents when isolation increases.</p> <p>If students or staff are in a high risk category due to other health problems, of course they should have an option to learn or work remotely, however, for the vast majority of the rest of those who, even if they come down with the virus, will recover well, the risks to other aspects of their health far outweigh the risk of coming down with (and recovering from) COVID.</p> <p>Please keep our kids in the classroom!! Thank you for your time and attention!</p>

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
8/6/2020 17:16:09	Brendan Chambers	<p>My name is Brendan Chambers and I teach English and Ytv at York High School. There's not much that I can say that doesn't repeat what my wonderful colleagues and administrators have already discussed; however, I do want to make sure my voice is heard in this incredibly important debate. I've been teaching English, including the YTV Program, at York for 15 years. I not only love my work -- I love coming to the building to do my work. Under normal circumstances, the reasons to teach in person are endless and far outnumber the reasons why I would want to teach remote. There is only one reason for teaching remote, but it should be the end of the discussion -- safety. Being remote, at least for the start of the year, is the only method that guarantees the safety of students, staff, and families within the district.</p> <p>If we go back to in-person learning, we can adopt safety measures, and they all can do their part to fight the spread of Covid-19. However, none of these measures will truly ensure transmission does not occur while students are in our care. To truly ensure safety, we'd need resources to create a situation akin to the NBA's bubble in Orlando, and unfortunately, while our resource level is great, it doesn't match the level afforded to professional sports. Our current focus on making in-person learning safe is dominating all the resources we do have -- time, money, and people -- diverting all of these to logistics rather than the core of our purpose -- excellent teaching and learning. And, if data and evidence has shown us anything, all of these safety measures will still not be enough to ensure our schools are not contributing to the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Last spring was not remote learning -- students and teachers will be the first to tell you that. But parents, we need your help in finding ways to make remote learning look like the school you demand and deserve. Whether it's creating schedules and collective expectations to ensure synchronous meetings take place, using schools as childcare and intervention facilities, using the myriad of online tools to engage students in critical and creative learning pursuits, and even supporting small group cohorts based on the already established small circles people have created with other friends and family. I am confident we can make remote learning a rigorous and rich learning experience -- there are readily available resources and examples of effective models. Let us serve our students best by allocating resources to making this a reality rather than to safety signage, plexiglass walls, and PPE.</p> <p>We will return to school someday; hopefully, sooner than later. We can then look back at how we tackled this pandemic head-on because of a creative and empathetic community, and I believe these discussions are allowing us to hear, be heard, and do what is not only best, but what is right.</p>
8/6/2020 17:16:17	Sheila Mueller	<p>Schools should be open with appropriate measures in place. Send our children to school IN PERSON! Students need to be interacting with kids their own age, learning in the classroom. Any subsequent eLearning plan needs to be completely revamped from last spring - One email and one zoom call per week does not equal eLearning nor does it foster a growth environment necessary for learning, interaction, and mental health.</p>
8/6/2020 17:19:05	Geri Schlueter	<p>My name is Geri Schlueter and I am a teacher at Jefferson but previously have taught at Churchville, Emerson and Fischer. The Elmhurst community has become my second home. I don't have the words to express how I feel about the current school year. As a parent, I have worked to try keep my children well-balanced, happy and healthy. Each year, the students from my class become "my children". I think, plan, and work all year long on how best to meet each of their needs not only educationally, but socially and emotionally and in a safe space. This year it is the safe space that is causing me the greatest concern. I have tried to work out how best to socially distance students within my classroom and the school, how to clean everything after a student uses it, and plan for the possibility that the next day may become a remote learning day. Currently, there are no concrete plans on how this will be achieved. There are some plans for the district in general but the day to day plans on how to keep everyone safe has not been worked out in detail. I spend a great deal of time worrying about how I can keep my students safe and feel less anxious while dealing with so many unknowns. Starting remotely would allow us the opportunity to establish a routine that won't be affected if Illinois or Region 8 changes to Phase 3 or if suddenly someone has to self-quarantine. The teacher, class size and students would remain the same. This is different from the current plan where parents can opt out at any point, meaning the students in my class could be constantly changing. Students, whose parents opt out once the school year starts, would not necessarily have the same teacher as their in-person teacher. If we start remotely, learning will not be disrupted or lost by all of these changes. I hope that for the safety of the students, their families and the teachers you strongly consider starting remotely at all grade levels in the district.</p>
