

3-10-21 Written Public Comment-rev1

Timestamp	First and Last Name	Please enter your comment
3/9/2021 12:34:16	Katie Larsen	Enough is enough. Get our Bryan middle schools kids back in school full time.
3/9/2021 12:38:01	Michelle Moreis	I want to note my objection to the mandatory saliva testing. I felt coerced into agreeing to the testing because my student wants to attend in person. Due to my students diagnosis of anxiety and depression, she needs to attend in person for her mental health. I am aware of the process of objecting to the testing, however, that requires her to be remote pending the decision of the meeting. Again, this is not a good option for her mental health. The administration and BOE have overstepped their authority making this testing mandatory.
3/9/2021 12:55:24	Kolleen Mooren	We need to prioritize getting ALL students across ALL grades back in school 5 days a week, immediately. Additionally, we need to assess what it will take to get the kids truly back full day as they're being shorted almost 2 hours per day in instruction time.
3/9/2021 12:55:26	Michael Larsen	Our kids deserve a good education not just an adequate one. Please get our kids back in school full time until 3 pm with lunches. They can eat outside not that the weather is warm. We also need a plan for next year. Full time no more excuses.
3/9/2021 13:17:14	Deenie Doughty	I am strongly opposing the saliva screening to get the kids back to school. This is not necessary to get them back into the building. Especially since neither the teachers nor the administration are getting tested.
3/9/2021 14:10:57	Amy Wellman	It's now been almost an entire year since our children have had a normal day in school. Teachers are being vaccinated, hospitals are not being overwhelmed, and our children and teachers are still wearing masks right now. Why aren't our children in school for a full day every day? What is it the Board is waiting for to get these kids back to a regular day like other districts have done? I was shocked to see that there is a thoughts survey on the 2021-2022 school year as I cannot fathom why full day regular school would not be the plan for every grade. Covid19 isn't going away and cases are not going to be eliminated. Vaccines are available for teachers and should be for the general population by the start of next school year. This is great news for teachers and students and parents and I would hope the administration would agree. Stop the moving targets. Stop the constant surveys and talk of even more surveys as it seems clear the vast majority of people want their children in school. Stop the referencing of lawyers and insurance as stall tactics. Start using logic and reason and accept no other plan than full day every day for every student in D205. All of the students (K-12) in this community have suffered enough. They deserve a full in person education like their peers in privates and other districts.
3/9/2021 14:14:09	Mari Saenz	Hello - please provide a concrete date as of when Sandburg & Bryant students will get back onsite for 5 full days. If a date is not provide please explain why and the remediation steps to address the issue. Also, please provide information as to why elementary schools have not resumed their full schedule- 8am to 3pm. Thank you
3/9/2021 14:20:46	Mark Swanson	D205 has instituted mandatory saliva testing however no information has been provided to parents about how to appeal this requirement outside of a small blurb on the district's website that an email request should be sent to assistant superintendent Chris Whelton and a meeting would be set up. There are thousands of students so it is appalling D205 will make parents wait until 1 individual sees their email and schedules a meeting. How many meetings can 1 person hold a day while also reading emails and setting up future meetings? In the meantime children are stuck in remote learning until Chris Whelton chooses to set up a meeting and make a decision. In addition there has been no information provided as to how Chris Whelton will make his decision, what criteria he will consider, and any indication of consistency across all objections. Two people could appeal for the same exact reason and we would have no way of knowing if one was approved and one denied. Multiple parents have reported that upon asking what recourse they have if their appeal is denied, they're told the information is on the website, which it isn't, or D205 administrators flat out refuse to answer. This is unacceptable and if D205 wishes to maintain mandatory saliva testing they should have a clear process to address parental concerns.

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3/9/2021 14:26:03	Jen Fiocca	With the full return to school for K-5, approaching spring and increased vaccinations, I believe it is time these kids are back to school full day until 3pm. These kids have lost so much this year. We need to push for as many instructional hours as possible as we head towards summer break.
3/9/2021 14:27:34	Michael Larsen	Our kids deserve a good education not just an adequate one. Please get our kids back in school full time until 3 pm with lunches. They can eat outside not that the weather is warm. We also need a plan for next year. Full time no more excuses.
3/9/2021 14:37:45	Jeffery Wellman	Open our schools for a full day for every student. Anything less should not be acceptable.
