

March 14, 2022

Attached are copies of the written public comment submitted to the school board prior to the March 14, 2022 business meeting.

One submission is not included as it does not comply with [School Board Policy: BDDH Public Comment at Board Meetings](#).

Comments that violate school board public comment policy are shared with the school board but not included in public posting.

Best,

Judy Bowden
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Board Secretary

Written Public Comment

Mikell Harshbarger <thegreath@comcast.net>

Sun 3/13/2022 4:34 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Good day and hello members of the school board for Springfield Public Schools,

I am reaching out to you to ask you to begin to making visits to all school buildings to meet and visit with staff and to take a good look at the facilities in our district.

I am not suggesting that you participate in the usual sorts of "dog and pony shows" that occur when folks like yourselves visit buildings. I think you would be best served by visiting each school's staff room (perhaps armed with donuts or cookies) and hanging out there for a couple of hours, so you can have impromptu conversations with staff. While I realize that at some point you will be hearing the results of the "Stay Interviews" to learn more about the concerns of teachers, you might find it beneficial to hear things first-hand.

A few weeks ago, I was extremely fortunate to be able to have a "Stay Interview" with a friendly and considerate member of the district's leadership staff, and it really boosted my spirits. Having someone listen to me with empathy meant the world to me. I would bet that your presence and conversations might make all the difference to some staff.

I have heard that for some reason school board members are currently not allowed in the buildings. If this continues to be the case, then I would encourage you to take turns hanging out at a place like Roaring Rapids or Plank Town Brewery and inviting school staff to join you. (I'd be happy to buy you a beverage!) You could even do it as a fundraiser for SEF or some other deserving organization at a place like Papa's Pizza.

Finally, it is time for the school board to begin publicly discussing modernizing or replacing many of our aging facilities. Walking around these buildings might help you understand how so many of them have become insufficient or an obstacle for doing all of the things we need our schools to do. Talking with staff in those buildings would help you understand all of the issues some of them have and the challenges for kids and adults that these buildings create. We are proud to have such beautiful facilities like at Maple Elementary, Hamlin Middle School, A3, and the district office, but those are exceptions. Too many of our buildings fall short, and it's time for the board to be doing the hard work of getting them replaced.

Thanks so much for all of your efforts to help us do our best for the kids and our community,

Mikell Harshbarger
Fifth grade teacher, Elizabeth Page Elementary School

Written Public Comment

Nick Wing <nickwing33@gmail.com>

Mon 3/14/2022 11:54 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Elected School Board,

I understand that SPS has recently changed its position in regards to the state vaccine rule. As much as I appreciate the district making a way for unvaccinated community members with religious or medical exceptions a pathway back to serve students, I would ask that you consider less intrusive accommodations. I understand that the state rule puts the district in the position that you need to require extra precautions for those who have not received the covid vaccine. I would like to share my thoughts on this subject as I would like you to consider changing the current policy.

Please reconsider the masking requirement. There are other alternatives that the school district could use that are acceptable to the current vaccine rule. Testing alone for instance or a morning temperature check could technically fulfill the rule.

I am very opposed to this rule overall as it appears to have nothing to do with actual science or health but instead is meant to bully and shame those who have chosen not to take the covid vaccine. It is well established that though the vaccine did help prevent hospitalizations and deaths, (mainly under the delta surge when therapeutics were not readily available in Oregon) it did not stop the spread as we experienced with both delta and omicron. Therefore, the idea that an unvaccinated person is at greater risk of spreading covid is not scientifically supported. If the rule is therefore in place only to protect the individual who has chosen not to get vaccinated this is gross government overreach. Especially as mask mandates are being lifted for the rest of the state. Will the state begin to make rules that require all educators fall in a specific BMI range, and if not, they are banned from sugary snacks and drinks?

This rule continues to ignore natural immunity. The idea that natural immunity only lasts for 90 days is intellectually dishonest. If this was actually true then we should be preparing for another surge as the last Covid surge began about 90 days ago. Our leading health officials are moving back restrictions as they understand that the most recent studies show that natural immunity is many times more effective than the vaccine at preventing hospitalizations and deaths. The studies also show that natural immunity is effective for many months if not years.

Please reconsider the masking requirement as almost everywhere else in the state and country are now allowed to choose for themselves. Unvaccinated educators should not be treated differently. I am asking for you to reevaluate the current policy and make adjustments that are less intrusive. I am concerned that with the current staffing shortage, requiring masks for unvaccinated staff and volunteers will continue to negatively impact our students and staff.

Respectfully,
Nick Wing