8/6/2020 17:23:55	Kyle Ogrodnik	<p>The process of determining these plans for opening the school year has no doubt been daunting and stressful. I appreciate the time and thought that you all have put into this work, I certainly do not envy the position you are in.</p> <p>The community has chosen, by a vast majority, to start the year with in-person schooling. I worry that this outcome will be interpreted as widespread support for this option. The learning plan for those choosing remote learning was poorly defined and included few specific details, which is understandable given all of the uncertainty regarding this situation. Still, as a parent, it's difficult to decide to commit to remote learning for my kids when I don't know exactly what that will entail, particularly when this choice would also be at least a one-semester commitment, and perhaps more than that. I didn't feel choosing remote learning was the right decision based on these difficulties, even though I would prefer for the entire district to start the year remotely. I simply chose in-person learning for my kids because I knew I could opt into remote learning at any time. We can't parse from the responses how many other parents feel this way, so knowing that over 80% of caregivers chose in-person instruction becomes somewhat meaningless.</p> <p>Ultimately, though, the choice for how this year starts shouldn't even be up to the parents and caregivers. Instead, we should follow the guidance for those that we always entrust the well-being of our kids with: our teachers. They are calling for a remote start to the year, with an interest in protecting the health of our kids, our communities and themselves. We need to listen to their concerns and build a plan based on the input and discretion of the professionals, our teachers, who know our students and schools the best.</p> <p>Finally, a last point to consider is Elmhurst's specific data regarding COVID infections. To date, according to the IDPH website, the age group with the greatest number of infections in the 60126 zip code are people under the age of 20. This age group, most of which are students in our schools, account for 19.2% of the COVID cases in 60126, but only 14.5% of the tests. Our students are already catching and spreading the virus. We shouldn't imagine this will suddenly stop when we start having them gather in our schools.</p>
8/6/2020 17:24:10	Anonymous	<p>I am interested to know what Elmhurst 205 has figured out in terms of safety in the classroom that other districts in the surrounding area have not been able to do? Why have many other surrounding districts gone remote for the fall when we have not?</p>

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8/6/2020 17:29:02	Tammy Henderson	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>My name is Tammy Henderson and I have been a Elementary PE teacher in the district for 25 years. I currently teach at Jackson Elementary School.</p> <p>In PE, athletics and intramurals, we know rules protect kids. Currently, we are being told by doctors, scientists and our Governor to maintain 6 feet social distance with masks on and to wash our hands frequently. We are being told not to gather in groups of more than 50. These are the rules. Additionally, this week we are being warned that COVID is spreading more prevalently when people are gathering with friends and family at home.</p> <p>Many of these issues are being addressed by our administration but there are many unanswered questions as to how we keep this virus in check. I was a member of the original OPEN D205 committee and was looking forward to part two of this committee work. I was led to believe part two would involve creating engaging, effective and rigorous remote learning opportunities and expectations as well as how to eventually open up the schools safely. Sadly, this work did not take place with all members of the committee (including myself) and we find ourselves two weeks away from the start of school with many unresolved questions.</p> <p>Many building principals have created question and answer docs in which staff can submit questions. I respectfully request the board to take the time to read these in order to realize how many questions remain.</p> <p>I am excited for the start of another school year and I look forward to continuing to develop relationships with my students. I wish it were safe to do this in person, yet I am confident I can do this just as well virtually. Having been in the district for 25 years and having taught in every elementary building but one, I am proud to say that we have a dedicated group of educators who care deeply about the children of D205. The conversations that have been occurring amongst teachers reinforce my belief that everyone will work to their very best ability to create an outstanding remote learning experience for all children until it is safe to return to school.</p>