3/9/2021 15:07:12	Laura Miller	In the superintendents message on February 24th, Moyer said he was bringing the board a plan on March 16th for increased in person learning after spring break specifically for Bryan and Sandburg. And while that should absolutely be a focus, please ensure the district is NOT stopping there and delivers a plan on March 16th for a return to full time (8-3p.m.) for all D205 students. More and more districts in our area are announcing a return to full time in person instruction and we can't be caught on our back foot yet again. Please let the community know what the hurdles are to getting the elementary schools back to an 8-3p.m. schedule, and why those can't be overcome (if they even exist at this point). Do not wait until the March 16th meeting to ask for a plan. Please demand the administration PRESENT a plan on March 16th to see increased in person FOR ALL D205 students and not just the middle schools.
3/9/2021 16:11:41	Jen Mann	First, I appreciate all that's been done by so many to make progress to open schools! The impact of not going to in-person school has taken a huge toll on my kids (and others) physical and mental well being. Two of my elementary age kids started seeing therapists during this school year. I didn't notice a change from therapy as much as I did with them being back in the classroom. They are in their second week of being back 5 days a week and already I notice a positive change! They need social interaction just as much as the educational aspect. I know this is hard and there are so many opinions out there (I'm not one to judge). I hope we can come together and get all grades/all schools back to a full time 8-3 schedule. Thanks for all you do!
3/9/2021 16:57:38	Cherice Nicosia	This is our kids lives!! The lives of our future!! As taxpayers we have been lied to, our kids have been pushed to the side and now we are being denied in person education unless your terms are met. My son has been in person 2 days a week with no problems and now he has to go remote unless he relinquishes his DNA to a screwed up District!! Sounds like discrimination to me! David Moyer needs to resign NOW!! The Board needs to let him go NOW!!! I'm sure there is an interim Superintendent that can step in until you hire another. Enough of the politics! The board needs to put these kids first and come together to fight for them, not with stipulations. Fight for normalcy! Please Board fight for the kids of Elmhurst!
3/9/2021 17:09:12	Cecelia Grebs	Driving by Lincoln a couple weeks ago, I was thrilled to see kids playing on the playground equipment. Thank you allowing that to happen. My kids have mourned the loss of recess this year, and I was excited check in with them after school. Unfortunately, they reminded me that they only get 15 minutes TOTAL to eat and play, and they didn't have time to play at all. Talk205 recently sponsored a presentation titled "The Purpose of Play in Your Child's development". If you know how important this is, why don't our kids have time play at school? Social emotional development is so important for future success, arguably more so than academics. DCFS guidelines for licensing day care require the following for school aged children: Children in care 5-10 hours must be served a meal and two snacks or two meals and one snack. My kids don't get a decent meal most school days until 2 pm. They have experienced headaches, dizziness, and trouble concentrating. Please allow our kids 5 full days in person at school at all levels, including all the middle schools. Our children deserve a meal and break/recess at all levels. While I'm thrilled to see Churchville offered 5 days a week, it's inequitable to not offer this to all middle schoolers. Thank you for your time!
3/9/2021 18:14:07	Rachel Mikula	Hello, I continue to write to advocate for the IMMEDIATE OPENING of ALL D205 schools 5 DAYS A WEEK FULL DAY IN PERSON! Enough is enough. You have heard from the parents in this community how to make this happen safely and swiftly so now is the time for you to act and make this happen for the children of this community. In addition, what is your plan for fall 2021-22 school year. Parents need to know this now as you have kept the children and parents of the D205 community in limbo for a year. I am especially concerned about the middle school students who are only given the hybrid AB option at this point. Middle school is pivotal for academic, social and emotional growth. You seem to be missing the boat with this group of students. Please, make them a priority too. I also urge you to stop any and all plans for tearing down Lincoln and moving those kids to Edison and Bryan until you have a comprehensive plan as to how you can get ALL students from those schools in the classroom 8-3, 5 days a week.

