

**Canon-McMillan School District**  
**40 Muse School Street, Muse, PA 15350**  
**Special Board Meeting Minutes – Thursday, November 5, 2020**

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mrs. Bowman-Monaco with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Members present:** Darla Bowman-Monaco, Manuel Pihakis, Joseph Zupancic, Bernard Price, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Pete J Moniodes, Zeffie Carroll, and Mary Beth Kline

**Others Present:** Michael Daniels, Superintendent; Brenda Rupert, Recording Secretary/Executive Assistant; Jocelyn Kramer, School District Soliditor; Scott Chambers, Assistant Superintendent; Timothy McCullough, Director of Human Resources (physically present); Matt Harding, Director of Support Services; Joni Mansmann, Director of Business and Finance/Board Secretary; Rebecca Lieb, Special Education Director; Ken Schrag, Middle School Assistant Principal; Ken Crowley, High School Principal; Robert Kleinhans, Cecil Intermediate School Principal; Justin Heckman, Director of Technology; Jurdon Maier, Director of Facilities; Tula Dziak, Muse Elementary School Principal; Tom Theodore, Muse Elementary School Principal; and Greg Taranto, Middle School Principal.

**Agenda Approval**

To approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Manuel Pihakis.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Presentation**

The administrative team gave their presentation regarding the pros and cons of physically returning to school five days a week and presented a plan for progression toward returning. The plan is to return to school four days a week after the end of the first semester unless there is a change in the CDC/DOH/PDE recommendations.

**Citizens' Speak**

**Letters and phone calls received from parents wanting their children physically back in school five days:**

Jessica Sanders, David Ledger, Sam Sepe, and Karen Taczak

**Letters and phone calls received from parents satisfied with the current hybrid method:**

Tamara Rellick, Kathryn Richter, Katherine Banaszak, Lori Jansma, Kate Wilson, Nancy Alois, Lauren Gasher, Carolyn and Ron Brunner, Stacy Bartkus-Bayer, Bobbie Loesch, Briana Maczko, Kathleen Schrader, Jeff and Jennifer Ilconich, Erin Keaney, Sara Spearman, Mike Macowski

**Citizens physically present expressing their desire for their students to physically attend school five days:**

Jane Worthington, Zach Erdeljac, Donna Spina, Kacy Jobkar, Amie Bolewitz, Karen Taczak, Renee Mead, Jennifer Berry, Shannin Pettigrew, and Krystal Landsittel.

**Citizens physically present expressing their desire for their students to physically attend school five days:**

Damien Shaffer  
Jane Worthington  
Michael Studd  
Zach and Amber Erdeljac  
Den Smiddle  
Kaley Jobkak  
Melissa Brown  
Karen Taczak  
Carrie Fisher  
Joseph Ross  
Alison McGowan

Amie Bolewitz of McDonald, PA is regarding/filming the meeting.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

#### **Mock Trial Team**

To approve the creation of a Speech & Debate Club/Mock Trial Team at the High School, as presented.

Motion by Bernard Price, second by Joseph Zupancic.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

#### **Personnel Sheets and Substitute List**

To approve the Superintendent's personnel sheets and substitute list, as presented.

Motion by Manuel Pihakis, second by Mary Beth Kline.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

#### **Bid Rejections - new middle school**

To reject the following bids for the new middle school:

- 1) invalid bid of Dagostino Electronic Services, Inc. for the Technology Contract for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (PDE #3832). The bid form was not in a sealed envelope.
- 2) separate prime bids for the Fire Protection Contract for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (PDE #3832).

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Mary Beth Kline.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

#### **Plancon Part F - Attachment C - new middle school**

To authorize the Administration and Architect to prepare and submit for approval to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Plancon Part F, Attachment C, Post-Bid Opening Notification, for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (#PDE #3832), as presented.

Motion by Bernard Price, second by Mark Dopudja.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

#### **Award Contracts - New Middle School Project**

To award the following contracts for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (PDE #3832) contingent upon PDE's Plancon Part F approval.