8/6/2020 17:29:48	Teri Finley	<p>Good evening- my name is Teri Finley and I am a social worker at York High School. I would like to speak to you tonight not only as a professional but also as a parent. I empathize with your feelings of frustration, anger, and fear having to make decisions based on frightening unknowns. One of my sons graduated from Hinsdale Central in May and due to Covid-19, he, and all other graduates, were deprived of experiencing the typical milestones like prom and a graduation ceremony. To say that we grieved these losses would be an understatement. My youngest son is going to be a junior, which many believe to be a particularly important year academically for a high school student. However, both personally and professionally, I believe that starting the school year with remote learning is the safest and least disruptive option for our students. Uncertainty is one of the most common triggers for anxiety and the proposed hybrid model is a complete unknown to staff, students and parents. Not to mention the necessary physical changes of the classroom setting and structure which will be frustrating and anxiety-provoking for many students. If we return in-person, it is unfortunately inevitable that students will be diagnosed with Covid-19. Potentially, there will be fear and guilt that they may have infected their classmates or teachers, possible shame or embarrassment and worry over their own health. While not perfect, remote learning would be consistent, more familiar, more effective, and most importantly, safer. Thank you for your time.</p>
8/6/2020 17:29:58	Brown	<p>First off, thank you to everyone putting in long hours while trying to make this difficult decision. We're truly living in unprecedented times.</p> <p>I'm writing to express a couple of concerns I have with regards to the start of the upcoming school year. I have seen reports that 85% of parents are in favor in person education. I believe this number is false for a number of reasons and should not be used by the district as an argument for starting the year in-person.</p> <p>First, I believe many parents held out for as long as possible to see if a safer plan would evolve from talks with the union. That never happened. We were told that we would be able to opt out of in-person learning but not opt in. My guess is that a staggering number of parents chose to "opt-in" hoping a better plan would be developed or the situation would improve. The situation didn't improve and a more comprehensive plan was never developed so many of these parents (myself included) may pull their children on day one.</p> <p>Secondly, at the time the survey went out the COVID metrics looked optimistic that we may return to some sense of normalcy. Many people believed things were improving and school would be able to start on time. In reality, the country and DuPage county have taken a turn for the worse. Numbers are trending upwards again and sending students and teachers back into the classrooms will only add fuel to this fire.</p> <p>All that aside, how does the board propose arranging classrooms to accommodate appropriate physical distancing? Assuming class sizes are 20 students (and I'm guessing that's on the low end) and 85% (your number) of students are in the classroom. How do you arrange the room to have 17 desks all 6 feet apart from each other?</p> <p>Lastly, a number of schools are still under construction. Will they even be habitable by the time teachers are supposed to report? Will it be safe for students to start in just under 3 weeks, COVID aside? It seems as if there is still a lot of work to get accomplished in these next three weeks. The district may benefit from remote learning to start the year in order to complete a few of these projects and make a more distraction free learning environment. Would you want to go to school in the middle of a construction site?</p> <p>Thank you for considering my questions. I trust you'll make the right decision and vote for an all remote start to the school year. The teachers and the union have my full support.</p>

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		<p>Thank you for allowing me to address the board tonight. My name is Cecilia Dunn, I'm a first grade teacher at Lincoln. As of today, there have been almost 12,000 confirmed cases of covid-19 in Dupage county. Our country has confirmed over 4.8 million case and we've lost at least 159,000 people to covid. I believe that if we open our schools we'll contribute to the growing numbers. Instead, I want to keep my students, their families, and my own families. Many districts have made the responsible decision to change their modified on-site and hybrid plans to include remote-only starts, I urge you to do the same.</p> <p>I miss teaching. I really miss seeing students everyday. I miss reading stories aloud to my students on the carpet. With the current restrictions there will be no carpet time at school. I miss seeing my students make new friends. That's hard to do from 6 feet away especially when you can only see each other's eyes. However, I worry about the social-emotional impact of the health restrictions that need to be in place. I worry about how to properly comfort an upset first grader from 6 feet away. I worry about finding the best way to ease the immediate transition to remote learning when our schools inevitably have to close. I worry about doing enough to keep my students and my own family safe. These, and many other worries, keep me up at night.</p> <p>I'd like to remind you that teachers are not medical professionals. Unlike some medical providers and many essential workers we DO have a safer alternative to in-person classes. Teachers can teach virtually. In fact, many medical providers are also doing virtual appointments rather than in-person because that is an acceptable, reasonable, and SAFER alternative. As teachers we understood the health risks when choosing this career - it comes with boogers, pink eye, and strep throat. It shouldn't come with a life-threatening pandemic. Teachers have accepted that they might even have to take a bullet for their students! But now, you're asking them to take that bullet home to their families and loved ones.