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3/10/2021 16:16:23	Jean Hogan	<p data-bbox="657 178 1371 211">Open all D205 schools full time, everyday, no later than March 22, 2021</p> <p data-bbox="657 235 1967 316">All students need to return immediately to the classroom, full time, five days a week. Fully reopening D205 is necessary in order to make up for the learning loss from the last 12 months, for the well being of our students and to prove to the community that D205 will be fully operational in the 21-22 school year.</p> <p data-bbox="657 341 1967 544">As of today, March 10, 2021, there are only 52 instructional days remaining in this school year. Saliva screening, being implemented on March 8, 2021, was only supported by the community with the understanding that consent meant a return to full time education, not hybrid. All teachers will have had the opportunity to have their second vaccination dose by March 15, 2021. The D205 Covid positivity rate remains low, hospitals are not overburdened, and globally Covid cases and deaths with Covid are dropping substantially. Furthermore, science has shown us repeatedly that children are not at risk of serious illness or death from Covid. Anyone in the high risk category has now been given the opportunity of vaccination. Finally, D205 received almost \$1M from the CARES Act and Illinois is set to receive another \$5B for its schools from President Biden's stimulus. Our schools have everything needed to safely and successfully reopen full time.</p>

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3/10/2021 16:20:53	Anonymous Parent	<p>I ask to remain anonymous because of the backlash I am afraid my children or my family will receive from our Elmhurst community. Elmhurst was a town we chose to move to here 11 years ago because it's had a great family vibe and outstanding school system.</p> <p>These past 2 months, I am embarrassed by my community. The people. The parents. Elmhurst is divided. Masking to keep safe vs. shaming the mask; following clinical guidelines vs. "but other states are doing it"; remote kids vs. hybrid vs. in-person; mandatory saliva test vs. saliva tests are illegal. There is one thing we agree on though; we want our kids in school.</p> <p>Saliva tests. It appears to be the primary topic because some parents think it is a waste of money and now trying to find any other way not to make it happen and finding a plan to make it fail. Some are investigating whether SafeGuard Surveillance is a fraudulent business that "may sell the child's DNA" and that it is against their constitutional rights and therefore does not want their children to participate.</p> <p>I am speaking as a parent to Dr. Moyer, to the BOE, and anyone reading my public comments explaining to you how our family was personally affected last year by COVID-19 before we were even to think that it existed in our community. But it did. Multiple trips to the ER within different hospital systems. Numerous trips to the primary care and urgent care offices. There were NO TESTS available to confirm COVID-19. I repeat, no diagnostic tests were available, sent home on antibiotics, inhalers, and cough medicine.</p> <p>Most people understand there is a 98% survival rate when you contract COVID-19, so everything is fine. But, no one talks about the long-haul symptoms COVID-19 survivors deal with daily. This includes extreme fatigue, shortness of breath not relieved by inhalers, chest pains, filing for work disability, thousands of dollars spent on medical bills, and the helpless feeling because you can't enjoy activities you used to do with your kids because... you physically can't. This all happened to us, and it's still happening. We were a healthy family before this happened.</p> <p>Throughout this pandemic, we have been very cautious because we don't want our family members, friends, colleagues, or anyone to experience what we went through. AND we don't want it to happen again because it can happen! Could this happen to you as a parent? Be so sick that you can't help your kids? Especially when there is a vaccine shortage? Absolutely, 100%! This is a fact.</p> <p>We want my kids in school safely as much as everyone else. We are both full-time working professionals. I work in the medical field within a state university. I've done my research on what is safe and not safe based on data.</p> <p>In-person learning for our kids? Great! Reducing to 3-foot distancing? Fine. Increasing and doubling the number of children in a classroom? Fine! Clinical literature supports that children 10 years of age and up transmit COVID-19 like adults. Teachers plan to distance themselves 6 ft from our kids? Makes sense!! Vaccinating teachers? Yes, for those who choose!</p> <p>Our middle schoolers/high school children can transmit COVID-19 similarly to adults. That is a fact. Mandatory testing for all children is a necessary mitigation step for this group of children, especially if we remove safety layers. Saliva testing is not perfect, but UIC has been doing this same test since August 2020 to their staff and students. It is a give-and-take process! You take away layers of safety, and then you add safety in any form we can! We have that resource! It is just common sense. Some workplaces make saliva testing or swab testing mandatory. Would the parents of Elmhurst quit their job if that happens? Probably not. What are you teaching your kids? To not be part of a positive action? To not comply with ways that will protect the community, their peers, and teachers? Is it really unethical? What's unethical is to "jokingly" add water to the vial, or have your dog's saliva in there or add someone else's saliva as a sample. This is documented in the rants of some of the Elmhurst Facebook groups. It is a complete and utter embarrassment. It is hurtful. It is sad. It is devastating to hear parents make fun of others during this pandemic, mostly when others, including our family, have gone through so much.</p> <p>It's challenging to be a parent these days. It really is. But, I'm asking the Elmhurst community that if we want our children to be in-person safely, please make the wise decision to have your child tested. Everyone needs to do it; otherwise, the risk of an asymptomatic carrier is a possibility. As stated in the Facebook group, don't pretend you have a religious conflict to be exempt. That is unethical. What are you teaching your children? We never had the option last year for a diagnostic COVID-19 test before the pandemic started. We have the opportunity now to prevent outbreaks. We are fortunate.</p> <p>Please don't take away our freedom to choose in-person because we want our kids safe because we rely on saliva tests to decrease the unease. Don't increase our kids' chances of asymptotically transmit COVID-19 to their parents, grandparents, and friends. I guarantee that if we remove the mandatory option, many families may drop to remote, and our hard-working teachers will then again Zoom and teach in-person. It's a vicious cycle.</p>