- 1) For General Construction, to Walter Mucci Construction Co., Inc. in the amount of \$33,553,170.
- 2) For HVAC Construction, to Lugaila Mechanical, Inc. in the amount of \$9,120,000.
- 3) For Plumbing Construction, to Shipley Plumbing, LLC in the amount of \$2,258,600.
- 4) For Electrical Construction, to A-1 Electric, Inc. in the amount of \$4,868,000.
- 5) For Food Service Equipment, to Eleven Four Hundred, Inc. in the amount of \$657,000.
- 6) For Technology Construction, to Horizon Information Services in the amount of \$657,000.
- 7) For Traffic Signalization and Public Improvement Construction, to A. Folino Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$483,483.

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Manuel Pihakis.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Appointment of Commissioning Agent**

To appoint Pitchford Diversified, Inc. as the HVAC Commissioning Agent for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project as per their proposal in the amount of \$168,000.

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Bernard Price.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Plancon Part G - new middle school**

To approve and authorize the submission of Plancon Part G, "Project Accounting Based on Bids", for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (PDE #3832) to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for review and approval, as presented.

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Mike Caporizzo.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Plancon Part H - new middle school**

To approve and authorize the submission of Plancon Part H, "Project Financing", for the Canon-McMillan Middle School Project (PDE #3832) to the Department of Education for review and approval, as presented.

Motion by Bernard Price, second by Joseph Zupancic.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Document Signature Authorization - New Middle School**

To authorize the board president and secretary to sign all necessary documents related to the new middle school.

Motion by Joseph Zupancic, second by Bernard Price.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**T-3 Expo (Acrylic Germ Guard) Bid**

To accept the proposal for Acrylic Germ Guard from T3 Expo, as presented.

Motion by Bernard Price, second by Mark Dopudja.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**School Board / Committees**

**Resignation - Board Treasurer**

To accept the resignation of Michael Caporizzo as the School Board Treasurer effective immediately.

Motion by Bernard Price, second by Manuel Pihakis.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

Nominations for School Board Treasurer (no motion necessary)  
Ms. Bowman-Monaco nominated Mr. Price. No other nominations were made.

**Motion that Nominations be Closed**

Move that nominations be closed for the position of School Board Treasurer.

Motion by Zeffie Carroll, second by Joseph Zupancic.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**School Board Treasurer**

To approve Bernard Price to serve as School Board Treasurer effective November 6, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Motion by Mary Beth Kline, second by Manuel Pihakis.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Bernard Price, Zeffie Carroll, Mike Caporizzo, Mark Dopudja, Manuel Pihakis, Darla Bowman-Monaco, Pete J Moniodes, Mary Beth Kline, Joseph Zupancic

**Citizens Speak (non agenda items)**

Zach Erdeljac – November 3<sup>rd</sup> In-Service Topic

Adjournment – time 7:00 p.m.

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Joni Mansmann

Dear Canon-McMillan Administration and School Board Members,

We are parents of students at NSIS, South Central and Borland Manor. We are reaching out to express both our support of the Hybrid Learning Model you have implemented in our schools, as well as our concern over talk we are hearing of community pressure to go back to full in-person instruction. Among us are 4 public school teachers. We are looking at this situation with great thought and concern, as both educators and parents.

We would first like to thank you sincerely for the time and dedication you have given to our school reopening plan. Being in the education field, we know full well that this is no small task. The level of thought, planning and coordination it takes to implement a reopening plan is extraordinary. We are extremely thankful for the endless hours you have given to create a successful plan for our children to begin school safely. We are so pleased with the plan that you have implemented and we are grateful to live in a community where our kids can return to school and receive the benefits of in-person learning, but do so in a way that maximizes their health and safety, as well as the health and safety of all of the teachers, administrators, and every family connected to each school building.

It is for this reason that we are reaching out as concerned parents. We are aware of a group of parents who believe our children should all be going back, 5 days, fully, for in person learning. We would assume that this is the goal of the district, as it is certainly our goal as parents. However, when we can safely reach that goal is what concerns us. With the hybrid plan in place, great care was put into how to utilize the space within the schools, while abiding by the CDC and/or PA Health Department guidelines. By limiting the number of kids in the classrooms, cafeterias and hallways at a given time, you are effectively able to space kids 6 feet apart to maintain the level of distance required to avoid close contact. **The point that was made in the petition for 5 days that “the need to social distance 6 feet is no longer a requirement” is simply NOT TRUE. It has been and remains a guideline from both the CDC and the PA Department of Health.**