</p> <p>Since we are a data-driven district, here is some important data. Some have mentioned how schools in other countries have opened successfully. While this is partially true, it should also be stated that in many areas around the world schools reopened and then had to close again because of this global pandemic. Both Denmark and Israel experienced a surge in cases after schools reopened, including cases in children. NEW CDC GUIDELINES HIGHLIGHT REOPENINGS IN EUROPE AND ASIA: (<a href="https://www.contagionlive.com/news/cdc-guidelines-school-reopenings-europe-asia-">https://www.contagionlive.com/news/cdc-guidelines-school-reopenings-europe-asia-</a>) Right now our nation leads the world in the number of coronavirus cases. This is not the right time to consider opening our schools. While teachers miss school, what we'd be going back to, isn't what is missed by students and teachers alike. In fact, this article even articulates how the hybrid and on-site plans are destined to fail. THIS PUSH TO OPEN SCHOOLS IS GUARANTEED TO FAIL. IT IS TIME TO STOP PRETENDING. OUR CHILDREN ARE STAYING HOME: <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/push-reopen-schools-fail/614869/">https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/push-reopen-schools-fail/614869/</a> Several other districts across the country have already tried opening schools and have seen numerous cases of covid. Let's learn from their mistakes and keep our community healthy. Here are a few of those stories: WITHIN 11 DAYS OF SCHOOLS OPENING, DOZENS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS HAVE GOTTEN COVID-19: 'I TRULY WISH WE'D KEPT OUR CHILDREN HOME': <a href="https://www.businessinsider.com/schools-reopen-coronavirus-spreads-already-2020-8">https://www.businessinsider.com/schools-reopen-coronavirus-spreads-already-2020-8</a> OVER 100 STUDENTS QUARANTINED IN MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL DISTRICT AFTER SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19: <a href="https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/05/us/mississippi-school-district-coronavirus-trnd/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/05/us/mississippi-school-district-coronavirus-trnd/index.html</a> THESE TENNESSEE SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE ALREADY REPORTING COVID-19 CASES AFTER REOPENING: <a href="https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2020/08/05/tennessee-school-districts-reported-coronavirus-cases/3296529001/">https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2020/08/05/tennessee-school-districts-reported-coronavirus-cases/3296529001/</a> HERE ARE ALL THE CENTRAL INDIANA SCHOOLS THAT HAVE RECORDED A COVID-19 CASE SINCE JULY 1ST: <a href="https://www.indystar.com/story/news/education/2020/08/04/coronavirus-indiana-central-indiana-schools-covid-19-cases/5580861002/">https://www.indystar.com/story/news/education/2020/08/04/coronavirus-indiana-central-indiana-schools-covid-19-cases/5580861002/</a></p> <p>My hope is that you will value our students' and teachers' lives and start our school year remotely. Identifying the first quarter or trimester as fully remote will allow our families the opportunity to plan for childcare. Teachers report back to school in 11 days, please make this safe decision soon so us teachers have time to make remote learning as fabulous as possible. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 17:33:10	Cecilia Dunn	
8/6/2020 17:37:10	Cindy Foran	<p>I wanted to send a note in support of the school board's decision to offer parents in-person options for our children. We know there is an evolving situation on the medical front and we appreciate the board's continued persistence to stay safe with medical guidelines. I feel like our children really need the in-person experience with their teachers for as long as it is safe. My kid is in dual language and I feel that the team at Fischer will do a much better job in the educating the incoming kindergarteners in-person than I can remotely. I want to reiterate that I support the in-person options, as well as offering parents the choice to do remote learning if they choose. - Cindy and Peter Foran</p>
8/6/2020 17:37:16	Beth Dougherty	<p>I would like to comment on the options provided to our students by our district. I was very disappointed that there was not a comprehensive plan for e-learning when returning to school. As such, I chose in-person learning for my middle and elementary age children because I am not confident the plan laid out for e-learning is any better than what we experienced in the spring. I would have preferred a robust plan for e-learning or hybrid learning rather than a plan that presents every possible situation with few specifics. I would like our administration to look nationwide at what worked for other districts and at existing homeschooling curriculum to come up with a remote learning plan that gives students a solid at-home learning program. If given such an option, my choice for returning to school would have been different.</p>
8/6/2020 17:37:16	Beth Dougherty	<p>Obviously we cannot replace the in-school experience but we have all had to make changes to how we work and live our lives. It has been more than four months and it is time to accept that the schooling experience of the past will not return to "normal" any time soon; our district needs to seriously prepare for a new learning experience.</p>
