Board of Education Minutes
Wichita Public Schools · USD 259
Wichita, Kansas
January 11, 2021

Roll Call	The Board of Education of Unified School District No. 259, Sedgwick County, Kansas, met in regular session in the Wichita High School North Lecture Hall, 1437 Rochester, Wichita, Kansas, at approximately 6 p.m., on January 11, 2021, with President Sheril Logan presiding. Present: Ben Blankley, Julie Hedrick, Ernestine Krehbiel, Sheril Logan, Stan Reeser, *Mike Rodee, and *Ron Rosales. *Participating by conference call.
Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance	The business portion of the meeting opened with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
Statement about the COVID-19 Modified BOE Meeting Format	Due to the Governor's Declaration of Emergency and due to health and safety concerns that exist because of COVID-19, no members of the public are present at this meeting. This meeting is available to be viewed live by the public in the following ways: 1. WPS-TV on Cox Cable Channel 20, 2. District's website at www.usd259.org/wpstvonline, and 3. Apps for phone, Roku and Apple TV by searching "WPS-TV." Following the conclusion of today's meeting, this meeting will be available on the WPS YouTube channel. It will also be rebroadcast on WPS-TV Cox Cable Channel 20. At this meeting, all Board members, District staff, and presenters will identify themselves by name and position before they speak. The usual public communications item that allows members of the public to speak at Board meetings has been removed from the agenda. In its place, an E-mail Public Comment item has been added. Information about how patrons can submit e-mail comments is included in the BOE Agenda. Public Communications will not be placed back in the agenda until the public again starts attending meetings.
Reports Appendix 0	Report – School Board Recognition Month. Superintendent Alicia Thompson recognized Wichita Board of Education members for their service to the district and community. Each Board member received a personalized plaque from the district. Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly signed a proclamation stating that the month of January 2021 is School Board Recognition Month and invited all citizens to join in this recognition of school board members. The Proclamation is provided in the Appendix. Continued on next page >>

Reports (Continued)	Report – Good News Bostic Traditional Magnet is Recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School. The U.S. Department of Education has recognized Bostic Traditional Magnet as a National Blue Ribbon School. 1. Kansas Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Awards. Tonight, the following KAHPERD award recipients will be recognized for 2020: Erin Carney, South High: Kansas Young Professional of the Year; William (Bill) Schrant, Horace Mann Dual Language Magnet: Kansas Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year; and Emily Maier, West High: Kansas High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. 2. Magnet Schools of America National Awards. Every year, Magnet Schools of America (MSA) selects a handful of schools from hundreds of applicants to receive their Merit Award of Distinction. The district had four buildings receive that honor in spring 2020. Earhart Environmental Magnet won their first, McLean Science/Technology Magnet and Allison Traditional Magnet received their second, and Jardine STEM/Career Exploration Magnet received the honor for the third year in a row. In addition to the whole-school awards, MSA also selects a teacher and principal of the year. Vanessa Martinez from Horace Mann Dual Language Magnet received the Principal of the Year Award. Report – Service Employees International (SEIU): Esau Freeman, SEIU Business Representative. Topic: COVID vaccine and concerns regarding tonight's discussion of the second semester learning models. Report – United Teachers of Wichita: Kimberly Howard, UTW President. Topic: COVID vaccine and concerns regarding tonight's discussion of the second semester learning models.
E-mail Public Comment	President Logan acknowledged e-mails from six community members, which will be attached to the BOE Minutes for this meeting.
Education	
Verizon Innovative Learning Initiative	Superintendent Alicia Thompson, Chief Information Officer Rob Dickson, and Secondary Schools Executive Director Branden Johnson announced that for four years beginning in 2021-22, twelve middle schools will participate in the Verizon Innovative Learning Initiative: Brooks, Coleman, Curtis, Hadley, Hamilton, Jardine, Marshall, Mayberry, Mead, Pleasant Valley, Robinson, and Truesdell. Opportunities will include: 1. Always-available access: Every student and teacher will be equipped with a device and data plan. 2. Professional learning: A full-time school-based coach and blended in-person as well as virtual Professional Development will ensure all teachers are supported in promoting student learning. 3. STEM opportunities: The Verizon Innovative Learning Initiative will provide students with innovative STEM opportunities. 4. Research: Ongoing research will determine how the program is changing teaching and learning. This presentation was for the Board's information. The complete presentation is in the archival copies of this BOE Agenda and Minutes.