We are seeing that this hybrid model is WORKING. Our kids are thriving and we have heard from many families whose children LOVE the hybrid model and that they are in a wonderful routine between home and school. We realize this can be inconvenient for parents and families. We are

working parents too, and this is definitely not an ideal situation. However, the guidance from medical experts and our state leaders shows that it is the SAFEST way for our kids to learn right now. It is the SAFEST way for our teachers to enter the buildings every day, stay healthy, and be able to teach our kids. It is also the most practical way to keep schools open. Being in the public schools, we are very aware of the protocol for contact tracing, as cases arise in the schools. Based on this protocol set by the health department, we can avoid “close contacts” much of the time when the 6 feet of distance is provided. This allows the classroom or school to remain open and limits the number of quarantines and days shut down. By going back into a classroom with all students, we assume it will be impossible to provide the 6 feet of distance. Without the 6 feet of distance, “close contacts” would surely be inevitable. With a full in-person plan in place, when a positive case arises, contact tracing would likely require a quarantine or shut down. This could prove to be extremely disruptive to the school schedule and place even more of a burden on working parents with sudden, unexpected or extended school closures.

We have been following the Covid-19 data at the community, state and national levels since this summer. While we have not seen the drastic spike in cases that our neighboring counties have seen, we do see a consistent INCREASE.

The following data represents the current numbers as of **October 26, 2020**. This information is taken directly from the **PA Department of Health Covid-19 Zip Code data**:

- The positivity rate for the last 7 days in Canonsburg is \*9.30%
  - There were 31 NEW cases in our district zip codes in the last 7 days
  - The incidence rate for the Canon-McMillan School District is 51.74 per 100,000 residents
  - The positivity rate for the Canon-McMillan School District is \*8.01%
- \*Once the positivity rate exceeds 10%, ALL REMOTE learning is recommended by the state guidelines.*
- The transmission level across our district falls into the Moderate category based on the state criteria.
  - Washington county as a whole falls into the Moderate category, and the recommendation from the state is for ALL REMOTE or HYBRID learning.

The following data represents the numbers as of *1 month ago* on September 25, 2020:

- The incidence rate for the Canon-McMillan School District was 21.70 per 100,000 residents
- The positivity rate for the Canon-McMillan School District was 4.68%

It is clear to see the increase in both the incidence rate per 100,000 residents and the percent positivity in our district. The point was made in the petition for 5 days that we “fall well within the health department guidelines to reopen for full day instruction.” This is UNTRUE. The data clearly shows that **we do not fall into the health department guidelines to reopen for full in person instruction.**

We are very concerned about the upcoming months, and the projection from medical and infectious disease experts of a difficult season of flu and Covid-19. Numbers are rising significantly across the entire country. Numbers in Pennsylvania are rapidly rising. Our neighboring counties are dramatically trending upwards in cases. The trend in Allegheny county has shown around 120 NEW cases a day in the last week. This is a significant increase from just a few weeks ago. Westmoreland county has been placed in the state’s substantial risk category two weeks in a row, which gives them the recommendation by the state for all remote learning. Our school district and county data both show an increase in cases at this time. We believe strongly that it is safest and most logical to wait for cases to DECREASE before we talk about bringing kids back 4-5 days in person.

We are concerned for teachers. We are making decisions based on what is best for the students, as we should be. However, we need to look out for our teachers too. They are more vulnerable to this virus and by allowing for a full in person model, it would be putting them at significant risk, due to complete lack of any social distancing. This is extremely concerning and rejects what is being recommended by the state for safe operation of schools. Furthermore, keeping schools open relies on the health of the teachers. We know all too well about the shortage of substitute teachers. We are sure most school districts are concerned, as ours is, about what will happen when, inevitably in cold and flu season, more teachers begin getting sick. With the 2 tiered symptom checklist we are using, symptoms of common illnesses that may not have kept us home before, will now require us to stay home out of precaution. This presents an enormous staffing

problem, which again can result in closures for remote learning. By continuing to follow the hybrid plan as we deal with this pandemic, in the midst of cold and flu season, we are providing a much greater opportunity to keep schools open by significantly limiting the spread of illnesses.

