

Central Bucks School District
School Board Briefs
June 9, 2020

At the June 9, 2020 School Board meeting, the Central Bucks Board of School Directors:

Announced that prior to the June 9, 2020 School Board Meeting, the Board met in Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and a real estate matter. The Board also received information sessions from Dr. Kopicki on June 4th and May 29th on activities in the district related to Distance Learning and COVID preparations. No deliberations or voting took place during these information sessions.

Approved the minutes of the May 26, 2020 School Board Meeting

Heard Public Comment: Public Comment was collected using an online form, and President Darcy read the submissions aloud. Please see attached for the complete packet of Public Comment submissions.

Heard the Superintendent's Report: Dr. Kopicki remarked that the Pennsylvania Department of Education released their guidelines and requirements for all school districts to examine as we prepare for a return to school, hopefully in the Fall. The district intends to develop its Health and Safety Plan, as required by PDE, and present it to the board directors for approval in July. Within the next three weeks, PDE will release additional guidelines and guidance that outlines steps for school re-openings, while addressing safe operations, teaching and learning, and student wellness. We will continue to communicate with our community as details become available and plans are completed. The guidelines sent out on Friday were health and safety plans to be developed, and the educational guidelines are forthcoming and will be communicated to the public. Currently, the district is preparing for various scenarios, including a hybrid situation, an online situation, a blended situation, and a traditional in-person format. Within the next few days, a survey will be sent to parents to request their input, and administration will continue to communicate plans with the community.

Dr. Kopicki remarked that we will continue to strive to improve and engage in thoughtful discussions with all of our community stakeholders our intentions on furthering our diversity committee initiatives, and our work, and will continue to seek to develop the partnerships that we've begun and include the various participant groups. We will continue meeting, collaborating, and listening, so that we can create meaningful, thoughtful, effective change.

Dr. Kopicki announced that the district has opened our playgrounds, tennis courts, and high school stadiums

Reviewed the School Board Reports:

Curriculum Committee

Finance Committee

Operations Committee

Bucks County Intermediate Unit

Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

Approved the Accounts Payable Check Disbursements Report

Approved an Agreement of Sale for the Ash Mill Property in Buckingham Township in the amount of \$1,050,000.00

Approved the low bid from Visual Sound, Inc. for the CB South HS Phase 1: Auditorium Audio/Visual Upgrade Project in the amount of \$344,544.00

Approved the low bid from Beams Custom Woodworking for the CB South HS Phase 1: Auditorium Audio/Visual Upgrade Project in the amount of \$19,915.97

Approved the proposal from J.C. Ehrlich Pest Control for district-wide pest control services in the amount of \$34,000.00

Approved the change order proposal from JBM Mechanical for the Butler Elementary School boiler replacement in the amount of \$131,519.44

Approved the Master Services Agreement with Bucks County Intermediate Unit in the amount of \$16,000.00

Approved Personnel Items:

Appointments

Retirements/Resignations

Leaves of Absence

Activities EDR Changes

Extended School Year

Approved Staff Conferences/Workshops

Reviewed the Reports and Information: Sabbatical Leaves of Absence



Public Comment

JUNE 9, 2020

Laura Corcoran

Furlong

I understand there are 4 options regarding opening school in the Fall. Can you please share those with the parents and are we going to have a voice as to which we ultimately select? Are there specific guidelines determining which one will be implemented, and if so, what are they? Based on this data that you provide, parents can make an informed decision whether they would like to send their kids to CB schools in the Fall. Children need in person teaching And extra curriculars as we've witnessed through this 3 month period. Thanks!

Dan Tropea

Warrington

I do not believe in the “new normal” as touted by our elected officials. Shall we have a “lessons learned”, in our total response as a nation to this pandemic? absolutely! But to radically change our learning structure without data supporting it, is ridiculous. I support any initiative that gets us back to the old normal. Masks, limited social interaction, restrictions on extracurricular activities, will cause more harm than good. As a nation we survived worse with viral outbreaks without changing our learning culture, this instance is no different .

Katherine
Abbott Cutler

New Britian

There should be a virtual option for "at risk" kids but all other kids need regular school (Regular gym recesss etc)

Kelli Grayson

Warrington

My children need to be in school. My oldest needs to be with a teacher. My youngest is struggling so bad not being in the school!! And sports! WE NEED ALL SPORTS!!!!!! Give parents a choice if they want to keep their kids home. Mine NEED to be there!! Face masks...not happening. My children will not be wearing a face mask in school. This will cause a distraction to them. Thank you!!

Robert Schwarz

New Britain

Based on the available data on COVID-19 provided by Bucks County, I see no reason to open the K-12 schools with any modifications. The children have had enough disruptions to their education. Let's re-open our schools as we normally would.

Erica Darrows

Chalfont

I Will have an elementary student, a middle schooler and two will be in high school in the fall. I work at Children's Hospital in the Emergency Dept. (We wear masks and goggles throughout our shift-I get it!) I would like to see the students return to their typical school day and year. I recognize that some safety measures would likely need to be put in place I.e mask wearing, etc. while I appreciate that the district and teachers acted so quickly to minimize the interruption of students learning and school involvement when Covid hit, the overall learning and in some cases accountability wasn't there. For our family, I have decided if the kids aren't headed back to school in the fall and CBSD continues with its current model, I will be enrolling my kids, except for my senior in cyber school.

Erica Darrows

Chalfont

(continued)

I want them to have actual instruction, participation and accountability, as well as true grading. Two of my students have 504's and one was supposed to get speech. He received 2-4 speech sessions that were 15 mins each since mid March. That is unacceptable. The 504 accommodations don't seem to work plus my soon to be 6th and 10th graders need structure and accountability. Again, thank you for what the district has done, my kids will need more education and accountability, if traditional school is not open in Sept. Thanks, Erica

Karly Seaner

Plumstead

CB School District- I would like to thank you all for your hard work and continued communication. What these teachers did was something short of a miracle. Through distance learning both my children 9th and 11th grade signed on to all their calls and did all work asked of them. As challenging as it was at times, they pushed through it. Like in many other families my children have two different personalities. My Son misses the additional discussions that come out of the classroom and my Daughter misses the social aspect. Regardless, both are very important when it comes to the mental health of a child. I'm not going to bore you with statistics, all the information is easily accessible. These children can return back to school in the Fall, safely.

Karly Seaner

Plumstead

(continued)

I trust that with the information you have access to, you can make this work. Also understanding that some modifications might need to be made. Distance learning if necessary, needs to be revisited now that time permits. The district needs to consider options and platforms that have been working for colleges and universities. I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my concern and take it into consideration for your decisions for the upcoming school year. Take care, Karly Seaner

Elyssa Nemeroff

Warrington

As a tax payer with children in the school district, I want to voice my concern regarding virtual schooling. In my opinion it had a negative effect on my children and believe it was a waste of time. My youngest will be entering kindergarten and there is no way she will receive the education we hoped for when moving to central bucks. A kindergartener can not sit and do virtual school and receive an optimal social, mental, physical education that she deserves. My first grader would cry every day over these last 3 months while doing virtual school and she was an excellent student before all this. Please allow the schools to reopen for in person classes or we will definitely be looking to move somewhere that does offer it. Thank you

Sonya Herrick

Doylestown

I would like to strongly encourage the school district at large to consider that many families in the community don't have the privilege of a stay at home parent. In a two parent working household or single parent household it will be impossible and/or extremely expensive to work around any abbreviated school schedule which includes a hybrid of in school and distance learning. Working parents should not be forced to choose between educating their children or quitting their job. If individuals are nervous about sending their children to school and have the means and to do so, they should opt for distance learning. For the rest of us, we should have the ability to choose to send our children to the schools that our taxpayer \$\$\$\$ fund. Please consider all family and financial circumstances and limitations and ensure you are not catering to the privileged few in the name of "covid".

Edward J Stranix

Doylestown

Distance learning has been a complete failure. It has not worked and the children are struggling every single day. Please do what is right by the kids and teachers - they need to be together.

Kimberly Sciorillo

Warwick

I truly hope that school will resume in the classroom in September as I have an upcoming senior, sophomore and 8th grader in the school district. If that is unable to happen, then I feel that students should be taught from 7:30am until 2:30pm virtually, as if they were sitting in the school. My good friend is a high school math teacher in NJ and she has taught all five of her classes, for the full class time, five days a week, since day one of distance learning. She was shocked to hear how little instruction our children are receiving. She stated that she has had to work harder than she ever has in her 25 years as a high school math teacher but she is instructing as if the kids were in class with her all day long and it has been very successful. The same goes for another friend whose sons attend a private high school in PA. It is possible.

Kimberly Sciorillo
Warwick

(continued)

I appreciate all the hard work that teachers and administration have put into virtual learning and I realize that we are in uncharted waters but in talking with others, I have realized that our district needs to do more next year to make virtual learning a success if “in classroom” instruction is not going to happen. We cannot have another year of one(Holicong) or two(East) classes per week and think that that is enough, our children need and deserve more. They will clearly be at a disadvantage academically if things continue as they have been since March. Thank you for your time.

Elaine Marucci
Warrington

Our kids are suffering emotionally and academically. They need to be back in the classroom. The damage has been great, and will be irreparable if we continue with distance learning only. The struggle is very real for these students, we have to do better in this challenging situation.

Donna Bonilla

Warrington

I would like to see us move forward. Our kids need to be around their friends, participate in the social aspects of school, interact with their teachers. I am sorry but it was very difficult to see all of the protesting going on and those of us who listened to the social distancing requests and stayed home it was like a set back to us - why did we even do it at all. We all need to continue with our lives. School activities should be allowed.

Megan Leone

Chalfont

To whom it may concern, I wanted to make a comment supporting the opening of schools in September. The past 3 months have been torture for my family. My husband and I both work full time and have 3 kids under the age of 8. Juggling work and home school has been stressful to say the least. Our oldest is going into 3rd grade and requires learning support. I am not qualified to teach him and I feel he has suffered as a result of home schooling. He is not engaged and is unable to focus when taught via recordings. I understand the district did the best they could given the situation, but this needs to end. Our kids deserve the in person education this district is able to provide.

