

**STRONGSVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OCTOBER 29, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING**

The Special Meeting of the Strongsville Board of Education and any other items germane to the Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 29, 2020, at the **Administration Building, Meeting Room, 18199 Cook Avenue, Strongsville, Ohio**, by President, Richard O. Micko.

All members of the Board and media were notified of this meeting in compliance with Section 121.22 O.R.C., effective November 28, 1975.

The following Board Members answered Roll Call: Mrs. Bissell, Mrs. Buckner-Sallee, Mrs. Housum, Mr. Micko, and Mr. Roberts.

Others present were: Dr. Cameron Ryba, Superintendent; Mr. George Anagnostou, Treasurer; and Ms. Jenni Pelko, Assistant Superintendent.

This meeting was videotaped and is part of the official minutes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Tracy Joniak, parent, shared her concern that hybrid learning doesn't work well and urged the Board to vote yes to keep the children in school.

Ms. Vicki Maloney, parent, thanked the Board and Administration for considering more than just the color of the County's risk level. She stated that COVID is not spreading between students, and she sees much improvement in both academics and mood since the students have returned to in-person learning. She stated, kids need to be in school and asked the Board to vote to continue with in-person learning.

Ms. Cindy Podojil, parent and nurse shared graphs and facts on COVID. She stated there are higher numbers of hospitalizations for the flu than for COVID but they are not required to track death rates from flu. She appreciates that Strongsville is one of the few schools to have in-person learning five days per week. She said other schools are watching us. She thanked the Board and Administration for all they do and asked the Board to vote to keep schools open. Let students stay in school. "Show others watching how to be Mustang Strong."

BOARD DISCUSSION – STRONGSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS COVID-19 RESPONSIBLE RESTART COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Micko asked Ms. Pelko to share current Strongsville numbers of COVID cases and quarantines. There is one student at Chapman Elementary and one at the Middle School who tested positive. There are also a handful of quarantines at most of the buildings due to various reasons. Ms. Pelko reviewed the number of quarantines at each building. This information can be found on the District dashboard which was updated today.

Each member of the Board shared his/her opinion starting with Mr. Micko. Mr. Micko first shared some facts and then stated our schools are doing a good job and must continue. He is comfortable to continue with in-person learning but stresses masks, hand washing, social distances, etc. must continue. He also stated if the County goes to purple the District will go remote.

BOARD DISCUSSION – STRONGSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS COVID-19 RESPONSIBLE RESTART COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (continued)

Ms. Buckner-Sallee stated Strongsville numbers are high and there is concern that the virus will be spread in the schools. She would like to consider another option instead of in-person learning. Remote or hybrid learning would offer more social distancing. She recommends remote or hybrid learning definitely at the middle school and high school but is not sure about the elementary level. She would probably recommend hybrid for elementary students.

Dr. Ryba had to excuse himself for another meeting engagement at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Buckner-Sallee continued. She stated Strongsville should be in purple. Mr. Micko stated all counties plateaued which is a positive sign for everyone.

Ms. Housum shared that she recently spoke with many Strongsville residents. There is fear, but many voiced that they want to continue to stay in school. Ms. Housum agreed with Mr. Micko and would like to continue to keep the students in school.

Mr. Micko stated that right now decisions are being made a week at a time, but it would be nice to extend it to two-week periods. Hybrid and remote learning needs to improve. Professional Development needs to continue. Conversations need to continue regarding what Strongsville City Schools is going to look like next year. Ultimately, bringing students to school full time is a priority but we need to be ready for hybrid or remote if students and staff need to be home.

Mr. Roberts reiterated that we need to set an example for the community by wearing masks and to take into consideration the mental and physical wellbeing of the students and staff and do everything possible to keep them safe. The Governor stated today that it is hard to pinpoint where spread is happening and Mr. Roberts stated he finds it hard to believe that it's not spreading in schools. He believes the responsible thing to do is to continue to educate but in a safe manner. To do so, Mr. Roberts proposes the District move to a blended scenario at the middle school and high school. Mr. Roberts would also like to discuss how to enhance blended learning. He would like to have a plan implemented within the next ten school days.

Tuesday is a professional development day. Mr. Micko asked Ms. Pelko to share any ideas or plans that transpire with the Board at the next meeting. The teachers are doing a wonderful job.

Mrs. Bissell spoke to the community on how frustrating it may be that the Board appears divided. In fact it shows the Board is representative of the community. She encourages the community to be patient with the Board and to know that the Board is listening and discussing and doing everything they can. Mrs. Bissell also asked for patience as the Board is reading and answering all the emails and phone calls they have been receiving. All the feedback is appreciated.

Dr. Ryba returned to the meeting at 7:44.

Mrs. Bissell stated stability is important. There is no way to track asymptomatic spread. We must make decisions based on the data we have.

**BOARD DISCUSSION – STRONGSVILLE CITY SCHOOLS COVID-19 RESPONSIBLE
RESTART COMPREHENSIVE PLAN** (continued)

Mr. Micko summed up the discussion. He asked adults to be conscience of how conversations affect our children. Mr. Micko made a motion to continue with in-person learning for one more week.

20-10-45 Moved by Mr. Micko to continue the course for one more week, continuing with in-person/in-building learning at all grade levels, seconded by Mrs. Housum and approved on a roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Micko, yes; Mrs. Housum, yes; Mrs. Buckner-Sallee, no;
Mrs. Bissell, yes; Mr. Roberts, no.
Motion carried 3-2

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

20-10-46 Moved by Mrs. Housum to adjourn the Strongsville Board of Education Special Session, seconded by Mrs. Bissell and approved on a roll call vote as follows:

Mrs. Housum, yes; Mrs. Bissell, yes; Mr. Roberts, yes;
Mrs. Buckner-Sallee, yes; Mr. Micko, yes.
Motion carried 5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Richard O. Micko, President

George K. Anagnostou, Treasurer