We understand it has been argued that other neighboring districts have implemented full in person learning plans, notably Trinity and Peters Township. Comparing our district to these other districts is invalid due to several factors. Our enrollment is simply not comparable to either district. We also have large class sizes in our district. Additionally, from what we have heard, these other districts have hired new staff members to accommodate their in person learning plans. We just cannot be fairly compared to these districts in terms of reopening. Furthermore, these other districts seem to be ignoring the guidelines by allowing many more children in their classrooms. Why does that mean we should ignore them? Our district has thoughtfully, carefully and responsibly planned for a safe return to our schools. **We are proud to live in a district that is choosing to follow CDC and state health department guidelines that are in the best interests of the safety of our students, staff and community.**

We truly understand how much pressure you are under to make these decisions. We also know that there is no decision right now that will please everyone. We are optimistic and hopeful for a point in this school year when the doors will finally open for all students, and we can resume some sense of routine and normalcy. Yes, our children need to be back in school and that is what is best for them in a “normal” time. Until that time, the hybrid model WORKS. The students are learning, engaging, socializing, following a structure, and doing all of the things that they were NOT able to do when we were shut down. We are extremely hopeful that the district will continue to extend this instructional model until the data tells us it is safe to change.

We do not want to see the lower numbers and success of this model be washed away by a rush to get back to “normal.” Data, science and district trends just do not support this rush to increase the number of students in the classrooms at this time. Many colleges are shutting down between Thanksgiving and the New Year to limit the potential for Covid-19 spreading more due to holiday travel. Numbers in and around our area are higher now than they were when we started this school year. Many of us chose this model of instruction over all remote learning because we felt our kids would be safest with this plan. With numbers rising, we have more cause for concern. We would be dismayed to see this changed, and be faced with the choice of keeping our kids out



of school entirely or putting them in a high risk environment. We are hopeful that you consider these points as you make these extremely difficult decisions moving forward. We would be most appreciative for you to share this letter with any other decision making parties, along with the board members whose email addresses were not made public on your district page. We are so grateful for the opportunity to have our voices heard.

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Thank you,

Tamara Rellick  
Kathryn Richter  
Terine Banaszak  
Lori Jansma  
Kate Wilson  
Nancy Aloï  
Lauren Gasher

Dear Members of the Canon-McMillan School Board and Superintendent Daniels:

As grandparents of two children in the Canon-McMillan School District, we were so glad to see the hybrid option of instruction was available for students. We have been impressed with how well it has been working and have appreciated your concern for the health and safety of all children in the District. This has meant a great deal to many grandparents, like ourselves, who are elderly and at greater risk for COVID-19. We have been comfortable being with our grandkids thanks to the system you established for students.

My husband was a high school teacher and coach for 45 years. I taught at various levels, was a school district administrator and a university administrator until my retirement. Currently we have very serious concerns about the possible changes that are being discussed to alter a plan that is working for the students in the Canon-Mac District. We are frightened by the possibility of no longer being safe to spend family time with our grandchildren and helping with child care for fear of exposure to COVID-19. As retired educators, we also fear the loss of some great teachers in the district who have their own families to consider.

As you know, we are experiencing increases in the numbers of COVID-19 cases in Washington County and throughout Pennsylvania. The predictions from the medical field for the coming months are dire. We have seen what has happened in school districts throughout the country that had students return to classrooms that could not social distance and did not have the costly, proper ventilation systems in their schools. Let's not be part of those grim statistics.

Again, we commend you for the plan you have in place. It is working for so many and serves as a great model for many school districts. We understand there are various needs for all students in the district and as a Board of Education and School Superintendent it is clearly the most difficult situation I am sure you have had to consider.

With the predictions of the majority of medical experts, increases of numbers in the county and the approaching holidays, PLEASE consider re-evaluating the data and keeping the current hybrid system in place until 2021. As I am sure you know, you could be making life and death decisions for so many people.

Please share our email with all of the Board and if appropriate, please read our email at the November 5th meeting. We thank you for your time to consider our input. Most importantly, we thank you for your dedication to providing children an exemplary education and a healthy and safe way to learn.

Sincerely,

Carolyn and Ron Brunner

Hello.

This in regard to the school days the kids are going to school.

I am perfectly fine with how my kids are going to school, Hybrid A schedule. They are doing well in their classes.

Also, with them being in school only the 2 days it helps with the compromised adults that they are around. Grandma had a major stroke a year ago and grandfather had major heart surgery last week.