Megan Leone

Chalfont

(continued)

My husband and I moved to this area so our kids could attend the public schools. If schools do not open, our children will suffer the consequences. Kids need to be taught in person by those qualified to do so. I am confident the majority of parents want their kids back in school so we can get back to some kind of normalcy. Schools need to figure out how they can open under the new guidelines, whatever it takes. If there are people that prefer to keep their kids home and teach them, let them do that. There are many other reasons schools need to open secondary to education. They include declining property value, lack of child care for working parents and mental health of parents and children. Schools need to open in the fall! Sincerely, Megan Leone

Kathleen Burke
Buckingham

My son was in Kindergarten this year. I would like to request that as much as possible younger children can move to the next grade with the same children in their class. The younger children were just learning about their classmates and forming friendships and would most likely feel some comfort having familiar faces in class whether in person or online.

Jonnell whitson

Buckingham

I am 100% against the new normal idea. Our kids want to go back to school like it was before. No masks, no social distance, let them play sports, eat in the cafeteria and be together. All of this distancing and mask wearing is putting exuberant amounts of fear into them and isn't good. Keeping kids apart is causing more harm and these kids are suffering!! Viruses come and go, let their immune system do what it's meant to do!! If students and teachers need or want to learn online let them but let the healthy go back to living. Our kids futures are at stake. My kids do not want distance learning, they feel like they are being cheated of a true education, their future is in your hands. Please open schools fully and back to normal for fall.

Bill N.
Chalfont

For the psychological, social and intellectual health of our youth, open our district schools with regular in-person instruction - 5 days a week and normal hours - and masks should be optional - not 'recommended' nor 'mandatory'. For medically fragile or vulnerable students, offer them virtual instruction. For teachers not feeling comfortable returning, offer them to take the year off and bring in teachers who are willing to teach our students.

Erin Zezzo

Buckingham

My name is Erin Zezzo and I have an incoming senior at CBEast. I wanted to voice my daughters concerns as well as mine for the re-opening of our schools. The entire Covid situation has been surreal to all of us. We have seen the good, the bad and the ugly. We have seen good decisions being made and we seen poor decisions being made. Everyone has had to make adjustments and we have to show humility at all times, trying to find good in every situation. However, the impact to our young children has been tremendously negative. We've taken them completely out of what they consider normal and then they hear that this is the "new normal". That cannot be, especially when it doesn't have to be. The data does not support this. If we physically distance then masks are not needed and are ineffective in prevention of disease unless the can filter out a .1 micron virus.

Erin Zezzo
Buckingham
(continued)

I am a trained Microbiologist. I have been watching the numbers, the comments and the data. There should be no reason why low risk individuals who can maintain a physical distance need to wear a mask. If someone feels they need to sneeze they may do so in a tissue that can be disposed of. If they feel sick, do not come to school. But for a healthy person in low risk categories to go to extreme measures is ludicrous and makes no sense. The mask do not prevent a small virus from penetrating through the mask. To ask these kids to wear masks to take tests, wear the mask at all times in school and then ask them to distance from their friends is a dangerous undertaking.

If they are distancing, then masks are not needed. We cannot expect kids to wear these masks and tell them to be at the top of their game for regular testing and especially for standardized testing. They're restrictive, and they do not give these kids the oxygen level that they need to perform at their best. My daughter is a straight A student, a high performer and an athlete. She also can easily suffer from anxiety and has done so when we ask them to wear masks, walk a certain way down a hallway and completely take them away from anything that they considered normal. The anxiety is real and difficult to deal with. We are taking the HUMAN out of humanity. Please help put a stop to this and do the right thing for our children.

Erin Zezzo
Buckingham
(continued)

With the prevalence being so low in these young kids we cannot restrict them and tell them it's OK not to perform their best. Their health and well-being will suffer long term consequences if everything they worked toward is suddenly striped from them. There is increased anxiety that they are being put in at a high disadvantage especially when there isn't a standard across all schools in the United States. How do they distinguish themselves from someone else when other school districts will not be requiring such stringent guidelines? How do they adapt to wearing masks all day, restricting air flow? How can they perform at their highest. How can they even stay motivated? This is not what we raised our kids to be. The anxiety levels in kids are high enough. We constantly talk about mental health breaks for them and now we are taking them away from everything they know putting a mask over their face and telling them that that's the new way that life is going to be. I am adamantly against this. My daughter is adamantly against this.

The process is simple. Limit classroom sizes, have hand washing stations put throughout the schools. Keep a clean environment and they will be safe. If your sick, stay home and offer class work on line until you feel better. For the sake of our children, please consider making masks optional for the teachers and the children. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Erin Zezzo

Chrysty
ODonnell
Buckingham

I am 100% on board for my children (5th and 8th grade)starting school in the fall. I do believe certain cleaning, hand washing, and staying home with any illness need to be enforced but that is it. No face masks! While I have no complaints about the homeschooling that was adapted for the Spring. It was sufficient enough under the extreme circumstances we were all put in. However, this program would not be sufficient for the fall and must be ramped up, with that being said both my children learn better from a live classroom setting with their peers. Both my children desperately miss the social interaction and activities that in classroom learning provides. I do believe there should be an online option for parents who choose not to send their children to school. Thank you

Alicia Anderson
Buckingham

I urge the school board to make evidence and science-based decisions to drive the format of what school will look like in the fall. You are probably hearing from a lot of parents who have organized a campaign of "fully reopening school", or are urging you to allow families who "don't want their children to attend" opt not to, and then have to manage providing online instruction. As a stakeholder, I find this full of inequities, and unfair to ALL stakeholders in the district - students, staff, administration and the community at large. So, I urge you to stay the course of doing what CB has always done: finding rational and fair solutions while keeping members of our school community safe, and not bending to the will of the few.

Leah Planck
Buckingham

Open schools in fall

Jamie Walker

Buckingham

I moved to the Central Bucks School because of their wonderful school system. I have always been thrilled with the school district until March 2020. My expectations of Central Bucks School District is to be a strong pro education leader in the next few months. We are the third largest district in the state. We must set an example for the rest of the state. The only option our school district has to continue being a wonderful school district is to resume school, sports, and all extra curricular as normal prior to March 2020. The arbitrary guidelines set forth from our governor and health department change weekly sometimes daily. The current guidelines set forth would make it impossible for Central Bucks School district to operate. They are completely unrealistic and obviously do not take education into account. Dr. Kopicki needs to be an advocate for our kids right now. Summer school is able to take place July 1st. I know many students are entitled to ESY services and this would also be a great to offer catch up classes to students that could really use the extra instruction. Will the district be offering these services? Dr. Kopicki stated himself he views the direction by the state as flexible. I believe this means people are looking to him and our district for guidance. Lets be the ones that open up normally and teach our kids. If Central Bucks doesn't resume to normal (prior to March 2020) the results will be felt by the entire community for years to come. People move to Central Bucks for their schools. This is what keeps our house values high. I know if my kids are forced to be taught virtually, wear masks, sit in partitions, made to social distance, not be able to play sports, go to recess, or eat in a lunchroom I will look for alternate education. If the school district threatens to shut down every time a person tests positive for the virus I will look for alternate education. I would like to think that as educators and leaders the entire board realizes how harmful all of the above mentioned things are to developing children.

Jamie Walker
New Britain
(continued)

We absolutely cannot continue to have lack of consistency in education and socialization. Its been too much already. If school doesn't resume as normal I am wondering what my school tax dollars will be going towards. Will I receive tax credit back to place my kids somewhere that meets their educational needs? Will I get the money back for transportation costs? What does the district plan to do if a large amount of people pull their kids out? Does that mean layoffs for many of the staff? If school is virtual again is there an actual need for many CBSD employees. You certainly do not need principals, vice principals, special education aides, lunch duty aides, bus drivers in virtual school. What happens to all the tax money that goes towards sports, music, and art programs? Where is that allocated? Think about that multiplied by the entire state of PA. Central Bucks should be developing a virtual option for parents that are afraid. This option can be taught by at risk teachers that are afraid because they have medical condition. The kids and teachers that want to continue virtually can be grouped together. It would not matter which schools the kids go to because the district has the same basic curriculum. If a student wants to return to classroom they should be able to have that option. If a student does test positive for the virus they can attend the virtual school for a period of time. In August a survey can go out to parents which option they want for their kid, virtual school or normal school. I still have faith in the school district that we will open normally and give our kids the education they deserve. I have faith Dr. Kopicki will be a leader in this fight for our kids. Remember everything put out is simply a guideline. The consequences of not having kids in school normally out weight anything else for CBSD.

Jamie Walker
New Britain
(continued)

We absolutely cannot continue to have lack of consistency in education and socialization. Its been too much already. If school doesn't resume as normal I am wondering what my school tax dollars will be going towards. Will I receive tax credit back to place my kids somewhere that meets their educational needs? Will I get the money back for transportation costs? What does the district plan to do if a large amount of people pull their kids out? Does that mean layoffs for many of the staff? If school is virtual again is there an actual need for many CBSD employees. You certainly do not need principals, vice principals, special education aides, lunch duty aides, bus drivers in virtual school. What happens to all the tax money that goes towards sports, music, and art programs? Where is that allocated? Think about that multiplied by the entire state of PA. Central Bucks should be developing a virtual option for parents that are afraid. This option can be taught by at risk teachers that are afraid because they have medical condition. The kids and teachers that want to continue virtually can be grouped together. It would not matter which schools the kids go to because the district has the same basic curriculum. If a student wants to return to classroom they should be able to have that option. If a student does test positive for the virus they can attend the virtual school for a period of time. In August a survey can go out to parents which option they want for their kid, virtual school or normal school. I still have faith in the school district that we will open normally and give our kids the education they deserve. I have faith Dr. Kopicki will be a leader in this fight for our kids. Remember everything put out is simply a guideline. The consequences of not having kids in school normally out weight anything else for CBSD.