Department of Equity, Diversity, and Accountability Presentation	Director of Equity, Diversity, and Accountability William Polite and Director of Equity and Diversity Training Keith Reynolds presented an overview of the district's work to close achievement, opportunity, and participation gaps in the pursuit of the district's four long-term goals. The priorities of the Equity office are to: 1) Create an Equity Advisory Council; 2) Create Equity Champions in every school; 3) Increase equity training for Professional Development; 4) Increase support, mentoring, and tutoring for students; 5) Eliminate disproportionate discipline of minority students; 6) Increase inclusiveness and belonging of every student; 7) Increase awareness and confront unconscious bias; 8) Challenge stereotypes and produce a bias free work environment; 9) Improve recruitment and retention of African-American male teachers in elementary schools; 10) Intensify Restorative Practice, culturally-responsive teaching, social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed services; 11) Ensure digital and educational equity and opportunities; 12) Increase ongoing inclusiveness, belonging, and equity assessments of stakeholders; and 13) Increase the number of African-American males in advanced educational programs One of the primary goals of the Equity Work Group is to decrease the suspensions of the district's African-American students by 10% annually (from presently 37% to 17% by 2023) as measured by the State of Kansas Significant Disproportionality ratio data. Professional development focuses on cultural sensitivity, Restorative Practice, and culturally-responsive teaching; unconscious bias, and workplace diversity; making meaningful connections with minority students; improving peer relations, respect in the workplace, and stereotypes and bias; improving transgender awareness and sensitivity; and creating trauma-informed schools. The district participates in the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) Males of Color Program. This initiative helps CGCS member districts: 1) Adopt and implement elementary and middle school efforts to increase the percentage of Males of Color who are succeeding academically and socially in urban schools and who are on track to succeed in high school; 2) Reduce absenteeism, especially chronic absenteeism; 3) Reduce disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates; 4) Develop initiatives and regularly report on progress in increasing the numbers of students in the Males of Color program, and increasing the number of students participating in advanced placement and honors courses and gifted and talented programs; and 5) Engage in a broader discussion and examination of how issues of race, language, and culture affect the work of each district. The Males of Color work includes: revising suspension and discipline policies, practices, and procedures; eliminating the School to Prison Pipeline by providing intensified restorative practices and other targeted interventions district-wide; and providing Future Ready Mentoring Program for student mentoring, support, tutoring to increase literacy, graduation rates, decrease behaviors, increase attendance, and close the achievement gap. Continued on next page >>

Department of Equity, Diversity, and Accountability Presentation (Continued)	The district's Family Engagement Task Force strengthens relationships between schools, families and the community to support student success; develops targeted programs that engage and support families and students; and engages congregations to participate in the Future Readiness initiative. The Diversity office's **95-0-3 Campaign** guides all student initiatives: **95%** student attendance, **zero** suspensions, and a **3.0+** Grade Point Average (GPA). The Better Academics and Social Excellence (BAASE) program provides a fraternity for 7th-10th grade boys striving for academic and social excellence. Members have a GPA of 3.2 or higher and minimal office referrals. All USD 259 middle and high schools sponsor chapters to build positive peer groups; close the gap in Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors course enrollment and completion; and help students prepare to be leaders. Other programs that emphasize academic preparation include the Middle School Jr. League Football Challenge and Books over Balls. The complete presentation is included in the archival copies of this BOE Agenda and Minutes. This presentation was for the Board's information.
Consent: Disposal of Routine Business	Ms. Krehbiel (Mr. Blankley) moved the Board of Education approve the following items of routine business. The motion passed 7-0.
Human Resources Report Appendix 1	Board approval.
2020-21 Employment Agreement with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Uniformed Security Officers and Security Dispatchers Appendix 2	BOE Member Julie Hedrick pulled this item for discussion. Please see "Action on Pulled Consent Items" on page 5.
Monthly Finance Report: November 2020 Appendix 3	This is a monthly report to the Board on the budget and finances of the district. The report is provided for the Board's information. No action is requested.
Financial Services Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System Appendix 4	Authorize a change order to the Sierra Cedar, Inc., professional services agreement for additional implementation fees not to exceed a maximum $250,000 to allow for continued implementation support, with a revised total for Sierra Cedar's professional services not to exceed $2,450,000. The district's financial enterprise planning system is currently being upgraded. The project has experienced some unexpected challenges with system configuration to the Cloud architecture. Additionally, timeline delays have occurred resulting from COVID-related absences and a pivot to remote implementation procedures to avoid further spread of the virus. Because of this, the district will not be able to finish implementation procedures according to the timeline set forth under the original fixed fee implementation agreement with Sierra Cedar, Inc., approved by the Board of Education in December 2019. Sierra Cedar had already provided one extension of the project at no cost to the district.
Purchasing Consent Appendix 5	Board approval. Summary