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3/10/2021 16:23:11	Michelle Shoemaker	<p>We are days away from our kids being out of school full time for a solid year. As of this date, we still do not have a plan to put all kids, all grade back in school 5 days a week for their entire school day. There is more data than there is time or energy to site to show you that it is absolutely safer for kids to be in school, than not. There are no excuses for this half day plan, a hybrid plan should no longer exist and the small minority that choose to stay remote, should be taught by an external firm or by exclusively dedicated remote only teachers. We expect and demand that all of our students are back in school by March 22nd and that our schools will be and stay, fully open in the school year 21-22. In addition, this ridiculous "mandatory" saliva testing is quite possibly one of the largest examples I have of the bullying tactics used by this administration. Refusing kids a public education because they do not want to consent to a saliva test which turns over their DNA and in NO WAY is documented anywhere that this is needed in order to facilitate a safe return to school, has held many families hostage to "do as you say or else." It is disgraceful. Not to mention when your original plan was presented and not favored in the original survey results, it was at the time to be voluntary. The word voluntary is in print and is public record. As always, you changed your rules and a community "consented" out of desperation to have their kids back....and yet it isn't even full time. Stop this unacceptable leadership from the top down. Stop fear mongering. And open up the schools, get rid of "mandatory" saliva testing and stop doing all that you can to quarantine kids and keep them OUT versus in. Enough is enough.</p>
3/10/2021 17:15:13	Rebecca Harpster	<p>When the Board of Education discussed saliva screening, it was always with the indication that it would be for five in-person days a week. At the middle school level, we have vaccinated teachers and tested, low-risk students. Why are we not at five days? My child did the test for ONE day of school this week. There has been much discussion about rebuilding trust with the community, and implementing saliva screening without going five days is yet another breach of trust. I am giving you my child's DNA, now please, give her a five day per week in-person education. We are running out of time. There are only 52 days left in the school year. Please see the urgency of this situation and get our middle schoolers back to five days. Thank you.</p>
3/10/2021 17:28:44	Michael Booth	<p>If you want to mandate saliva testing then open up 5 days a week full times. Let's not look up come the end of the year and see that D205 fell behind compared to other school districts around us. I've lived here since 1980 and for the first time in my life I'm thinking about leaving. We've enrolled in Timothy Christian just so we have an option come Fall. Word as of today there's a 150+ kids on the waitlist. 3 kids in D205 and even they are shaking their heads. You can do better. Serve your constituents!</p>
3/10/2021 17:33:23	Julie Barton	<p>Now that teachers have had the opportunity to be vaccinated and the saliva testing is in place, please, please let our middle schooler children at Bryan and Sandburg go 5 full days a week. To have almost 75% of our middle schoolers have less in person instruction than Churchville is a massive inequity in education.</p>
3/10/2021 17:33:44	Susan Jones	<p>The forced medically testing of students needs to stop immediately. The district has overstepped its bounds and is encroaching on decisions that a should be left to parents. The numbers are low and teachers who want to be vaccinated are well under way so there is no excuse for this disgusting personal violation.</p>
3/10/2021 17:36:58	Lisa Woodward	<p>Please get Sandburg back to school 5 days a week. The numbers show it is safe when precautions are taken. It's time.</p>
3/10/2021 17:38:07	Beth Zimmer	<p>Hello Administration and Board Members,</p> <p>I would like to thank you for making progress towards more in-person learning. But I'd like to ask you to do more, and quickly. The school year is slipping away and my children are ready for school to return to it's pre-covid schedule.</p> <p>Now that all of the teachers have been vaccinated, there really is no reason to have anything less than full time, in-person school and all extra curricular activities taking place. These children need more from you. Our children deserve the academically-challenging curriculum, full school days, lunch, recess, and all of the activities that have historically taken place at the schools. Many schools have proven that schools can be run safely with masks and handwashing.</p> <p>It's time to get them back to regular lives, like so many other kids are doing across the nation and even right here in Elmhurst. Let's go back to normal beginning on March 22.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

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3/10/2021 17:38:32	Katie Vreeland	Teachers are vaccinated and kids are ready to go back full time. The damage to mental health far outweighs the threat of Covid. Time to listen to the science and get these kids back in the classrooms and off zoom!