Nancy Tegano
Buckingham

Good morning, my name is Nancy and I have two children, a 12th grader and a 7th grader who will be attending CBSD in the fall. I am begging you to let the children return to in person schooling. As a boy mom I believe it is imperative for them to see their friends. Boys do not communicate as easily as girls do and I know both of my children are in need of some interaction with other school aged children. Science show us the importance of social interaction within the school setting, one website noting this is <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/social-distancing-effects-on-social-development>. Moving forward, I believe maybe parents and families should have two options. The first option being normal pre-covid instruction with no partitions and normal recess, if students or faculty want to wear masks they should be allowed. For those families who are not comfortable sending their child to school possibly due to an underlying physical condition, then maybe we can have live streaming of every class? Families should have the right to choose. Thank you.

Eric
Horchheimer
Buckingham

I want CBSD to follow the CDC's guidelines for school's this coming fall. Just this past weekend, most of the new Covid-19 cases came from just one exposure location at the Jersey Shore. I will have two children in two different CB schools this coming Fall and I do not want them going in unprepared and feeling like everything is safe just because school is "back to normal." The vocal minority who are calling for "100% back to normal in the Fall" are irresponsible to think schools will be safe enough without measures in place. Please consider the ramifications of your discussion tonight should you feel swayed by these short sighted, Covid-deniers. Thank you, Eric H

Lindsay Crozier

Buckingham

It was a big disappointment to see schools close and a move to distance learning last year, however, I get it - we didn't understand what we were up against with this new virus. Unfortunately, distance learning did not work well for my middle and high school aged children. It was difficult to keep the children engaged and they were often distracted with other things. Completion of homework and class attendance were also issues. In speaking with other parents, I believe the Pass/Fail method of grading also worked against distance learning as many students were not motivated to try as hard as they would have when earning letter grades. As a concerned parent, I want my children to receive a quality education. This is why we moved to Buckingham - because of the amazing schools here. Looking ahead to the new school year, I want to see schools return to normal. I am opposed to masks, given the opinions of many medical experts that they are unhealthy and do little to stop the spread of the virus, and my children will not wear masks. CDC data has now shown overwhelmingly that children are not the ones being hospitalized or dying from this virus. Hospitalizations by age: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/06052020/images/lab-confirmed-hospitalizations.gif> Deaths by Age: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm

Lindsay Crozier
Buckingham
(continued)

Children have a higher risk of dying from the flu: <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-05-07/comparing-coronavirus-deaths-by-age-with-flu-driving-fatalities> Most parents are wanting school to resume as normal - no masks, no partitions, no social distancing, usual bus transportation, full use of cafeteria, and provide after school sports activities. Many other states have already resumed summer sport activities, such as baseball, with no masks or social distancing required. Children in various neighborhoods in our area have already resumed playing with other children without masks or social distancing. Over the past several weeks, my children have refused to go anywhere that requires a mask. Children deserve to have a normal life. They have been oppressed for too long. Screen time and weight gain are way up. Their mental health has suffered. Returning to the old normal is the only thing that is acceptable. I'm sure parents would be happy to sign a liability waiver if potential lawsuits are an issue. Alternative assignments could be given to teachers with risk factors such as age 60+, obesity, diabetes, etc. if needed. Please seriously consider these things when planning for the new school year. If new restrictions and oppressive policies are put into place, many families will seek alternative ways to provide our children with the educational environment they deserve. There are several good, well established cyber schools in PA and homeschooling is also an option. I have even heard parents say they would consider moving out of district if unacceptable changes are made. Thank you for your time.

Stephanie Ward
Buckingham

I believe schools need to reopen for in person instruction this coming school year. I understand things may look a bit different based on CDC guidelines and what the district decides to implement based on guidelines. My child is tough to engage during online learning and greatly needs social interaction in person for the sake of her mental health. She also needs more of a challenge. Distance learning has been too easy for her.

Beatrice Thompson

Buckingham

We need to return to school with as much of "old normal" as possible. New normal is not based on facts. The goal posts keep changing and we as parents and custodians of education need to insure our kids get structure, sports, specials, human interaction, cafeteria time, smiles. Let us not take for granted how hard this has been for everyone. Distance learning has even set some kids back, not due to the tremendous efforts from the teachers but because of the lack of the structure and support they need to flourish. I beg the board to do as much as they can to fight for our kids, demand actual fact based evidence and make decisions based on them, follow the CDCs recommendation on mask usage (ie they are NOT effective). Involve the parents. Give people options. We are a community and no decision is one size fits all. We need to support each other and push for normalcy. Our kids are our future and they deserve better. Thank you!

Pamela Masciotro

Buckingham

Our family would like every effort to be made to open the schools with as few "barriers" as possible in the fall. I could list all kinds of reports and data on the mental and physical down side of social distancing and wearing masks, minimal to non-existent spread by asymptomatic carriers, privacy issues, financial concerns, distance learning deficiencies, etc, but I'm sure you've seen it all. I do want to be clear that I will willingly sign a waiver holding the district and school harmless if my daughter gets Covid. I think these kids NEED to get back to as normal a routine as possible, without social distancing and masks. I hope you're discussing options, and will be fluid with them throughout the summer as more is learned about this virus, with the ultimate goal of school looking as close to September 2019 as safely possible.

Kimberly Hinkle

Chalfont

I have a senior and 2 sophomores at CB South high school and since March 12th their lives have been thrown upside down! After the initial 2 weeks they went to the distance learning and quite frankly I'm very disappointed. They are getting minimal instruction then hours of homework and assignments. My oldest didn't understand and had a 98% when leaving his Statistics class and is now hardly passing.. he reached out to the teacher and her reply was she's busy during the day teaching her own children! After that, as a parent, I threw my hands up and said we are done!!!! You do what you need to to get by and that's it! These kids need in person learning, they need sports, they need socialization and they need normalcy. They ARE our future and this is NOT beneficial for my kids at all! I know I'm not alone in this. It saddens me that my daughter had a 4.0 gpa and now it's a pass.. beyond devastating! My senior really is so bummed for many reasons but to have a teacher say she was too busy teaching her own kids is unacceptable!!!!!!

Kimberly Hinkle

Chalfont

(continued)

I get CB/the state had to make a call for the safety of all at the beginning of this pandemic but they had SO MUCH stolen from them. Sad..we are grateful for the intiment, well thought out graduation but hope things become more normal for my rising juniors. If it's distance learning again we will be reclassing them. This isn't working. I see kids whom are depressed and socially isolated and that makes me so sad.. my kids are not but many are and it's scary. My daughter is traveling to Delaware for basketball practice and I've not seen her so happy in 3 months. Another issue is younger kids will be left home alone as parents must work! That makes me so sad to even think about. Is this ever going to go away?? Nope! Will we have cases of this virus in the future?? Yes! Can we shut it all down again? NO! Look at the %'s and the ages of those whom have unfortunately lost their lives.. certainly not ages 0-19! Let's live, let's wash hands more frequently and let's stay home when we are ill and let's live our lives.. period! Thanks for listening! Kim Hinkle

Patricia Achilles

Doylestown

Regarding the reopening of public schools this fall: I have two grandsons in elementary school in CBSD. I have no complaints about CBSD teachers, who I'm sure were unexpectedly challenged with transferring to remote learning. My daughter, a single mother, has endured much stress trying to monitor the boys' progress while working remotely in her full-time job. I spoke to our grandsons recently and asked if they would have remote tests since it was the end of the school year - they replied they would have no tests. So there will be no record of what was learned or retained by them during these months; the difficulty of setting up remote testing shows a glaring inadequacy of remote learning. I have also spoken to a friend who has been a teacher and administrator in Delaware schools for 20 years, and she reported without question that distance learning for elementary age children is much inferior to in-classroom learning. Therefore I strongly urge the CBSD to return to the pre-covid style of classroom learning this fall. Since health statistics have determined that young children are the least likely to be affected by covid I also urge the school district to make every effort to make learning JUST AS IT WAS BEFORE THE SHUTDOWN - in other words, with no masks for children and interactive and intermural activities taking place just as they have during every other school year. Returning to normalcy is paramount in the lives of children who have just been through a very disruptive societal event.

Patricia Achilles

Doylestown

(continued)

There should be no 'new normal,' our children need the old normal to be able to pick up where everything cut off, without distraction. I'm sure you have already read the article from the Wall Street Journal detailing the inadequacies of remote learning (link below). I urge you not to disrupt our CB students, teachers and parents further with experimental techniques of classroom mitigation when every ounce of effort should be directed to normal education. RETURN TO NORMAL PRE-COVID SCHOOLING. -- Pat Achilles
WSJ: https://www.wsj.com/articles/schools-coronavirus-remote-learning-lockdown-tech-11591375078?emailToken=4fd88283b8cb0e2c979ee5ba8b947926Cf%2FffMhHj0loFRsbE2VEz1Hul4UVuhzQL+pcWu1ZyMbqf7nxF3%2FfuZ5047hosSkLRMX6sP3cH%2FZmHbmhnDCf1okwnuog7oZV8jArGBkfCEA%3D&reflink=article_copyURL_share&fbclid=IwAR1Pl8Av6s4sBwAc_xxOR7RZluqpzL-G_RSupiwNXsoW8mwN4fdPvhj6_pY

Stephen Davis

Doylestown

We cannot short these kids any longer.
The fall out from missing any more
school will far surpass any virus. Let them
return to normal!!!!!!

Emily Schwarz

Warwick

Do you recall the classic novel Lord of the Flies and the disastrous effects that occurred when the kids tried to govern themselves? Here we are in 2020 with a coronavirus that overall spares children severe illness, but kids remain at home to distance learn on their own amongst other tasks like eating. Like many other parents in the school district, my husband and I are both essential workers and have worked throughout the pandemic with the main casualty being our children. They have become more engaged in detrimental devices and poor working habits without the guidance of teachers and the whole village that brings them education. Education is an essential business and you must find a way to bring our kids back to school full-time in the fall, even if it involves some minimal risk as COVID is not going away anytime soon. Our kids' developing brains are being adversely affected the longer you close schools. You can't keep education shut down indefinitely. Bravery is needed here to keep our kids from suffering long term effects of the shutdown. It just has to be done, and can be done, safely. Thank you for your consideration. And PS, the shutting down of CBSD outdoor properties for the ENTIRE summer knowing we will likely hit the green zone in June was totally premature, and will have a deleterious effect on youth sports/exercise outlets.