Description of products/services	Amount	Responsible Party
1. Microsoft Premier Services	$ 87,170.00	Rob Dickson

<table>
<tr><td>Gym Floor Replacement: Coleman Middle School

Appendix 6</td><td>Approve an amount not to exceed $87,090, which includes the above base bid and a contingency amount of $6,000 with Great American Hardwood Flooring for the gym floor replacement at Coleman Middle School.

<table><tr><td>Base Bid:</td><td>$81,090</td></tr><tr><td>Contingency Allowance:</td><td>$6,000</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>$87,090</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Intercom Replacement: Wilbur Middle School, and Heights and Northwest High Schools

Appendix 7</td><td>Approve an amount not to exceed $30,200, which includes a contingency of $2,200 with Pinnacle Fire and Automation, LLC, for the intercom replacement at Wilbur Middle School, and approve an amount not to exceed $74,416.52, which includes a contingency of $5,500 with Electronic Contracting Company for the intercom replacement at Heights and Northwest High Schools.

<table><tr><td>Pinnacle Fire and Automation</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Base Bid: Wilbur</td><td>$28,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Contingency Allowance</td><td>$2,200.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>$30,200.00</td></tr></table>
<table><tr><td>Electronic Contracting Company</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Base Bid: Heights</td><td>$33,643.01</td></tr><tr><td>Base Bid: Northwest</td><td>$35,273.51</td></tr><tr><td>Contingency Allowance:</td><td>$5,500.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>$74,416.52</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Secure Entry Addition: Woodland Elementary School

Appendix 8</td><td>Approve an amount not to exceed $145,200, which includes the above base bid and a contingency amount of $11,000 with Van Asdale Construction, LLC, for the secure entry addition at Woodland Elementary School.

<table><tr><td>Base Bid:</td><td>$134,200</td></tr><tr><td>Contingency Allowance:</td><td>$11,000</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>$145,200</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>BOE Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2020

Appendix 9</td><td>Board approval.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Consulting Services: 3rd Floor HVAC Replacement at Hamilton Middle School</td><td>Enter into a contract with Professional Engineering Consultants, P.A., for design and engineering of the 3rd Floor HVAC Replacement at Hamilton Middle School in an amount not to exceed $55,000.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Action on Pulled Consent Items</td><td>Pulled items are presented in the order of the BOE Agenda.</td></tr>
<tr><td>2020-21 Employment Agreement with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Uniformed Security Officers and Security Dispatchers

Appendix 2</td><td>Board member Julie Hedrick said she was pleased that the SEIU Security Group had approved its contract. All employment groups now have contracts for 2020-21.

Ms. Hedrick (Ms. Krehbiel) moved the Board approve the tentative agreement for one year, 2020-21, with the SEIU, Local 513, Uniformed Security Officers and Security Dispatchers, and authorize the Board President to sign the agreement as presented.