3/10/2021 17:40:10	Michelle Polach	Bring back full days 8-3. If these kids can eat a snack, we can find a way to eat lunch in the same manner/instead. Teachers are vaccinated and kids are low risk. Let's make every effort to make sure these kids do not fall behind!
3/10/2021 17:46:50	Jaime Schwager	All students should be in school full time. With vaccinated teachers and weekly testing of students grades 6 through 12 (along with distancing when able and masks) this is as safe as it's going to get. Covid rates are very low in Elmhurst and Illinois and with vaccinated teachers we need to get the kids back in school full time. Separately, please also provide clear details on disposal of student samples. It is not clear how samples are disposed of. Thank you!
3/10/2021 17:48:05	Lisa Pingel	This situation is incomprehensible. Get our kids back to school full-time five days a week NOW! If the private schools can do it so can we. The saliva testing we are asking the kids to succumb to is a disgusting breach of privacy. Step up and finally do the right thing to get some sense of normality for our children and this community. Don't just listen...hear what we are saying and take immediate action.
3/10/2021 17:48:59	Meredith Vogel	The BOE and administration need to present and approve a plan for a return to school for all students, all day, 5 days per week beginning March 22, 2021. I'm not clear as to what we are waiting for. Let's come together and make this happen. Everyday more and more schools are returning. Let's prove that we can be leaders and get them back in the building 5 days, all day with lunch. Our children's mental health depends on this.
3/10/2021 17:49:37	Elizabeth Thompson	Getting the k through 5th grade students back has been a great success! We now need to expand our school day for all grade levels. Please get our students back into the classrooms from 8:00 until 3:00 5 days a week. This needs to be done for middle and high school students as well. They are at critical stages of learning and development and should not be overlooked or made to wait any longer. Our community numbers are low, The teachers have had the chance for vaccination and there is no reason to continue operating at lower educational hours. Please do what is right for the students of this district and do it now.
3/10/2021 17:57:52	Jen Rice	It's time after a year to start making common sense decisions and put the kids first. Right now we are dealing with mandatory saliva testing. I appealed. I won't be dishonest and manipulate the situation. It is against every moral, ethical and parental fiber of my being this is wrong. I'm not going to lie and say I'm of Santeria religion. I could and you couldn't disprove it but I'm of moral character. Something this administration has proven time and time again to have known of. Mandatory saliva testing is also wrong because you again put staff before the kids. The last I checked you are in the business of educating our children not appeasing the Elmhurst Teachers Council. And again all kids are guilty until proven innocent. Yet somehow the staff at our schools, specifically the ones who choose not to vaccinate are innocent and no test will be given to dispute that. I applaud their rights to choose if they want to vaccinate. Unfortunately the same respect was not given to our families or our children who choose not to saliva test. But thanks to a staff member I was told "no kid has the right to an in person public education during a national emergency." Hmm...with the world opening up let's just stay stuck in the fear and terror right here in Elmhurst, IL where over 80% of parents want their kids in school full time. While the CDC and the IDPE continue to role out ways to get the schools open nothing was included about mandatory saliva testing. Yet you took it upon yourself to continue to alienate the community and role out an all or nothing plan because you signed a deal, a very expensive deal without thinking it through. Schools across the region are in school full time with voluntary testing. Lastly, can you please try and push forward to get these middle school kids in to the classroom 5 days a week. Stop using "I can't start making things happen FOR THE STUDENTS. These kids are at a very critical stage of mental, physical and education growth and it's completely stalled and the anxiety my 6th grader feels is strictly because of your lack of leadership.