Amber Quinn

Bucks

This is in response to the possibility of returning to school as normal with the option to stay with online learning if that's not comfortable. Having 2 options that does not include onsite learning to accommodate families that are not comfortable with school as normal, especially when the CDC is recommending guidelines to stay distanced, is not caring for the district's community or our children's education. If sports want to continue as usual then that can be an individual family choice but to keep children learning from home is not productive for the full student body. Some families have health concerns at home and to return to school as normal, if that's not the recommendation, would be irresponsible.

Holly Scholl

New Britain

Our children cannot go to their schools with restrictions. They need recess, lunch in the cafeteria, play time with others. They need to build their immune systems and interact with other students and teachers. My children would be terrified if they had to wear masks all day and like they are in a prison if they can't interact. My kids need their school back to normal!

Maria Cawley

Doylestown

I would like to know a specific date/deadline that the CBSD administration has placed upon itself for completing a finalized plan for the upcoming school year and also the date they are going to reveal the this plan to parents and guardians. Also Will this plan include explanations for the basis of each new procedure? Finally is there any possibility that the school year will start earlier than the normal school year?

Jon Steinberg

Warrington

August 1st is an unacceptable date to make a decision regarding next year. Parents who work and can not be teachers themselves need to figure out if they are going to send their kids to private schools, hire private teachers, or even move to ensure their children can get an education. With more data coming out that their are only rare cases of spread from asymptomatic carriers, it is time to find a way to allow children to return to the classroom FULL TIME with some sense of normalcy. Education is essential, and it is time for it to become a priority in this state. Taking temperatures before students get on the bus or enter the building, mandatory 2 week stay at home for any child and their siblings who come to school with any signs of respiratory illness, appropriate PPE for teachers and staff are just some ways to ensure safety.

Jessica Steinberg

Bucks

August 1st is an unacceptable date to make a decision regarding next year. Parents who work and can not be teachers themselves need to figure out if they are going to send their kids to private schools, hire private teachers, or even move to ensure their children can get an education. With more data coming out that their are only rare cases of spread from asymptomatic carriers, it is time to find a way to allow children to return to the classroom FULL TIME with some sense of normalcy. Education is essential, and it is time for it to become a priority in this state. Taking temperatures before students get on the bus or enter the building, mandatory 2 week stay at home for any child and their siblings who come to school with any signs of respiratory illness, appropriate PPE for teachers and staff are just some ways to ensure safety.

Lisa Hunter
Doylestown

Regarding school in the fall, my son (second grade, Titus) will not attend if masks are required and a “staggered schedule” is implemented. WHO recommends masks when taking care of a sick person and has also stated that covid-19 does not spread easily by asymptomatic individuals. Wearing a mask all day will cause him to be uncomfortable and restrict his learning. Additionally a staggered schedule will cause issues for working parents and is just not practical. I hope that practical decisions are made so that I do not have to seek out private or cyber charter school. Thank you.

Krista Brigidi

New Britain

I want to start by saying our district has handled the covid-19 crisis so well and truly rose to the challenge. Our family even recieved a personal phone call from Dr. Kopicki to talk with us about our concerns and we cannot thank you enough for taking the time to do that, it was above and beyond. I now implore you all to use your voices and advocate for our school community with what you truly feel is the best for our children in regards to the safe opening of our district in the fall. As more and more results are coming in that show this virus is not effecting our young students and they are not silently carrying it and infecting the older population, please do not financially strap our district and raise our taxes to provide unnecessary measures that won't do much, if anything, to stop the spread of this virus but will greatly impact the quality of our childrens' life at school. Please consider putting more thought into screenings and keeping those who are sick at home, rather than spending money that is not in the budget on things like masks, partitions and the like. Please consider adding weeks to our schedule in the event that we need to close due to a resurgence, rather than create an inhospitable learning environment for our children. Please consider providing a cyber-school option for those who feel they are not ready to return to the brick and mortar buildings and allow those who want to go back to a regular and known version of public school to do so all while keeping central bucks tax dollars within the district.

Krista Brigidi

New Britain

(continued)

In America, right or wrong, we have chosen to educate our children en masse, out of our homes, five days a week. I have 3 young elementary school age children and I often feel our school day is too long and I am uncomfortable with the amount of time my children are spending away from their parents and out of their home but that is what we decided would be best as a society and my children do truly flourish while at school. We have already failed our alternative learners and special needs kids because you cannot provide adequate resources for those children only online and we have set them back so far and even farther still by not providing the traditional summer programming for those students. Our children need to learn to be good community members and how to behave responsibly socially, they need to see disappointment and pride and expression on the faces of their teachers and school mentors. I am giving you my child and saying, here, you can teach them better than I can but without our school days returning to what they used to be I don't know if I could say that anymore and perhaps I could do a better job at home with a cyber charter school. There are multiple Facebook groups with thousands of members, petitions with hundreds of signatures and so many people saying they would rather move or enroll in cyber charter than send their children to a school that is something too far away from tradition and what we are used to. I worry about what kind of a district we will be left with if many people leave with their tax dollars and we spend more than was budgeted for on unnecessary safety measures. We live in a wonderful county, in an excellent school district but many of our community members are struggling financially and need to send their children to a regular school day so that they can go to work. We need to get back on track for our children and our community.

Michelle Yencha

New Britain

My husband and I, like most parents, decided to buy a house in Central Bucks because of the excellent school district. Over the past couple months due to the COVID19 pandemic I realize that the school needed to be closed until the situation was under control. During this time it has been very difficult to work from home and manage my 2 children's distance learning. We like many families need both incomes and rely on in person schooling so that we are able to work. I understand distance learning was a last minute scramble to keep the school year going but my children do NOT learn well on a computer/device. They need the company of their peers and the guidance of a teacher. Since March we have learned a lot about what the science around this pandemic actually is and I feel confident children would be safe to return to school with minimal restrictions. Children are not the at risk population. They need to return to a normal school year with no masks and very little restrictions. The masks are not made to keep viruses out and they may cause a lot of other health issues. Children need fresh air, sunshine, good nutrition (fruits and veggies) and friendships. They have been isolated long enough. I feel that if there is an option for parents who don't feel comfortable sending their children to school for in person learning that would help solve some of these issues. Perhaps those children can do online learning. I am afraid that if we don't try to resume a normal school year (for the most part) then I will have to make a decision to pull my children from school and homeschool and if the restrictions continue eventually move out of this district. I would appreciate your consideration in opening the schools this fall with as little restriction as possible. Thank you for your time.

Mary Jo O'Connor

Furlong

I have two sons in central bucks one will be a junior at central bucks east the other will be a seventh grader at Holicong. While I understand the need for the distance-learning this past school year(due to Covid). Unfortunately I have found it a failure for my children. They both need the personal experience with the teacher and other students. They are not able to grasp all concepts over a computer. They need the interaction with both teachers and students. This environment motivates them, they both WANTED to go back to school. I want my children in a school this fall. Please -education is a social environment, where my kids flourish. I've done my research. Covid is not a great danger to children. We cannot safeguard them 100% before they return to school. They need the the clubs, sports-HUMAN INTERACTION. Please give us a choice to return to school in the fall. Without masks! They are harmful. Please give us a choice. Thank you!

Richard Walker New Britain

Dr Kopicki made a habit of finishing his messages with Protecting the Vulnerable. From the distance learning experiment put into place by Central Bucks it is apparent the Vulnerable are now our children. It is time to protect them. From every statistic, including ones expressed by the state of Pennsylvania, it is not our children, nor the teachers from the school environment, who are getting sick from the virus. However, the distance learning program is getting our children sick. Sick in that they are not being educated properly and that the effects of that illness will be long-term. Children need to be educated in the classroom setting that has been the effective standard for hundred of years. Making the parents assume teaching duties while balancing their own jobs was a disaster. The school district and board need to tell the state of Pennsylvania that school needs to reopen and it cannot open according to all the suggestions the CDC outlines. The guidelines put out by the CDC are impossible to implement. If these were the requirements of a business, none would exist. Multiple businesses have stayed open with less restrictions and dealing with a much more susceptible clientele. Children are the least vulnerable but the school district places the most restrictions on this group. If parents are expected to teach our children and the school district has shifted responsibilities to parents there should be a corresponding reduction of taxes and that entire issue is being examined by multiple class groups.

Richard Walker

New Britain

(continued)

The actions of the school district so far has not given me very much confidence that they have figured a way to distance educate our children. For example, my third grader was on multiplication when school was interrupted. The program implemented after March 12 was to have my child start with basic addition. We were not allowed to get his course materials from school. Less than two weeks ago it was safe enough to give them their materials. As soon as I saw where he left off I realized he was being cheated by the school. If he and the rest of his classmates would have been able to get those materials the teachers could have just continued the curriculum. I remember his first distance learning assignments and he kept complaining that he already learned this last year and why does he have to do it again. Once I saw where he left off on March 12 it really sunk in. I can't even figure out why someone would decide that was the best path. It's really disappointing. So you can see where your distance learning is not meeting their educational needs. Dr Kopicki and the school board need to push to have school reopen. They need to make this opinion heard in Harrisburg. I have not seen one opinion from Dr Kopicki other than to reiterate what Harrisburg dictated. This leads me to believe he has no opinion and will just follow the state's mandates with no input. Fight for our kids.

Holly Pulido

New Britain

It is wrong to steal the innocence of youth. We need to open up school without any restrictions. Putting them in an environment rife with stress and fear is wrong and not conducive to learning.

Dyllan Walter

Warwick

Do not be pressured by politics or individuals. Take recommendations from health experts and support the teachers as much as possible in educating the kids in innovative ways if needed. This is not forever!

Stephanie Hughes

Doylestown

We need to find a way to get the children back to school to learn appropriately as well as having socialization. Being separated from their peers is not healthy mentally either. No masks required for long periods as that can be a health issue as well. Maybe an option for those who would prefer distance learning vs those who want regular school again could be an option.

Jennifer Srenaski

Buckingham

While I want my children back at school as soon as possible, I ask the board to be guided by scientific standards and utmost concern for the children and staff who attend every day.