The motion passed 7-0.</td></tr>
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Policy	
First Review: New BOE Policy 0400 - Non-Discrimination Statement and Cross-References in Seven Other Policies Appendix 10	This agenda item provides a measure to amend the Wichita Public Schools Statement of Non-Discrimination, codify the Statement of Non-Discrimination in new BOE Policy 0400, and cross-reference P0400 with seven other BOE Policies. Language is included in new BOE Policy 0400 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of genetic information. Language is also included in other existing policies to more clearly identify behavior that will be considered harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex. This will ensure that the language is consistent with several recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court, including *Bostock v. Clayton County*. The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) is a federal law that prohibits employers from basing employment decisions on information about an individual's genetic tests, tests given a family member, family medical history, requests for or receipt of genetic services, and/or genetic information about a fetus or embryo. GINA also prohibits harassment on the basis of genetic information. For more information, see the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's *Fact Sheet: Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act* in Appendix 10. In the three cases often cited together as *Bostock v. Clayton County*, the United States Supreme Court ruled that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, or gender identity, are forms of discrimination "because of sex" as prohibited by Title VII. The district's Statement of Non-Discrimination already prohibits discrimination on these bases; however, a number of other policies which address or refer to harassment and/or discrimination require amendment to ensure consistency with the Statement of Non-Discrimination and the law as articulated in *Bostock*, in the interest of ensuring a safe and supportive environment for district students, parents, teachers, administrators, classified staff, and others.

Current Policy	**New Number**	**Title**
0400	NA	Non-Discrimination Statement – New Policy. The new policy is cross-referenced in the seven policies listed below and controls all BOE policies and other district documents.
0900	NA	Integration and Diversity
0910	NA	Civil Rights Resolution
1115	NA	Sexual Harassment of Employees
1116	NA	Sexual Harassment of Students
1119	NA	Harassment of Students
1120	NA	Harassment of Employees
4025	4000	Equal Opportunity Employer

The Board requested no further revisions to these policies.

Operations	
Election of Officers	In accordance with BOE Policy 0100 – Organization of the Board: "At the Board's first meeting on or after the second Monday in January of each year, the Board shall elect a president and vice president from its members, each of whom shall serve for one year or until his/her successor is elected." The election of officers shall be by open ballot. Board policy stipulates that each member may vote for any member of the Board and successive ballots shall be taken for each office until one member receives four votes. The newly elected president and vice-president shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the meeting at which they are elected. President: Stan Reeser. Ballot 1: Voting for Stan Reeser: Ben Blankley, Sheril Logan, Stan Reeser, *Mike Rodee, and *Ron Rosales. Voting for Sheril Logan: Julie Hedrick and Ernestine Krehbiel. Vice-President: Ben Blankley Ballot 1: Voting for Ben Blankley: Ben Blankley, Julie Hedrick, Sheril Logan, Stan Reeser, *Mike Rodee, and *Ron Rosales. Voting for Sheril Logan: Ernestine Krehbiel. *Voting by Conference Bridge after other Board members had cast their paper ballots and the ballots had been collected. After the Conference Bridge votes were cast, paper ballots were counted and reported into the meeting record.
Continuing Discussion: 2020-21 School Year	At the special BOE meeting on November 30, 2020, the Board received an update on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Sedgwick County and the school district. Subsequently, the Board approved a motion that the Wichita Public Schools transition to remote learning at all grade levels effective December 2, 2020, with targeted exceptions, as recommended by the Sedgwick County Medical Officer. As part of this motion, Special Education Individualized Education Program (IEP) services continued as directed by a student's IEP team, as well as direct service at high schools for dual and concurrent credit, and specialized labs based on academic requirements. The Board approved the district to remain in full remote learning until further notice, with learning model status being evaluated at tonight's BOE meeting. In addition, the district extended for one day, through December 2, the timeline for parents to choose the preferred learning model for their student(s) – onsite or remote – for the second semester. The Board's decision did not change the learning model for elementary students currently enrolled in MySchool Remote; middle and high school students, who continued in full remote; and students enrolled in Education Imagine Academy, which is a full remote program. Tonight, Health Services Director Kimber Kasitz provided an update on COVID testing, cases, and plans to offer vaccines. Safety and Environmental Services Division Director Terri Moses presented an administrative recommendation for returning students to onsite learning as well as employee work status. The complete presentation is included in the archival copies of this BOE Agenda and Minutes. Continued on next page >>