8/6/2020 17:37:29	Adam & Kathryn Jenkins	<p>Dear Board, We are very disappointed in the Board's failure to enact a reopening plan that follows the CDC social distancing guidelines. It makes no sense that my grammar school children have in-person instruction while my middle schooler is hybrid. This is poor planning. The Statewide shutdown took us all by surprise and it is understandable that the Board faced many new challenges with little warning last spring. However; what is inexcusable is, that since March, the Board has failed to construct viable contingency plans. This last minute cramming to reopen schools safely reeks like last spring's remote learning disaster. It is clear that at some point, given the coming cold and flu season, schools will likely have to move to remote learning. Dr. Moyer, have you considered the nightmare cold and flu season will have on symptom checking and school closures? Have you thought about requiring teachers to police the 20+ Students in their classrooms to assure Covid guidelines. Certainly, you have considered how schools will handle the following the questions: "Is it flu or Covid? A cold or Covid? Strep or Covid?" Who will enforce the distancing guidelines at recess? Full in-person return is obviously completely unworkable yet you are undeterred. You have no present detailed plan, you have no future/contingency plan for flu season to differentiate between Covid and flu and you will not be trusted with my family's well-being. The truth is that it will take years of data collection to determine the truth about the spread and we don't know yet how this new virus effects our kids or us. Start planning D205- do your job or else we will find people that can. D205 is not going to figure this out on the backs of my kids..</p> <p>Lastly, the start date needs to be pushed further back. The teachers are not prepared to teach using new platforms and have not received the necessary support from the board to open August 24th.</p> <p>Thank you, Adam and Kate J</p>
8/6/2020 17:38:40	Dara agruss	<p>My family and many others are thrilled that the District is offering in person instruction. As a former classroom teacher and now parent of an incoming kindergartener, I truly believe that virtual learning is ineffective. I have confidence that the district can safely open schools and offer our children a modified, but in-person learning environment.</p>
8/6/2020 17:39:14	Michelle Barclay	<p>It is essential that our students return to school. Even if it's for a half of day. I am sure the district can put together many precautionary measures to make it safe for teachers and students. We need and want in-person learning. Thank you.</p>

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8/6/2020 17:40:17	Jillian Hamblin	<p>District 205 Board of Education:</p> <p>I am Jillian Hamblin, a speech language pathologist at Emerson. I want to go back to school. I miss my students.</p> <p>Yes, as educators, we are essential. I believe that. But my doctor is also essential, and he is continuing to work remotely. My daughter's pediatrician is essential, and her appointments are remote.</p> <p>My cardiologist is essential, and he is not able to work remotely, thus safety precautions are required. The moment I walk into the office, the staff takes my temperature, rather than trusting I do it on my own and do it correctly. Not every patient sits in the waiting room. I wait in my car until my exam room is available. In other words, they don't bring everyone into the office at the same time.</p> <p>All other establishments such as shopping centers, grocery stores, gyms, restaurants, etc. are operating with limited capacity as well. I don't understand why schools can operate at nearly full capacity - especially elementary schools with the youngest children who will have the most difficult time maintaining safety procedures.</p> <p>As educators we are essential, but we are able to do our job remotely. Just like the majority of districts around us are doing.</p>
8/6/2020 17:41:04	Kelly DeLoriae	<p>You have a difficult decision to make. I know you can't make everyone happy. But you can keep everyone safe.</p> <p>My name is Kelly DeLoriae, and this fall will mark my 15th year at York. I teach in the English Department, and in the pursuit of preparing our students to be college, career, and life-ready, we talk a lot about community. Some of the questions we discuss are:  What does it mean to belong?  What are my responsibilities as a member of a community?  What systems exist within the community, and what experiences are members having with those systems? Based on what factors? What can we do to make our systems even stronger for all?</p> <p>I grew up in Elmhurst. My grandparents raised eight children here, and my mom still lives in my childhood home. I imagine what draws many of us here are the values of this community.</p> <p>I love working with your kids. I'm proud of the relationships we've built, the challenges we have faced and overcome, and the investments we have made together. When we walk into that building each morning, the energy is electric. We know we're about to do something meaningful and significant. And we get to do that every day. But that work is not about bricks and mortar. It's about humans, dialogue, and knowledge. About questions, solutions, and ideas.</p> <p>The research and science is clear. It is not safe to return on August 24th. I can't wait to meet your children in a few weeks, and to know that we're building something really important together. But it is our collective responsibility to keep everyone's safety as a first priority. And the only way we can do that is to begin this year with remote learning. Thank you.</p>