Please leave the Hybrid schedule in tact.

Thank you for your time.

A Canon McMillan Parent of a Freshman and a Seventh Grader.

**Stacy Bartkus-Bayer**

Hello,

I would like to comment on the New Plan of Education that the school board is discussing.

Our family feels that the current hybrid situation has been successful with our child, and we would like to continue with this model. It has proven to have kept cases/infections down in our school district, and has allowed our children and the faculty to be safe from COVID19. We do not want to consider a full time return to school, until there is a safe vaccine that is readily available.

Bobbie

**Bobbie Loesch**

Senior Vice President - Sales

iHeartMedia

Hi,

I thought it would be a good idea to inform you of our neighboring school (Chartiers Houston) that is being shut down next week due to what I am being told is the 4th outbreak of Covid-19. I'm sure it's being kept quiet but being that I have a family member who is a bus driver for the district I get information.

I have emailed before. I know a lot of parents are bashing the school and administration and are frustrated with how things are being handled (hybrid-remote) right now. I think under the circumstances the options are where they need to be and the teachers are doing amazing. I am one of the few that are against a full reopen at this time. I hope that more than just parent frustration will be taken into consideration at the upcoming meeting.

Thank you

Briana Maczko

I am writing as a concerned member of the CM community and a retired elementary teacher. Covid-19 cases increase everyday in Washington County. We increased today by 64 cases according to the news. There are more cases now than there were in April when schools were shut down. I have neighbors and friends who have chosen the hybrid model as well as virtual. I have many teacher friends. I am concerned that there are no substitute teachers and teachers are expected to cover for each other, also that the rooms are not cleaned well and there is not and will not be enough protection for anyone if the district chooses to return to 5 day classes. There is no way to socially distance 20-25 children in an elementary classroom. I also understand that the 1st case of covid in the faculty has occurred. Please DO NOT be bullied by these people who think that the virus is a joke. I realize it is hard to balance between education and safety. But I believe that safety should always be the 1st priority. If not any illnesses or deaths will be a result of the administration and school boards poor decision. Please do not send these children into a more dangerous situation. Thank you for listening. I would appreciate a response.

Kathleen Schrader

Dear Mr. Daniels, Mr. Chambers, and Ms. Bowman-Monaco

As a parent of three kids at two schools (Hill Hendersonville and Cecil Intermediate) my wife and I are very happy with the current plans in place in the school district. Our kids are using the hybrid option and believe this is the best of many non-ideal options. We feel the current plans follow the recommended guidelines while still providing in-school learning.

However, we know that there has been a push through social media and other avenues to remove the hybrid option and to move to a fully in-school/fully remote model. If this option were to be implemented, we would likely choose to have our children go fully remote, as we do not see how the guidelines can be followed. This would be due to the increase in class size at school as well as the spike in cases in our area. We believe that changing the current plan would negatively impact our kids, as well as many others in the district.

Finally, we do believe you are trying to do what you believe is best for the students in our district and that this is uncharted territory. Through the first 9 weeks, we believe the teachers and staff have tried extremely hard and for the vast majority of time succeeded in educating our kids.

If you would like to discuss this with me further, please feel free to reach out to me by email or by phone (567 277 0617).

Sincerely,  
Jeff and Jennifer Ilconich

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Dear Mr. Daniels,

I keep hearing about how the parents want our children back in school 5 days. I'm sure this is true of some parents, certainly the loudest group, but I don't think this group represents everyone.

Please send out another parent questionnaire. Let all of us be heard. If the majority really wants our kids back in school, then so be it. I'll most likely be pulling mine out to go full remote or cyber.

I just want my voice to be heard. I believe the hybrid model is the safest option that still allows our children some face-time with their teachers.

Thank you,

A concerned parent



Good morning! I am writing to thank Canon McMillan School District for all they have done and are doing this year in putting the safety of the kids and all teachers and staff members first! This year certainly isn't anywhere near ideal for anyone involved, which should be expected in the midst of a pandemic. Our teachers are absolute rock stars for adapting so quickly and going above and beyond and doing what's needed given the circumstances.