Continuing Discussion: 2020-21 School Year (Continued)	Tonight, the Administrative proposal included these recommendations: Elementary onsite students would return to class on January 13, PreK onsite students would return to class on January 14, and middle and high school onsite students would return to the blended onsite model on January 25 when the second semester begins. Families will not see any changes if they selected the remote learning model for their student, are enrolled in Education Imagine Academy, or have a student who is already onsite being served through a temporary services plan. These BOE Minutes report the four motions made at the Board table during the Board's comprehensive review of the Administrative proposal. --- Motion 1: Ms. Krehbiel moved the Board accept the recommendation for secondary school students to go back to school at the beginning of the second semester on January 25 using the blended onsite model. The motion died due to lack of a second. --- Motion #2: Mr. Rosales (Ms. Krehbiel) moved the Board allow the elementary students to return to school on January 19 followed by secondary students on January 25. The motion failed 3-4. Yeas: Ernestine Krehbiel, Mike Rodee, and Ron Rosales. Nays: Ben Blankley, Julie Hedrick, Sheril Logan, and Stan Reeser. --- Motion #3: Mr. Reeser (Ms. Hedrick) moved the Board approve the recommended action that the Wichita Public Schools transition and return to onsite and remote learning models for elementary schools on January 13, and for PreK students to return on January 14. In addition, middle or high schools will transition to blended onsite and remote learning on January 25. All staff will return in-person to their assigned building starting January 13. This will not impact families who have selected the remote learning model for their student or enrolled in Education Imagine Academy, or have a student who is already onsite being served through a temporary service plan. The motion passed 5-2. Yeas: Julie Hedrick, Sheril Logan, Stan Reeser, Mike Rodee, and Ron Rosales. Nays: Ben Blankley and Ernestine Krehbiel. --- Motion #4: Ms. Hedrick (Mr. Reeser) moved that elementary staff will return to onsite work on January 12 and secondary staff will return to onsite work on January 13. The motion passed 5-2. Yeas: Julie Hedrick, Ernestine Krehbiel, Sheril Logan, Stan Reeser, and Ron Rosales. Nays: Ben Blankley and Mike Rodee.

First Review: 2021-22 District Calendar Appendix 11	The proposed 2021-22 District Calendar was submitted for review, with August 12, 2021, as the first day of school, and May 25, 2022, as the last day of school. Board President Sheril Logan delayed action on the District Calendar until February 8, 2021, to provide Board members additional time to review the calendar.
Finance	None submitted.
Miscellaneous	
Superintendent's Report	None submitted.
Board of Education Reports/Requests	Sheril Logan: • Announced the Special BOE Meeting previously scheduled for January 25, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the North High Lecture Hall has been cancelled. Ben Blankley: • Said several schools, including the school that his child attends, have sponsored music programs using creative approaches. Ron Rosales: • Said he appreciated tonight's Equity, Diversity, and Accountability report, noting that like presenters William Polite and Keith Reynolds, he attended Wichita Public Schools.
New Business	None submitted.
Executive Session #1: Attorney/Client Matters	At approximately 9:43 p.m., Ms. Hedrick (Mr. Blankley) moved the Board recess into an executive session for purposes of consulting with the Board's attorney, who will provide advice on a matter concerning pending litigation and on another matter concerning pending litigation, pursuant to the Kansas Open Meetings Act exception as allowed under K.S.A. 75-4319, and the Board return from executive session to this room at 10:15 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.
Reconvene Meeting	At approximately 10:13 p.m., Board President Logan reconvened the meeting.
Adjournment	Ms. Hedrick (Mr. Reeser) moved the meeting adjourn. The motion passed 4-0, with Board member Ernestine Krehbiel away from the table, and Board members Mike Rodee and Ron Rosales not connected to the conference bridge. At approximately 10:14 p.m., the meeting adjourned.

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From: Kasey Clyde
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 3:17 PM
Subject: Spring Semester

BOE Members,

I am writing this to advocate for my children. They are in Kindergarten and 3rd grade. The remote school has been very hard on my children. My son in kindergarten, though they try to have a schedule, is having a hard time sitting in front of a screen all day. My daughter is struggling more now than ever with her math and spelling. Last year, she excelled in math. Now she is so stressed over her classes. They both struggle with not seeing their friends. As both my husband and I have to work full time, it puts a strain on our family and jobs having to figure out being home to help with school. There is no more risk having children in school than going to the supermarket to get groceries. I am asking that you strongly consider opening back up schools for elementary students next week so they get the education they deserve and have the stimulation their brains crave. Children deserve the routine and environment in school, with friends, and teachers who teach elementary classes, not a parent who is unable to figure out common core math, or is exhausted from working all day, or another sibling trying to help. For those families who have the means to home school, that is great! This does not fit every child's learning style or the parent's ability due to whatever the reason.