Lauren Feracco

New Britain

Please bring back regular school for children in the fall! It is understandable that families with at-risk members may need to have a virtual option for their children, but all the other kids need regular school (including sports, gym, recess, etc). Kids need structured instruction and social interaction!

Shannon Harris

Buckingham

I (Shannon Harris) sent the board, superintendent, principals and staff two separate emails: one regarding the curriculum and one regarding the reopening of schools. Each letter I detailed facts about inappropriate curriculum and in my other many facts to detail my advocacy for reopening school with two options: 1) returning to school as normal functioning prior to Covid 2) cyber school option run by the district for those who are concerned and so to preserve school district funding. Curriculum: With the realization of literature and school content given to both my children at the Elementary and Middle School level, I frankly have lost trust in the school district that I do not know if I want to put my kids in school. I feel that my trust should want to be earned back not disregarded. I would like the following issues addressed in some way or solutions implemented for the next school year. I want to feel like my kids are in a safe place and that their mental health and educational well being are the highest priority. 1) I do not want to censor books but there has got to be a level of general quality of suggested books or curriculum. Put guidelines in place such as: no murder, plots of killing, suicide, sex, etc. or only at age appropriate levels. Just like a rating on a movie, Books read during the school year need to be told to the parents at back to school night so that the parents can research them. A full classroom book list should be available to the parents so that they know what books are in the classroom. Scholastic book fairs should be monitored more closely for inappropriate books and labeled for their content by a possible rating system. I am volunteering to help vet books and I am sure other parents in the district would help. 2) The lack of transparency in general is horrific. Parents are not welcome in the school during school hours and that is not right. I have no idea what my kids are learning because kids have minimal homework.

Shannon Harris
Buckingham
(continued)

If parents are not allowed in the school, then we should have video access to our children during the day. I would like to listen to the book my teacher is reading my child and the content within it. I would like to know what my son is learning in history class. If I can trust this school district again, they shouldn't shut me out and need to be more transparent. Reopening: Option #1 Resume school as normal, no masks, PPE are forced. Sports, everything resumes as normal in the green. I do not care about PA in the green. We do not want a new normal. Our kids deserve a great education with in person instruction. Option #2: Central Bucks cyber school will be created for those that are cautious but they can join the school at the start of any semester. Cyber school would also include students viewing class in real time so that they can get the same instruction but at home. Distance learning should not be an option because it didn't show any benefit. The statistics of Covid by the CDC across the country and PA show a 99.7% survival rate even if you are elderly. Sweden who did not do any lockdown has the same survival rate. The WHO just also reported yesterday that asymptomatic spread is rare: https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/08/asymptomatic-coronavirus-patients-arent-spreading-new-infections-who-says.html?fbclid=IwAR2Z1BmP8IkQVQs7v8kfs4s1_TU0wNu38efcorvucPbnrtGOf1R8V-znFKA So if asymptomatic spread is rare and the elderly aren't threatened by this disease why can't be attempt to resume school as normal? Why are we living in fear? There is nothing wrong with washing hands, extra cleaning or all the precautions we were following prior to Covid. Masks however are a mental and physical barrier, social distancing fosters isolationism, and additional guidelines prevent learning. Keep the focus on education, not guidelines. Keep the focus on a creating a successful student instead of a physical, mental and social health crisis. Retain the students and school funding and keep our schools strong!

Central Bucks
Parents Petition

Buckingham

A petition is currently being circulated for a Dual Option for Central Bucks Schools (Normal school/Cyber School) This petition will remain active and can be viewed. Anytime. At the time of this meeting almost 400 people have signed the petition. Here is the link and I encourage the school district to actively view the comments from the taxpayers and parents of this school district
<https://www.change.org/ReOpenCBSchools>

Kristen Kelley

Jamison

I pray school opens and runs as it always has..for parents and our kids! However, if schools are not able to open there is no reason that children can't be in front of their computer or laptop and have a regular normal class learning new material through zoom. This means that each teacher would teach just as they would in school the same class periods and the same time slots and the children would be on the other end with open dialog and communication. Any worksheets or notes can be printed out and sent in a syllabus just as a college professor would do and the beginning of the year. Their assignments should be planned ahead of time anyway in a teacher's plan book so there is no reason that C BSD never did this in the past. The students can now know what they need to have done and when they needed to have done by..it will teach them time management which is something they've been lacking anyway.

Kristen Kelley

Jamison

(continued)

It would actually set our school district up to handle things the way private schools are with the same resources at our fingertips. This type of model would also provide the kids with a global like education. It is completely unfair to have kids come to school who's parents aren't scared and have kids whose parents are uncomfortable stay home. That is not a free and appropriate education provided to everyone. Special education students shouldn't have more than 10 to 12 kids in a classroom anyway so perhaps these students can attend school and utilize the classrooms that aren't being used... Maybe composing each class of only 5 students. Either way thank you I know this is not easy or ideal by any means!

Jordan Nemeroff
Warwick Township

I want schools to open up ASAP. I pay a lot in taxes every year for my kids to go to school in this school district. Distance learning is not effective. My kids need to be in school!

Elaine S Greza

Bucks

Open the schools pre Covid! Let's get back to normal! Kids need that as well as adults!

Rita Denis

Bridgeton

Transportation, what protections are in place for the drivers and students on buses. As a former driver and a classroom aide, I know that kids will be kids, they will pull each other's masks off, bullies may cough on someone on purpose, and some kids may wear the mask like their parents told them too, then take it off.

Laura Powers

Buckingham

I do not support the petition signed by hundreds in CBSD that recommends a fall reopening to include in-school and distance options that the family chooses based upon their own personal risk tolerance. I respectfully request that the School Board follow reopening plans that align with state guidelines and include safe and logical in-school / distance hybrid options.

Brittany pitts

Buckingham

Perhaps school should be half day for those that want to attend and that way the teachers have the other half for remote learning prep for those that do not feel comfortable attending. Let's face it, the normal school day is nearly as long as a 40 hour work week and kids don't do well sitting that long in a full day. Remote/ homeschool learning should take 2-3 hours so why not make the regular school day that long? Yes people are going to have issues due to work schedules but if covid is still a threat they will be working remotely anyway. For those that can't work and need daycare for online school perhaps consider a tax credit(exempt the parents from paying school tax) that would help cover costs of daycare.

Donna Salvatiik
Buckingham

We need to get our children back to school in the fall. Schools provide social interaction and emotional development, not just an education. Their mental health is suffering and distance learning, while a solution for the short term, is NOT a long term fix. No more uncertainty about will schools be open or will they not. Make the commitment to open the school. Spend the next 10 weeks figuring out how to do it.

Jennifer O'Donnell
Buckingham

School go back in the fall as normal

Tom Gilbert
Buckingham

I oppose the petition for the “dual option”. I support following the guidance of state and local experts regarding how to reopen schools in a manner that best ensures the health and safety of all students and staff. I have two children in CB schools and trust you to develop a wise approach. You have done an admirable job during this crisis. Thank you!

Rosa Christiansen

Chalfont

I believe that students should go back to school normally. Currently most high school kids have been gathering together socially. Kids are also working in the community. If they have to wear mask they will need breaks. Put in hand sanitizer stations. Kids need their education and they need socialization. Thank you

Robert Wright

Buckingham

I like some of the ideas in the petition about reopening schools, but it seems fake to me. I don't even know who posted it, it seemed to be a cowardly thing to "lead" this petition without having the courage to stand in front of it.

Jennifer Loving

Buckingham

In response to this petition someone put out there, I hope the district would focus on what kids need and what health and safety precautions must be in place for ALL students to ensure an equitable education and not what a few individuals want or think is best. This petition is disturbing. It further politicizes the virus and segregates children based on their parents' beliefs about the virus. This puts everyone in an uncomfortable position. We ALL want our kids back in school, we also all want our kids and staff to be safe and we don't want any child to feel singled-out and/or embarrassed because they are wearing a mask and other kids are not. Wearing a mask should not be optional, nor should my child, or any child be excluded from face-face instruction because some don't take the virus seriously and think that school should look like pre-COVID days in the fall. Thank you.

Amanda Bland

Buckingham

Schools need to return to normal. Look at the scientific information, this is a type of flu. Let's put it into perspective. The "new normal" will have long term damaging effects on our children. Make the right decision, open schools pre-Covid.

Gina Caputo

Buckingham PA

I would like to see our school district open with options. 1. For those of us that want the kids to go back to school as normal as possible with some social distancing but giving the chance to get back into the routine they need and reunite with teachers, administration, and their fellow students. I understand the importance to keep everyone safe and I respect that. It's not an easy decision but I do feel some normalcy and guidance will help your students during this crisis and pandemic. Option 2 - For the families of children who are at risk can have the opportunity to continue to learn via online. Possible sign in during love classes. it sounds easier to my ears but I know it's difficult to try and do both. Thank you for your time

Jennifer
Wagner merrick
Plumsteadville

Schools and sports should be open as "normal" as they can. With additional hand sanitizer available with reminders for the kids to use. Masks should be optional.

Madhav Ponamgi

Buckingham

John Kopicki and the CBSD have not held a single on-the-record public Question & Answer session about the many issues concerning the challenges facing this district during this pandemic. It is insufficient to hold a board meeting with public comments or to answer individually questions in lieu of public questions . A public Q&A allows parents to be informed of the many issues we have in common, and to work together to address them. For example, the grading for Middle School is not clearly described: 1. What classes will receive A,B,C,D? 2. How will the partial 3rd marking period grade me reflected into the calculation that has been earned? 3. What classes will be designated P/NP? In addition, there are many questions regarding scheduling at the schools 1. What classes will be eligible for A/B days? 2. How will Gym be handled on-line? 3. How are assessments going to be handled? 4. How will PEN be handled in the middle school? 5. Can students take a foreign language in 7th grade? We need a town hall with public questions answered of district officials -- enough Divide and Conquer of parental concerns.