I understand that many parents have concerns about the effects this year in addition to last spring will have on their child's education, but children are very resilient and are probably handling this better than most parents, myself included. I have 2 Kindergarteners and a 3rd grader in the district, one who I've seen resilience in many more times than I would have like to have witnessed. One of my Kindergarteners had multiple heart defects and many surgeries throughout his life causing him to be developmentally behind in addition to all of this and he's learning and growing each day even in a less than ideal situation. Our family has been much more reserved due to his situation and my kids constantly ask why so many other kids can do this or that and they can't. I would like to thank Canon McMillan for creating a safe environment for many kids to be able to go to school some of the time, rather than excluding those who may be higher risk completely. I feel the fact that they get to meet face to face with their teachers twice a week makes all the difference in the virtual portion! My kids are so thankful to be able to have at least a taste of normalcy and look forward to school more than they ever have.

I understand that our situation is not the majority, but I would ask that in the midst of a pandemic, you would consider keeping the hybrid plan. I hope that consideration for returning 5 days a week is not being considered at a time when the Covid numbers in this area are the highest they've ever been with multiple Canon McMillan schools shut down currently due to that as well. We all cannot wait until things can get back to normal but doing that safely should be the highest priority!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sara Spearman

I know there have been outbreaks but please let the kids go back to the classroom full time. I would even be happy with 4 days in class and one remote. Had conversation through email with my child's teacher and she even stated that online the kids aren't as focused as they are in the classroom. Thank you for your time.

David Ledger

Good morning Brenda.

Hope you are doing well.

On behalf of my husband and myself, I am submitting comments for the school board meeting discussion regarding the Return to School Revised health and Safety Plan.

We do want our daughter, who is a senior, back in school five days per week. Her risk of contracting COVID is much less than the myriad of risks and long term effects of her not being in school.

Thank you,  
Samuel and Alycia Sepe

I am (again) writing an email to the Canon McMillan school board requesting communication and action for a plan to return to IN PERSON INSTRUCTION 5 days per week. This is the third email I have sent to the board and superintendent.... and I'm assuming this will be the third email to not receive a response.

I am a parent with 4 children in the Canon Mcmillan School District. We are a family with 2 full time working parents. I have children in 4 different schools within the district.

We have now entered into the second 9 weeks of this academic year. There has been zero communication with the parents and students within this district about a return to school plan. This item was not on the agenda of the last school board meeting which is completely UNACCEPTABLE. This board is failing our families and our students.

The educational needs of my children, and others in the district, are NOT being met. Children do not learn by looking at a teacher streaming online 6 hours per day. They learn by interaction. They learn by completing hands on projects. They learn by engaging. Children require consistency and structure to thrive.

The virus is here to stay. We need to accept that and learn to live with that reality. Depriving children from in person instruction is not acceptable. I again ask, what metric is the board using to determine when a return to in person instruction will happen? What is the benchmark? Children and adults will both get the virus and the overwhelming majority will recover. This has been proven through science.

The Canon Mcmillan School District and board need to evaluate options and put a plan into place to return students to in person instruction. Many districts in our area, of similar size, have already devised and implemented plans successfully.

Devise a plan. Communicate a plan. Vote on a plan. Execute the plan. Time is up.....

Karen Taczak

I am reaching out to voice my opinion on the upcoming board meeting to discuss the back to school plan.

I have a son in first grade and he is currently in the hybrid program this year. He is becoming extremely disengaged in the learning process. As the school year has progressed, he has been struggling more and more to learn from the computer. He spends his days staring at a screen and then dealing with the effects of that screen for the rest of the day. He cannot fully focus on his school work and education because he is 6 and has many distractions around the house, no matter where we put him. Multiple times a day, he is told to look at the screen and pay attention. He is struggling to make it through his days and when he hears he has to do remote learning today, he becomes irritated and upset with having to do that.

I fully understand that Covid cases are going up and that schools have had to be closed. However, these students are beginning to have such a mental strain on the way this school year is going. I want to keep our children and staff as safe as possible, but I feel with the masks being worn in school, that is a way to protect them. We go about our days and go places and are allowing sports (which I fully support), but we are not prioritizing our children's education and mental wellbeing.

I would like to see the students return to a 4 day program. With 4 days, this gives the teachers a fair chance to reach out to all of the remote children and clean the schools. I feel that if we are willing to have the kids there 2 days, there is no harm in having them in 4.

Please consider changing from the hybrid program to a 4 day a week program, for the the future of our children.

Jessica Sanders