Since my children have been remote since December, my daughter has developed so much stress and anxiety. She is online from 9-4 and then has so much online homework with Dreambox and Alexia and then has paper homework that she has to do and take a picture of to upload. This is flat ridiculous.

Also, all other districts have gone back, so what is the justification for not going back? My kids should not have to teach themselves all day and then continue to teach themselves with more homework at night.

Rather than having all these kids with stress and anxiety about their homework and workload that they do/don't understand, and having to teach a good portion of it to themselves; wouldn't it make more sense to have the children in class in person? We are not trying to raise children with anxiety and depression because of Covid and remote learning. Covid vaccines are being rolled out, which should help with Covid rates. Please keep this in mind when looking at restarting classes in person. Also, please keep in mind that we were only given 24 hours to figure out something for remote learning, so it shouldn't take too much longer than this to restart classes.

I thank you for all you do to keep the teachers and children safe. I am just asking that you keep this in mind when discussing and deciding the fate of the school year. Thank you,

Kasey Clyde
1033 S. Doreen
Wichita, KS 67207

From: Sharla Brummett
Sent: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 4:45 PM
Subject: Going back to school

Dear BOE Members,

I know that you think you've done your best for our kids during this horrible time, I don't believe you have. When you meet next week think about the fact that there are many kids that don't even get out of bed for school, much less ever leave the house because of being depressed. Either let them have the last half of the year or just tell us now that it is full remote for all grades thru May 2021. If you keep some home they should all be home. All I ask is don't get their hopes up and then screw them again. Enough is enough!

This was supposed to be the year my child spread her wings and became somewhat independent. With all that's happened, she has become more and more trapped in her room, stuck on the computer all day. Literally all day, 7am-3:10pm and from 3:30 to 10/11pm for homework. I hear the same thing from other parents and don't understand why there is so much more work. Especially when teachers are complaining that they don't have time to grade everything.

Well, now you know I'm being polite and not yelling, I know it makes some of you cry. That's ok because until you've been in my home while my daughter is having a breakdown over an AP Physics test that is nothing like the review, you have no clue! None at all! At the very least you should have them on a hybrid schedule.

Thanks,
Sharla Brummett
6311 Beachy
Wichita KS 67208

From: Travis Roberts
Sent: Friday, January 8, 2021 11:24 AM
Subject: Remote Learning - Board of Education Members

Dear Board of Education Members,

I hope you all are getting off to a fantastic 2021! I know our family was excited to turn the page into a new year. My wife and I have 3 kids… at Franklin Elementary School. WE LOVE FRANKLIN! Principal Smith and her entire staff do an amazing job. We have been highly invested with them over the last 3 years. A church we helped start, The District Church, has also been involved with Franklin by mentoring, volunteering, and supporting all the teachers, administrators, students and families we can. Our Church opened up over the last few weeks of school to be a remote learning site for parents in our neighborhood who needed a place for their kids to go during the day so they could get to work, run errands or receive external support. My wife and I grew up going to public school; we believe in being highly involved in our local community.

We will continue to be involved and engaged, but we are weighing the cost of the education our girls are receiving right now. I realize the weight of leadership has got to be heavy right now as you steer the school district. But I strongly ask you to consider whether or not the current decision to keep elementary kids home for remote learning is providing an education that matches the strong reputation of USD 259. There are constant interruptions during the day, much of which is outside of the teachers control. If our girls get done with an assignment they are sitting and waiting, sometimes for 30 minutes to an hour before the next assignment begins. There are several times a week where a lesson plan includes jumping on a learning application, not even participating all together as a class. Their class schedules don't line up well enough where they can enjoy "recess" or lunch together. We've always believed in public education because of the social aspect our kids receive. This not only takes that away from them, but it even limits their interaction with one another, as sisters, throughout the day. My wife works from home so she is able to help keep them on track, but I can't imagine what parents are doing who both work or who are in a single parent home.