Frank Masciotro

Warrington

I will keep this short. CB schools need to reopen in the fall as normal and if not then we want our school tax money back and/or school choice implemented as well. It has been proven that covid 19 does not infect children at a high rate of infection and that when children get it it is mild. Now of course any child who has a compromised immune system should be dealt with different but in general in the fall ALL Central Bucks Schools need to reopen as normal. And of course anyone with a fever or who is sick should not be allowed in school. Covid 19 is proving to have the same mortality rate as the common flu. It is time to resume life, trust our fellow man, interact with each other and live our lives. We can no longer hide in our homes and wear dirty germ filled cloth masks staying away from each other. Enough is enough, it is time to live again. I know the school district is limited in its response because of the governors "orders" but we have to open back up and make it as normal as possible. Thank you and have a great day.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/05/covid-19-kids/611728/>

YanyanLi
Central Bucks

Adjust school time for each grade, keep social distance, and also keep distance learning as an option.

Gloria mauri

Warwick

I am in full support of returning to school without crazy restrictions. Would be willing to sign a waiver if needed. Good luck in your deliberations and thank you :)

Noel Byrne

Doylestown
Borough

I am a parent of two Doyle Elementary students. I believe that if school cannot return in some in-person format in the fall, that the start of the school year should be DELAYED. While virtual and distance learning has been a partially effective stop-gap for completing the 2019-20 school year, I do not believe that in the time we have before the start of the 2020-21 school year an effective virtual curriculum can be generated. Cyber charter schools have years to prepare teachers, lesson plans and technology to deliver an effective learning environment - I do not believe our district can do the same thing in the 2+ months before the beginning of the new school year. Rushing to start the year in a virtual environment will lead to even further erosion of our students learning. I strongly support finding means to bring the students back in the fall - whether an alternating day/week in-person schedule to limit school capacity, coupled with SUPPLEMENTARY online learning, or some form of that - we must find a solution to have kids engage in direct teacher interactions. If this cannot be accomplished, or is prohibited (rightfully) due to concerns over COVID-19, then we must delay the school year until we can safely return to in-person learning.

John Kinniry

Warrington

(1 of 2)

If schools remain closed, will there be plans to support special education situations where some children have a hard time focusing to a virtual teacher.

John Kinniry

Warrington

(2 of 2)

If schools remain close will there be a system in place to inform parents when classes are not logged into.

Alexander Mann

Plumstead

What efforts will the School Board commit to in order to develop a more diverse culture and anti-racist curriculum? As a proud alumnus of Central Bucks School District (Groveland, Tohickon, and CB East), I highly value the education I received. But, given the national (and inter-national) response to the death of George Floyd, it has become apparent how lacking CBSD's curriculum is with regards to race. I have reflected on how much self-educating I've done on my own to become more informed and more sensitive to the history of racism, its role in shaping public policy, and the current systemic oppression that non-white people, particularly black people, face in America. While I thank CBSD for giving me the tools to self-educate, I want to make clear that I should have been exposed to an anti-racist education from the beginning, and that I am still trying to make up for much of that lack of education. It is imperative that the School Board follow-through on the "responsible citizenship" phrase of the District's mission statement by creating a more diverse culture, and an anti-racist curriculum.

Alexander Mann

Plumstead

(continued)

I'll point out that the only—the only—black teacher I had through 12 years of schooling was Mr. Ron LaMar. His funeral was held on my graduation day. The School Board should see the response to the killing of George Floyd as an opportunity to bring non-white history and culture to the forefront. There are exhaustive studies showing the implicit bias that influences decisions; this is why non-white perspectives need to be pursued in our schools. It is not enough to just offer a diverse summer reading list, and let students choose what suits them. Learning about the racial inequities and systemic racism in our society are essential for “responsible citizenship”, and not something students should be able to opt out of. So again, I ask—what efforts will the School Board commit to in order to develop a more diverse culture and anti-racist curriculum?

Jeff Bucholtz and
Jill Bucholtz

Doylestown
Township

As a retired High School Math Teacher of 37 years, I would strongly recommend OPTION #2 to safeguard all students and faculty to the very utmost from the Coronavirus while continuing with the educational progress.

Wendy Gartenberg

Borough of
New Britain

I think parents and teachers should have the option between “school as normal” and distance learning (cyber school through the district).

Jill Bucholtz

Doylestown
Township

I would petition for OPTION #2 that would afford the ultimate protection and safety for both students and faculty, while continuing with the educational process.

Ilana Bucholtz

Buckingham
Township

Being a former CB South graduate, I would highly petition and recommend the district to adopt OPTION #2. It would provide both students and faculty with the best of both worlds (Health & Safety for everyone, and continuing the Educational progress for everyone involved.

Todd Miller

Buckingham
Township

Today (6/9/2020) the WHO declared that COVID-19 almost never spreads through asymptomatic carriers, all at once wiping out the entire justification for lockdowns, mandatory vaccines and contact tracing. Asymptomatic spread was the entire reason why world authorities demanded lockdowns, social distancing and masks, too. All at once, the WHO has just exploded all these narratives that were so aggressively pushed by the CDC, politicians, Dr. Fauci at the White House and even the WHO itself. Now, based on the WHO's new admission, not only should every lockdown be immediately ended; any government effort to initiate new lockdowns, especially at schools, should be vehemently rejected as being utterly groundless and anti-science. If the coronavirus only spreads through people who are actively showing symptoms, then the entire argument behind everybody wearing masks — which was that we all needed to wear them because none of us knew whether we, ourselves, were spreading the virus — instantly collapses. The WHO just made mask mandates a complete joke. What the school should do in the fall... 1) All children, teachers, workers, etc... should stay home if they have temperature or any symptoms of sickness. Not to come back to school until clear. If the school wishes, temperature checks should be allowed.

Todd Miller

Buckingham
Township

(continued)

2) Remote classroom cameras should be set up to broadcast to those children who are ill but well enough to follow along for the day. Or simply for those children whose parents choose not to send them to school at all. 3) Masks are OPTIONAL. No child or teacher should be forced to wear one. 4) All parents/teachers should waive their rights to file claims of liability to biological contaminants. 5) Not even hand washing is necessary, according to the new CDC results. The WHO had a perfect opportunity but blew it (I wonder why...) to use Sweden as a test case since Sweden generally did not close down their schools. There are no reports of widespread children sick from attending schools in Sweden. Since March of 2020 our kids went from a happy wonderful life going to school to a miserable remote learning system where not ONE of their teachers came online for an hour and taught a class. NOT ONE! If was....here is your work today...submit it online. Teaching delegated to the parents. That's not what our taxes pay for. Parents need to work, they are not trained to teach kids and the worst thing of all is the hours and hours of children starring at a laptop/monitor screen daily. That's just HORRIBLE. We the parents wish you to consider our message in all discussions about fall reopening.....

Helene Dunn

Warrington
Twp

Please open the schools normally. The numbers of this virus are extremely low, if you remove the nursing home incision. This whole situation is overblown.
<https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2020/06/08/health/coronavirus-asymptomatic-spread-who-bn/index.html>

Edward Mackouse

Furlong

I support the normal parents who wish the schools to operate successfully again and to allow cyber schools for children and parents who wish to protect themselves from the normal everyday interactions with others. Sickness is a normal part of life and is part of the bodies process of flushing and purifying itself. Vaccines and antibiotics will never allow all people to live forever and germs adopt to resist antibiotics. Children have not been dying from the virus. The shut down for the virus damaged the education of children especially elementary school children. We should not blame are sicknesses on others but work to improve ourselves. Children who are not exposed to germs develop asthma and are not able to develop the antibodies necessary to fight infection and disease. You do not have to be a rocket scientist which I am to understand the destructive forces being imported into our society. Thousand of innocent people are dying because of laws restricting the rights of police and innocent people to defend themselves with guns. President Trump cares about and actually gave more jobs to blacks and others than any other President.

Edward Mackouse

Furlong

(continued)

The Black lives matter movement says no justice no peace. Blacks are crying in the streets because of the destruction of their businesses and jobs by the criminals protected by the so called Black Lives Matter marchers. President Trump produces more justice and peace for innocents. People around the world in Hong Kong for example look up to America. Refugees from Socialist nations like Cuba, Russia, etc know that Socialism a free lunch for everyone does not work for the people. End the lock downs now. Placing 34 million people under house arrest and not allowing them to work does not save lives. People have to try to go back to work sometimes to support themselves and their families. President Trump is best for the workers and the decent people. The schools need to present both sides of the issues! The debt involved with pensions is unsustainable and needs to be brought under control. Keep up your good work! Fight for our schools and our Children!

Kathleen Fry

Doylestown

If parents want to do online schooling let them apply to the online schools that are already set up and give them a tax credit. We should not be funding or taking away resources to provide online schooling. I feel my child going back to school with mandatory mask wearing in the school building but not in gym class is acceptable and prudent. I do not feel that optional mask wearing is adviseable. I have worked in a healthcare environment with precautions throughout the pandemic. I and my other co-workers were exposed to four patients with active covid and with our precautions not one of us contracted Covid. As long as the students and teachers follow precautions we are as safe as safe can be. Holding back on education especially in the older grades are detrimental to their futures and college admission requirements.

Chris Kerrigan

Warrington

Please reopen our schools as usual this fall.

Melissa McMoil

Warrington
township

Please allow schools to resume normal learning. Distance learning (especially with classes once or twice a week) is not working and the kids need to be back into a regular routine. This means in school not a hybrid approach. Grades are a must as well. P/F not motivating.

Muriel Hastings

Doylestown Twp.

The current petition being circulated by some CB parents is extremely short-sighted. To ask that school return to "normal," while making masks optional could be a possible death sentence for for vulnerable students and adults. It should be noted that masks are not intended to protect the wearer, but to protect others. Students should be instructed as such and that consideration of others, in spite of ones desires for normality, is a worthy goal. The term "relegate" is defined as "to put (someone or something) in a lower or less important position, rank, etc. or "to give (something, such as a job or responsibility) to another person or group." According to the petition, those who are unwilling or unable to participate in face-to-face learning would be "relegated" to online learning. Is this just a poor choice of words, or is the intent to disparage those who cannot or will not participate in "normal" school.

Muriel Hastings

Doylestown Twp.

