

**Please note: *Italicized comments did not include a residential address in their communication.***  
**Comments are separated into “Comments on Agenda Items” and “Comments”**

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

From: O'Brian, Matthew  
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 2:19:54 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
To: Comments, Board of Education  
Subject: Back to school

Hello,

My name is Matt O'Brian and I hope to be reinstated tonight from the RIF list which is the best decision for student safety so the kids have a better ratio for in-person learning. I look forward to helping the school district during this very difficult transition back to school.

Sincerely,

Matt O'Brian

---

From: Casher, Jessica  
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 3:24:58 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
To: Comments, Board of Education  
Subject: 8/18/20 Comment on the Agenda

To the Board of Education Members,

I am grateful to be considered for re-employment at tonight's board meeting. It has been an honor to teach junior high art and to work with the Springfield community the last five years. This is a district that I value, and this is truly where I want to be. Furthermore, I believe in the power of art education. Springfield's ability to provide art at all age levels sets this district above many others and such programming should be preserved. We face a challenging year and students will emotionally benefit from having a creative outlet during these times. Additional staff will also allow for increased social distancing, and therefore a safer environment. Thank you for your consideration towards this decision and for your hard work throughout this summer.

Respectfully,  
Jessica Casher  
1880 Canton Road, Akron OH 44312

---

From: Knight, Annie  
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 4:52:24 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
To: Comments, Board of Education  
Subject: Regarding Reinstating Five Teachers

Dear Board of Education,

Now that we are moving forward with returning to school in the physical buildings, I ask that you agree to reinstate the five teachers on tonight's agenda. These teachers have been told many times that they would be returning to work if the decision was made to return to school in person. Our district needs these teachers in order to observe proper social distancing in classrooms and create a safe environment in our schools.

Respectfully,

Annie Knight  
486 Reynolds Ave  
Akron, OH 44313

---

From: Callaway, Angela  
Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 4:59:44 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
To: Comments, Board of Education  
Subject: Board meeting 8/18

Dear Board members,

Angela Callaway: jr. high teacher

I want to start off by saying thank you for all of the work you have been putting into this. After the decision was made to return back all five days, I am asking that you please consider keeping the five staff members that were promised. I understand the financial difficulties that could pose challenges to this decision. Please consider the safety and social distancing needs of our return and how our 5 staff members will aid in this for our students and staff.

Thank you so much for your consideration,  
Angie Callaway

---

### **CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

From: Laura Ridenour <lauratwinoaks@gmail.com>  
Date: Mon, Aug 17, 2020 at 4:25 PM  
Subject: Board meeting  
To: <comments@springspartans.org>

I was very disappointed watching the last meeting. I believe that this last vote was pushed through without all pertinent information being provided. It seemed that the reason for physically returning to school was based on the 70/30 survey and the fact that this will cause an inconvenience to the parents. It was not based on an updated survey that included any changes that may have been made once parents were notified of the recommendation by the Summit County Board of Health. The recommendation by the Summit County Board of Health and the recommendation by the school's

attorney was briefly mentioned and then practically dismissed. This is a health crisis and without someone in the medical field advising this discussion, it should have been focused on the recommendation by the professionals who specialize in this area. This meeting should have included that the school's job is to provide an education not be the families babysitters, there should have been updated, accurate, and substantiated statistics, information about side effect that occur in children weeks after they recover from COVID-19, the true facts about what masks and social distancing does, the truth that not all kids will follow the rules, the fact that not all parents will keep their kids home when they are sick should have been discussed. It also did not discuss that the kids staying at home will not be provided the same education opportunities as those going to school unless all learning is remote.

As a parent and a registered nurse who works in the hospital, I want to implore you to reconsider your decision. I understand that we cannot stop living, but we must live smart. We can and should be cautious with our children. Their lives and futures are in our hands. As the old survey seemed to hold a high influence, an updated survey with results after parents were made aware of the recommendation by the Summit County Board of Health should have been made available.

I agree that providing education at home is inconvenient. However, your job is to provide an education for our kids, not be our babysitters. I work 12 hours shifts four to five days a week while also continuing my education and taking college courses. I am exhausted. However, I will gladly take that any day and every day of the week as compared to sitting next to my children while they are on a ventilator or next to their coffin at their funeral. As my best friend has lost her daughter and must live with that every day, I see what she goes through and know that I am not strong enough to continue in that situation. How are you going to feel knowing that you voted to bring the kids back to school due to an inconvenience and a kid brings the COVID -19 virus to school. Symptoms generally do not appear until two to fourteen days after exposure. The school must shut down and now you must contact all the families that the child was in contact with and let them know they may have been exposed and possibly brought it home to the family. In my experience volunteering and running the parent teacher group, several of the children are being raised by their grandparents who are part of the at-risk population.