If education is best done through relationship and connection, this is a far cry from an education. Even more confusing to us was when the Kansas Board of Education came out a week after USD 259 moved to elementary remote learning and said it is best for elementary kids to be in class, in person. Across the country we have seen pediatric associations saying in person school is still what is recommended for elementary kids. Another source of confusion was the decision to make a blanket decision for all Elementary schools. I understand if there is a surge in cases in a particular school that shutting things down for a period of time might be necessary. But to my knowledge, there were only a few cases all semester long at Franklin. Wouldn't it have impacted much fewer students, staff and parents to let them remain in person?

As a parent, as someone highly involved in our local community and schools, I would ask elementary kids to return to in person learning as it is the education they need and are suffering from not receiving. At very least, I'm asking the school board to let the community know how long it intends to remain in remote learning. In many of our discussions as a family, we've said it would be in the better interest of our kids to move them to a different option of education if the remote learning of USD 259 was going to be prolonged into the Spring. The current model, just isn't working. I think we're kidding ourselves if we maintain this education is anything more than a distraction for elementary kids during their weeks at home. There have been many national articles cited about the results of remote learning as well. One of the most recent I read was from USA Today where it cited the failure rate across the board jumped form 8% of students to 38% of students. Quadrupled the number of students! We can help our kids succeed if we'll open our schools and get back to being connected with one another again!

I hate email and text because tone can be hard to read. Please hear my tone in this email as hopeful and concerned. I am not angry and I'm not trying to be overly critical, only trying to apply criticism where I think it is helpful. I know there is much to cover on this topic but wanted you to hear from a concerned family in your district. I trust you will make the best decision for USD 259. Please trust we will make the best decisions for our kids.

Sincerely,
Travis Roberts
502 S. Fern, Wichita, KS 67213

From: Josh Osborne
Sent: Saturday, January 9, 2021 8:01 AM
Subject: Public Comments for BOE meeting 1/11/21. Section VIII item B

BOE Members,

Full remote learning for elementary school children has been a disaster for students and families. The quality of remote education is wholly inadequate. The board's decision to go full remote was a self-preserving punt, and every member of this board should be ashamed for letting down the students they were elected to serve.

I urge you to return all students to in class learning especially elementary school children. Please vote to return to in class learning immediately.

Josh Osborne
135 N Battin St.
Wichita, KS 67208

-----Original Message-----
From: Kathleen Duncan
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 7:07 AM
Subject: BOE

BOE Members,

Please don't send the teachers and students back into the buildings.

Please follow your OWN guidelines of over 5% infection rate = remote and online teaching and learning just as you follow the city's guidelines of mask wearing distancing and no public participation in your own meetings.

Please show a little patience and wait until we can at least get our teachers vaccinated before you go back to any sort of in person learning.

Thank you for your time.

Kathleen Duncan
3210 S. Handley
Wichita, KS 67217

From: Durell Gilmore
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 7:45 AM
Subject: Access to food should be the least of our worries.

Dear Board Members of USD 259 School District,

Firstly, to all the Staff of USD 259, thank you for your hard work and diligence during this very difficult time.

I am Durell, writing to you as Kansas Appleseed's Community Advocate for our Thriving Campaign. One of the values that drive our works is:

Kansans should have the resources they need to support themselves and their families and live healthy lives. When a policy doesn't work for Kansans, our elected leaders should do everything they can to address the problem.

There are families that are unable to access the meals that are made available due to sites like Jardine closing. Transportation and time has been a barrier for many of USD 259 parents who rely on school meals for their children. Sometimes the wait is hours long, and for others the time for pick up simply does not work. Again for those who must walk, the current sites are not accessible to them.

Districts across the nation and some right here in Kansas have been utilizing the school buses to deliver meals along the established routes. We believe that this is the most effective way to meet the increasing need, going forward as we continue to weather the storm of Covid-19 together.

From the time the pandemic hit American life there have been over 10,000 families added to the rolls of those receiving SNAP benefits here in Kansas. The number of children facing food insecurity has grown to one in every four. A meal should be the least of things people must worry about, especially in a time like this.

Durell Gilmore
2231 South Glendale
Wichita KS 67218

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