(continued)

Are we to believe that online learning, therefore, is an inferior or less important form of learning? If this were to take place, would Central Bucks create a situation of educational haves and have-nots? It must be remembered that not every student or adult is able to participate in the distance learning they would be "relegated to," and that their education and services must take place on site. The recent Covid-19 education requirements by the state of Pennsylvania mandates that there must be accommodations for vulnerable populations, many of which, for a variety of reasons, are unable to participate in distance learning. In regard to the waiver for on-site participants, it is my understanding that God-gives life and the American constitution guarantees the right to life for all. I wonder then, why people- students, parents and other adults-- should be required to sign a waiver forfeiting these rights in order to receive or provide the best possible education.

Isabel McCarthy

Doylestown

I, as an alumni of CBSD, acknowledge and appreciate that I was exposed to education about the civil rights movement and that I was given the opportunity to read books by black authors in my senior year of high school. I remember reading the tragic story of Emmett Till in classes, I remember watching MLK's I Have a Dream speech, and I remember discussions about A Raisin in the Sun, Things Fall Apart, and Invisible Man. However, I also remember what I did not learn as a student of Groveland Elementary, Tohickon Middle School, and CB East High School. And I remember educating myself post-graduation and thinking, "Why didn't I learn this sooner?" I was not taught MLK's words on riots, that rioting is the "language of the unheard." I was not taught, when a white boy in my class imitated MLK's voice for the sake of comedy, that this was insensitive and uneducated. I was not taught the writing of Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, and countless other seminal black writers in American history. I was not taught about Malcolm X and why the Black Panthers protested racism the way they did, rather to see Malcolm X as a foil for MLK's form of protest. I was not taught to be anti-racist, to confront my whiteness head on and understand that in Central Bucks we live in a very privileged bubble. In college, I reflected on the surface-level education I received about racism through CBSD and I was disappointed in the failings of my former schools. As another student recently pointed out to me, the only black teacher I had in my entire experience in CBSD was Mr. Ron Lamar.

Isabel McCarthy

Doylestown

(continued)

It is worth noting, too, that Ron Lamar was the only teacher who went out of his way to ask about my interests outside of school and encourage me to follow my dreams as a young writer. I think about Ron Lamar a lot, since graduating, and since he passed away, and how our school district needs more teachers like him. More voices from the black community. Perhaps his encouragement was just the nature of his character, but I cannot ignore the fact that he was the only teacher I had who enriched my education in this way. Talks about race can be challenging but we must turn the silence into dialogue. These conversations are not reserved only for students of color but for students in predominantly white schools, like those in CBSD, too. We are equally responsible for helping our students build their capacity to understand and confront racism as well as contribute to a society where peace and justice prevail. What steps will you take TODAY to encourage these discussions in CBSD? At the very least, I would hope that you add more black writers to the English curriculum, and earlier than just 12th grade. I would hope that you educate students on historic black icons, more than just the peaceful stories of Rosa Parks and MLK. I would also hope that you take action to hire more BIPOC educators and board members within CBSD. The perspective of BIPOC is vital to our understanding of race in America and around the world. We need their voices to be elevated, we need to read their stories and hear their ideas firsthand, not just in history books. And we need to make sure that there is no erasure of the systemic violence committed against BIPOC for the sake of censorship. I hope that CBSD sees the current national climate and protests and responds accordingly to help teach students in Central Bucks how to be more responsible citizens and respectful community members. I thank you for your time and consideration of this matter and encourage you to move forward with action and a loud and proud curriculum of anti-racist education.

Laurie To
Furlong, PA

Thank you kindly for all of your hard work, especially during these unprecedented times. I realize that the district had to adapt quickly to distance learning and that you are aware it is not ideal. I understand students across the district have not had a consistent experience. If the pandemic requires distance learning to be continued in the next school year, I urge you to please revise the program to include EVERY CORE SUBJECT FIVE DAYS PER WEEK. My 7th grader received each class only once per week this spring, and her teachers were inconsistent with assignments - some gave multiple throughout the week, some gave only one. My 4th grader only had about 60-90 minutes of daily work and just two subjects or assignments per day outside of specials.

Laurie To
Furlong, PA
(continued)

This simply is not enough education for our children, especially for a district with such a sterling reputation as CBSD. I have heard of several other districts in PA and NJ that held every class, every day through distance learning so it must be feasible. On another matter, can you please share with parents the scenarios being considered for the 2020-2021 school year? There is much speculation, debate and concern in the community. If we had a better idea of what options the district is considering, it may ease some anxiety and help parents to better prepare. Thank you for your time and I wish you all the best as you plan for the challenges that lie ahead.

Warmly, Laurie To Furlong

Terri Weidner

Chalfont

Why don't you stagger days- example- have 6th and 7th grade go to school Monday&Wednesday and 8th and 9th go Tuesday & Thursday. Then have Friday at home learning day. You could do that for Elementary and High School. That way, there are less kids in the building.

Andrew Bullard
Buckingham

Would you please affirm that all decisions that are made with respect to the 2020/2021 school year (reopening schools for in-person learning and the precautions taken with respect to COVID19) will be made in consideration of the best available science and recommendations from public health and disease experts, and will not be based on non-scientific opinion or community pressure?

Peggy McCole

Warrington

While we appreciate all the work and effort made by CBSD over the last few months, distance learning did not work well in our house. All of our children deserve better than DL and need to go back to the normal school structure and environment starting in the fall!

Suzanne Dunleavy

Doylestown
Borough

I do NOT agree with the petition posted on change.org. Making PPE optional in class and not required during exercise even outdoors (when it is evident that heavier breathing associated with exercise can be a vector of transmission), would put CBSD in the position we've been trying to avoid all along; that is a place where exponential viral transmission would potentially occur. This short sighted plan does nothing to protect the most vulnerable students, teachers, administrators and household members. Please disregard this petition and continue to work on the plans that are in process in order to keep all safe and in an appropriate and least restrictive learning environment.

John Arico

Plumstead TWP

Please open schools in the fall without any restrictions. Please open summer sessions for Extended K students.

Traci Nocito

CBSD

In light of the overwhelming positive data showing that the mortality rate is less than .002% of the population and of that .002% the majority is in nursing homes, school must open normally. In the event they have massive stipulations around social distancing and wearing masks, I will be unenrolling all 4 of my children from the district.

Christina
DeVecchio Tuller

Doylestown
Township

To whom it may concern, I write today to enter a concern regarding transportation and COVID-19 and reopening of schools. I see no plan thus far in any agenda to increase the budget for transportation or further share the proposed 2020/2021 transportation plan. I am the parent of a private school child, who attends Gwynedd Mercy Elementary, As a Doylestown township resident, the only service the school district funds for my child is transportation. I remind you that the private school children are an asset to the district balance sheet as the only expense the district incurs for these children is in regards to transportation. So, while my son does not attend a public elementary school I believe my school tax dollars afford me the write to speak to this committee. As a working family we rely on the district transportation services. While I have had challenges with the budgetary declines toward busing of private school children (we gone from 4 buses to 3 buses as an example and combined high schoolers with elementary children). I have dealt with explaining sexual acts to my child that he over heard high school girls talking about, dealing with girls changing on the bus or re-assuring him Santa is real after a high school girl told him otherwise, I have had to put him on the bus as earlier as 6:45AM and longer for rides in excess of 1 hr, abus ride might I remind you that is currently, without seat belts, access to water or a restroom. But why am I coming to the school board now? Because no challenge or concern thus far compares with the risk of COVID-19 as an infectious disease.

Christina DelVecchio
Tuller

Doylestown
Township

(continued)

To explain further, my son has a VSD (a small hole in his heart) while the risk of any infection is always a concern for him and us, most infections are commonly treatable, strep throat, a cold, the flu, but COVID-19 is different because so much is unknown, treatments are still in development and what we do know thus far, is this disease can affect the heart in patients with pre-existing heart issues like my son. I formally ask for the board's consideration to increase funding for transportation as part of the re-opening plan and to have transportation outline their plan for children returning to school, a plan that has templates check for students as they board the bus, a plan that separates high school age from elementary school age students to eliminate unnecessary added exposure and risk for all students , a plan that ensures students are able to distintance themselves for safety on their rides to school and urge to consider a measure that ensures the well being of all children in the district by increasing the funding which allows for the increase in the number of buses/vehicles transporting these children to school. I ask the board to share in full for public comment, the 2020/2021 transportation plan prior to bus schedules being determined and mailed out. As the 3rd largest school district in the state, with a very capable financial budget, I believe this is a fair and reasonable request of the board to consider to ensure the welfare of the children in the district.
Sincerely, Christina DelVecchio Tuller

Kim Wojnicki

Buckingham

I realize it's too early to make decisions about how September will actually look, but this I can say now - whether it's full regular schooling, online learning or a hybrid of these options, it is imperative that all subjects are taught every single day, and with a live teacher (and recorded for those home sick.)

Jeanna Kiker

Doylestown
township

I feel strongly that schools should open in the fall under normal conditions. No masks, no barriers, regular busing. I'd love for CBSD to offer an option for on line education for those who feel that is necessary but if a normal schooling version is not available I will consider other options for my son. Thank you for all you do and your diligence, especially at this difficult time.

Lisa Sciscio

Warrington
Township

First I would like to thank you for taking the time to address community concerns regarding the reopening of our schools in the fall. In order to stay brief, you should know that I have signed the petition to reopen our schools in the fall that suggests a dual option—opening school buildings as normal as possible but also offering a true CB cyberschool option with the ability to enter in-person instruction at the end of each marking period. As the petition has stated, there are many compelling data-based and mental health reasons to give our school children a sense of normalcy when headed back into school this fall. The latest of which is the World Health Organization's ("WHO") statements regarding mask usage. Specifically, that healthy people need only wear a mask when tending to ill people. The WHO, as recently as yesterday, has also stated that asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 is very rare. I have children at the elementary, middle and high school levels. I also have a toddler with a mild heart condition and my mother also lives with us in our home. In the beginning, I was extremely strict about everything our government was instructing us to do and, quite frankly, I was extremely scared. But as we have learned more and experienced more, it is obvious that we do not need to live a life of fear.