8/6/2020 17:41:22	Adam & Kathryn Jenkins	<p>Dear Board,</p> <p>We are very disappointed in the Board's failure to enact a reopening plan that follows the CDC social distancing guidelines. It makes no sense that my grammar school children have in-person instruction while my middle schooler is hybrid. This is poor planning. The Statewide shutdown took us all by surprise and it is understandable that the Board faced many new challenges with little warning last spring. However, what is inexcusable is, that since March, the Board has failed to construct viable contingency plans.</p> <p>This last minute cramming to reopen schools safely reeks like last spring's remote learning disaster. It is clear that at some point, given the coming cold and flu season, schools will likely have to move to remote learning. Dr. Moyer, have you considered the nightmare cold and flu season will have on symptom checking and school closures? Have you thought about requiring teachers to police the 20+ Students in their classrooms to assure Covid guidelines. Certainly, you have considered how schools will handle the following the questions: "Is it flu or Covid? A cold or Covid? Strep or Covid?" Who will enforce the distancing guidelines at recess? Full in-person return is obviously completely unworkable yet you are undeterred.</p> <p>You have no present detailed plan, you have no future/contingency plan for flu season to differentiate between Covid and flu and you will not be trusted with my family's well-being. The truth is that it will take years of data collection to determine the truth about the spread and we don't know yet how this new virus effects our kids or us. Start planning D205- do your job or else we will find people that can. D205 is not going to figure this out on the backs of my kids..</p> <p>Lastly, the start date needs to be pushed further back. The teachers are not prepared to teach using new platforms and have not received the necessary support from the board to open August 24th.</p> <p>Thank you,  Adam and Kate J</p>
8/6/2020 17:41:26	Jennifer Nelson	<p>Dear Teachers, We miss you! Whatever the decision is for this school year, please remember that teaching is a labor of love and I strongly feel that teachers are second to parents as the greatest influence on a child's future and happiness.</p> <p>There are parents in basements and at kitchen tables all over our community being innovative, creative, and ambitious to continue their jobs and support their families given the current circumstances. I have the highest expectations from Elmhurst teachers and our Board to do the same. The length of this pandemic is indefinite. E-learning alone is not is not a sustainable plan. Let's embrace the opportunity to be an exemplary district in order to keep our students moving forward!</p> <p>Let's not just follow suit in our decision for e-learning, in person, or hybrid. Let's creatively find ways to conduct safe small in person groups in a manner similar to a doctors appointment. Help our kids foster relationships with their teachers and peers even if most of the learning has to occur at home.</p> <p>I thank you so very much for your unending and ever-changing attention to this matter. I trust that you are constantly re-assessing this pandemic on a state and local level and that you always have the best interest of the students in mind. THANK YOU for everything you have done and all that lies ahead.</p>

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8/6/2020 17:42:09	Jennifer Nelson	<p>Dear Teachers, We miss you! Whatever the decision is for this school year, please remember that teaching is a labor of love and I strongly feel that teachers are second to parents as the greatest influence on a child's future and happiness.</p> <p>There are parents in basements and at kitchen tables all over our community being innovative, creative, and ambitious to continue their jobs and support their families given the current circumstances. I have the highest expectations from Elmhurst teachers and our Board to do the same. The length of this pandemic is indefinite. E-learning alone is not a sustainable plan. Let's embrace the opportunity to be an exemplary district in order to keep our students moving forward!</p> <p>Let's not just follow suit in our decision for e-learning, in person, or hybrid. Let's creatively find ways to conduct safe small in person groups in a manner similar to a doctors appointment. Help our kids foster relationships with their teachers and peers even if most of the learning has to occur at home.</p> <p>I thank you so very much for your unending and ever-changing attention to this matter. I trust that you are constantly re-assessing this pandemic on a state and local level and that you always have the best interest of the students in mind. THANK YOU for everything you have done and all that lies ahead.</p>
8/6/2020 17:43:00	Colleen Sherburne	I think students should learn remotely until there is a vaccine. The risk to the entire community is too great.
8/6/2020 17:43:16	Ryan OLeary	The facts are clear that risks for serious illness in children from COVID 19 is far less than the seasonal flu. If you are going to follow the science you can't pick and choose the facts! Infection fatalities for people under 70 is 0.04% which is less than the seasonal flu. This is not a serious illness for healthy people under 70. CDC recommends opening the schools for in person learning. E-learning was a complete failure. High risk or elderly should take appropriate precautions otherwise follow the science and go back to school!