I also feel that many times it was mentioned the survey results. It was an influence on the decision to return to school. However, the survey should have been repeated after informing the families of the recommendation of the Summit County Health Department before this decision was made. If I am not mistaken, someone even mentioned that the attorney for the school recommended following those recommendations at the beginning of the meeting. I am very disappointed that the few statistics that were mentioned during the meeting were off the cuff and unsubstantiated. The job of the Summit County Public Health Department is to protect the well-being of our entire community. They made their recommendations based off well substantiated statistical information. The CDC shows as of 2pm yesterday children ages 0-18 years of age there are cases in Ohio with 237 hospitalized and 2, deaths. The Summit County Public Health Department has a reported 119 cases in the 44312 area. That increased by 10 in one day. However, contacting COVID-19 and recovering is not the end of it for some children. There is more to this disease than many are aware of. Yes, the children are strong, but there is also a possibility of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome that strikes weeks after they have recovered from COVID-19. It includes rashes, red eyes, fever, abdominal pain, swelling of extremities, and brain and neurological symptoms from irritability and dizziness to seizures, meningitis and stroke and can be fatal.

The mask does not prevent the exposure to COVID-19, it only reduces the exposure. Masks are made from a porous material and therefore does not prevent droplets from moving past the mask. Staying 6 foot apart only reduces the opportunity to spread the disease when a person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

In regard to the children following directions and keeping their masks on and maintaining a 6 ft distance, you should watch the different extra-curricular practices that are still going on. They are continually having to remind the kids as they watch them sitting next to each other without masks. I personally know, of one parent from our school who has tested positive and still sent their child to band practice even though the parent had not quarantined themselves from the child. That same parent refused to get their children tested even though they have symptoms. Unfortunately, just as parents have sent their children to school when they are sick in the past, they likely will continue to do so. Just ask the school nurses.

I realized when I watched the meeting that no information was provided about the restriction of education given for those who chose to stay home. My children are in advanced classes and will not be allowed to take those classes unless they physically go to the school. Therefore, we are not given a choice. We are being forced to put our children at risk. That information should have been given before the vote you that everyone can understand that it is not an equal opportunity. My children are being segregated due to their intelligence. I understand its due to staffing but in today's technological world, they could just as easy Zoom the classes. Lastly, I would like to know if it is so safe for our children to return to school, why is it you are still having your meetings virtually instead of in person and opening it up to the public. We were unable to have input into this meeting. It appears as if some of you did not feel comfortable having an in-person meeting.

I understand that many children learn better at school. I have three children and one does learn better at school. The second craves the social atmosphere. The third needs the structure. Maybe it is me being selfish or a very mean mother (which I have been called), however, the health of my children is to important to me to put my children at risk. If need be, we can retake classes or grades, but I cannot, and you cannot change the effects if any of those children get COVID-19. I would not expect any of you to instruct me on my job because it is not your expertise. However, the pandemic that we are experiencing is the expertise of the CDC and Summit County Health Department and that is whose guidance we should be following. At the hospital, policies regarding COVID-19 change almost daily as we learn more and more about it, but I will tell you that when we have a suspected case at the hospital and transport that patient to a negative pressure room, we are escorted by security to make sure that all doors are closed before we pass through to protect those in rooms and we are gowned and double masked with N95 masks. I rather doubt these are the precautions the school will be following. Please understand that I understand the pressure you are under however, in this case, the consequences outweigh the benefits! Even one child bringing in COVID-19 unknowingly can have catastrophic effects that you will be judged for even by those wanting the kids to return as well as possible law suits. I wanted to include some information for you to support my case. Thank you for your time and patience in reading this.

<https://www.scph.org/covid/maps-data>

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/dashboards>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/covid-19-children-doctors-see-link-between-virus-neurological-side-n1235501>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/mis-c.html>

Sincerely,

Laura Ridenour, RN  
2639 Mayfair Rd  
Akron 44312

---

**From:** Samuel Ray

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 18, 2020 1:59:18 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

**To:** Comments, Board of Education

**Cc:** Samuel Ray

**Subject:** Questions for tonight's meeting

Good afternoon all,

My name is Sam Ray and my address is 2575 Sanitarium Road. I along with council women Heather Anderson and Nicki Coontz have been helping the amazing cafeteria/transportation staff pass out meals every day for the students of the district that need it. I know this was first offered as a service to students while they were taking classes remotely. Since the district is now split between learning remotely versus in-class are you still offering this to those children or will they forfeit that lunch for a safer, at home, learning environment?

Secondly, is there a plan in place for the distribution of breakfasts/lunches for the students that will be in school? As you may already know, these areas are trickier since on a normal day our cafeteria staff would be in contact with every student during breakfast and/or lunch. Do we have any medium in which to deliver these meals to the students, will they have divided common areas or classrooms to eat in, and how will the staff handle exchanging of payments/reduced information while keeping our staff safe? I speak only for my concern seeing as I do have loved ones working in these areas and they are still unsure of the protocols as of this evening. I figured since your team deemed it safe you must know the ins and outs of what the plan is to be.

Thank you in advance,

Sam Ray

---