8/6/2020 17:43:39	Sarah Galarza	<p>Dear District 205 Board of Education,</p> <p>I am a concerned parent of 3 children who attend District 205 schools. I have been an Elmhurst resident since 2006 and am a certified K-12 music teacher. I will keep my comments brief and ask that you revise the Open D205 plan due to lack of collaboration and resolution with the Elmhurst Teachers Council or ETC.</p> <p>I agree with the ETC in that ALL students should start with remote learning this fall. I believe this is the safest way to start the school year. When it is safe to begin transitioning students to an in-person model, allow for creativity and offer flexibility for both teachers and students. We have extremely talented and innovative staff in our district that are willing to work hard to make education the best for all Elmhurst students. Listen to your teachers. Collaborate with them. They have been actively asking for over a month now to work with the administration as they plan for safely delivering instruction this fall. It's disturbing to see the administration and the board treat the teachers in this district with such disrespect. For the sake our community, this needs to stop.</p> <p>There are many unanswered questions that have been brought to the attention of the district and board by both parents and teachers. Questions that were asked over a month ago have yet to be answered. Questions with ever changing answers making it difficult to trust in the leadership abilities of the administration. With less than 3 weeks until the first day of school, this is unacceptable. Open D205 lacks a detailed re-opening plan which surrounding districts have been able to provide for their communities.</p> <p>Keep our children safe by starting the school year with remote learning. Allow the additional time needed for administrators and teachers to collaborate and provide a safe and comprehensive reopening plan.</p> <p>Thank you, Sarah Galarza</p>
8/6/2020 17:50:25	Lauren Gui	I've worked as an elementary teacher in Elmhurst for the past 7 years. I know students and their families are anxious to get back into the classroom and I am too - I can't wait to be in the classroom again with my students when it is safe to do so. However, while I know my main purpose is to educate the students in this community, it is also my job to ensure their safety while they are in my care. However, with 24 students and myself sharing a classroom space with little room for social distancing, it is challenging to say their safety is guaranteed. I'm willing to do a lot for my students to ensure their academic growth, whether I'm delivering lessons in person or online, but I'm not willing to risk their health, my health, or the health of our families to do that. I'm confident that the teachers in this district can deliver improved, engaging, and rigorous online instruction this fall. I want to end by reminding the Board that a child's education and learning can be recovered, but the lives of students, teachers, and our family members cannot.
8/6/2020 17:50:47	Christine Nolen	I have been a resident of Elmhurst for over 70 years. I am against in person learning at the schools at this time. The covid virus has been going up since the restaurants and stores have opened. Why would you people think that opening the schools would be any different? Did you lose your common sense? How will they learn, when they become sick, and their teachers are in the hospital recovering, I hope, from the virus they caught being in school? Are you waiting for a child, teacher, or community member like myself, at 85, to die before you do the right thing? You cannot expect to pack 28 children in a room and have 6 feet apart for each child! I think remote learning is the only safe option. Please do the right thing! My life depends on what you do now!
8/6/2020 17:52:35	Laura Oliver	<p>August 6, 2020</p> <p>To the Elmhurst District 205 School Board:</p> <p>When the School Board approved the administration's plan, we knew immediately that we could not keep our children safe with so many people in the buildings at one time. We are eager to be back at Emerson School with our students, but our number one priority is assuring our students' safety. We are asking that a plan be approved that addresses this issue in a definitive way. At this point, we do not know how many students will be in our classrooms, how many have chosen remote learning vs. in-school learning. In addition, we have not been given our teaching assignments; we do not know if we'll be teaching in school, or remotely. We need this information as soon as possible so we can plan effectively for the start of the school year.</p> <p>Sincerely, Erika Bradley Kelly Guzewski Laura Oliver</p>
8/6/2020 17:53:34	Amy talbot	My name Amy Talbot and I am resident of Elmhurst and school psychologist at York High School. I am extremely proud to work in the York Student Services Department and cannot wait to get back to work. However, in my professional opinion, a remote learning start would be the best for students to start this upcoming school year. Social-emotional functioning skills an
8/6/2020 17:54:51	martha lopez	I have two daughters at York HS, one is a Freshman and the other is a junior. I strongly recommend that the students are able to return back to school to be taught by the teachers. They need the social interaction with friends and peers.