Lisa Sciscio

Warrington Township

(continued)

I feel very strongly that my children should not be forced into a school that will continue to spread fear. They should be able breathe, learn, communicate and play freely. I feel strongly that we need to learn to live with this virus as we do every other virus that has entered our lives. There really are no words to describe the educational and emotional toll this has taken on my children, any many other children. I know the district and teachers have done their very best to make the best of a bad situation. I appreciate it immensely. But this cannot be the future of education for anyone. I know that there are a few parents out there that are scared, that aren't where I am yet and that are not ready to get back to "normal" education. Maybe the best option for them is a true cyberschool given with CB teachers and follows the CB curriculum. To keep them in our wonderful school community until they are ready. I have been reading up on the success that schools in the Netherlands have had with no mask-wearing and limited social distancing. They began their process in May. If you can, please take the time to read about it. The population of the Netherlands is similar to Pennsylvania. Learning about their encouraging results has made me even more confident that we can do this here too. Please seriously consider giving back our children the education and extra-curricular activities that they have always known and loved in September. I shudder to think about the further damage that will be done to them without it.

Melissa Smith

Chalfont Borough

In light of my knowledge that several CBSD parents are advocating for reopening without any restrictions in the fall, relegating those at risk to cyber school, I just wanted my voice to be heard. There is a large contingent of parents (dare I assume a majority, albeit quieter) who just want the district to make sound, reasonable and realistic decisions about education in the fall. I don't purport to know the answers about what end-August will bring, as there is still much to be determined over the summer. I fully trust that the board and superintendent will weigh the scientific FACTS and the guidelines recommended by the medical and epidemiological community with the needs, priorities and safety of our CB families, teachers, and staff. I appreciate the difficulty of your task and hope for an equitable outcome which caters to no agenda, other than what is best for all.

Melissa Smith

Chalfont Borough

In light of my knowledge that several CBSD parents are advocating for reopening without any restrictions in the fall, relegating those at risk to cyber school, I just wanted my voice to be heard. There is a large contingent of parents (dare I assume a majority, albeit quieter) who just want the district to make sound, reasonable and realistic decisions about education in the fall. I don't purport to know the answers about what end-August will bring, as there is still much to be determined over the summer. I fully trust that the board and superintendent will weigh the scientific FACTS and the guidelines recommended by the medical and epidemiological community with the needs, priorities and safety of our CB families, teachers, and staff. I appreciate the difficulty of your task and hope for an equitable outcome which caters to no agenda, other than what is best for all.

Maria Lande

Plumstead
Township

I have a child in Special Education classes. While her teachers have been wonderful throughout Distance Learning, it has been a very difficult time for her and she is falling behind academically and socially. Distance Learning does not work well for her. She needs to be in "normal" school and have access to her Special Ed and Specials teachers. In addition, I don't want my child to wear a mask at school all day - it's not healthy. The children will constantly be touching their masks and faces. I also believe it will take up too much precious classroom time if the teachers need to constantly remind the children to keep their masks on. They have all missed so much already. I would like the option of having the children return to normal, pre-coronavirus, in-person school.

Christine Linso

Warrington

Esteemed ladies and gentleman of the Central Bucks School Board, I want to first thank you for your efforts to continue our children's education during the lockdown. With that said, I implore you to allow in person schooling for the 2020-21 school year. Distance learning is not a good fit for my children at all. They will not thrive in a distance learning education. We understand there may be risks involved and accept all of those risks. For our family, the benefits far outweigh the risks. If they are unable to attend school in person, I will have no choice but to find education outside of Central Bucks. I hate the thought of this but we would be left with no other choice. We will not participate in distance learning. The Central Bucks School District is the reason we moved here. We love Central Bucks but we do not love distance learning. Thank you for your consideration.

Samantha Linso

Warrington

Distance Learning for my brother and I has been hard considering learning for me must involve sitting in a classroom with my peers and watching the teacher explain his/her lesson. The less than an hour classes and completing work on my own time makes me not want to join class at all because of my lack of motivation. I miss seeing my friends and teachers, and i'm sick of watching them through a screen explaining a lesson I have barely any motivation to do. Although I completed each assignment given to me, it took a lot of focus and time.

Margaret Bryant

Plumstead

Any decisions about physically opening the building should make as a priority creating an environment where the most at-risk students and staff are safe and able to access the same education as anyone else. Kids can adapt to new protocols, and they can understand that these protocols help keep others safe. There is also time now to create a more dynamic plan for distance learning. We would support distance learning if it is not practical or safe yet to reopen buildings by the end of summer. Whatever the school decides will affect the health of the wider community and has the potential to cause a resurgence of COVID-19.

Erin Corrigan

Hilltown
(but member of
CBSD staff)

As the President of CBEA, I would like to thank Dr. Kopicki for his recent heartfelt words about racism, equality, equity, and social justice. As an association, we echo the belief that we have the duty as educators to do more to engage in the hard conversations he referenced. We urge the district to continue to expand the work that has been started and have also submitted another request that CB consider renewing participation in the Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity. We, as an association, are committed to partnering with administration to do that work that is vital to strengthen our schools and community and appreciate the efforts of all involved.

Monica Neal

Doylestown

(1 of 2)

Diversity/Inclusivity Monica Neal- Social Studies Curriculum Review Comment My name is Monica Neal. I am a mother of two African American children. I obtained my master's degree in The Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education in 1995. That same year, I began my elementary teaching career. Much has changed since 1995, but a lot has not. It is my life's work to think about the ways that school and culture intersect. Recent national events require us to examine the ways that race plays a part in our schools, the ways that schools perpetuate systemic racism. As a parent and a concerned citizen, I am deeply troubled about curriculum decisions that are being considered. As a member of the Social Studies review committee, I researched the proposed programs, considering a variety of factors. With each program, I was drawn to the US History units especially those related to slavery and the Civil War. To quote Teaching Tolerance, "Teaching about slavery is hard. It requires often-difficult conversations about race and a deep understanding of American history." We need to provide our elementary school learners with accurate, respectful, and inclusive history lessons that also help them better understand the present.

Monica Neal
Doylestown
(continued)

Given that charge, our committee found Core Knowledge's program biased, prejudicial, and offensive in how it presents parts of history. The content and images promote biased, racialized tropes that are not appropriate. While the longer narrative passages might cause some to initially think Core Knowledge provides more "depth", this appeal is greatly overshadowed by how history is contextualized through a biased lens. These concerns extended to various units across many grades. Core Knowledge presents a narrative style that relies on speculative ideas and uses value-laden terms and data unevenly. In the Grade 5 unit, The Civil War, there are troubling images and content. Many of the images do not necessarily serve a purpose to enhance the content, and some present caricature-like images (recalling Sambo versions from the past). One particularly glaring example is found on page 13 of the text. The illustration is of slave children presented in a manner that is no longer considered acceptable in today's world. One would assume that this is a rendering from the past, but the artist is a contemporary artist. This begs the question of why this picture? How is it advancing the content?

Monica Neal
Doylestown
(continued)

In this Civil War unit, it is notable the way that violence is described. One section makes a point to provide details about Nat Turner's slave rebellion by stating, "Over the next three days, he and his followers killed fifty-five men, women, and children." (p. 14). In this same chapter, the word "killed" is NOT used to describe the fate of enslaved people. While it is mentioned that acts of violence were committed against enslaved people, this passage about Nat Turner is vivid and clear. It presents data (fifty-five) and mentions the killing of children. WORDS matter.

Monica Neal
Doylestown
(continued)

There is no mention that enslaved children were killed in the chapter, and the text does not offer any statistical information about how many enslaved people were killed. The authors have a responsibility to help children understand and learn about history, and this is an uneven rendering of history. Other biases and “labeling” showed up in other grade levels of the Core Knowledge text, for example, in the 4th grade units is about Ancient Chinese Dynasties a passage about the Ancient Chinese Emperor, Shihuangdi has a heading entitled, A Cruel Ruler, and the explicit details of his cruelty are described in the text (burning books, ordering 400 monks killed). Part 2- My husband (Thomas Neal) yields his comment to me.

Monica Neal

Doylestown

(2 of 2)

Diversity/Inclusivity Monica Neal- Social Studies Curriculum Review Comment PART 2 Conversely, in a Grade 5 unit about the Renaissance, Mary Tudor is mentioned by her common moniker, “Bloody Mary,” but the extent of her persecutions is not revealed. Why are numbers, details, and data used in some instances and omitted in others? Close to 300 religious dissenters were executed at Mary’s command, yet this is omitted from the book. Children do not need to be exposed to gory details and salacious information. However, we need to present them with factual, developmentally appropriate accounts of history. Core Knowledge also has problems with the ways that the headings and text seem to reinforce gender-stereotypes. Shihuangdi is characterized as a Cruel Leader yet, Elizabeth I is characterized, Queen of Her People, Bride of Her Nation.

Monica Neal
Doylestown
(continued)

The heading to describe her coronation is A Dress of Gold and a Velvet Cape. Overall, the chapter discusses Elizabeth I's reign of England, but in doing so, it relies on gender tropes that can underscore just how powerful she was. Core Knowledge seems to consistently promote a pattern of presenting White and European historical figures in reverential ways while portraying other figures, namely people of color, in less flattering ways. The home page of Core Knowledge shows smiling children of various backgrounds, but upon closer inspection, the content that it offers is troubling. Telling multicultural stories and showing images of smiling children is a superficial attempt at diversity when the words and images throughout different units do not truly reflect culturally responsive ideas and engage in dangerous tropes about specific groups of people. As a parent in this district, this is not a Social Studies program that I would want my children to learn. It is biased and borderline offensive. I am asking you, the Board, to do what is best for kids. My hope is for you to not consider the adoption of Core Knowledge.

Laura Sorenson

Doylestown

Good evening members of the board. I would like to start by first thanking you for your support during these unprecedented times. Along with several other teachers from across the district, I recently had the opportunity to complete an extensive review and evaluate four social studies curricula in consideration for a pilot next year. While we found three of the curricula to be excellent options for our district, as a committee, we had serious concerns about the quality of one of the Core Knowledge program. Core Knowledge History and Geography clearly does not meet the standards that Central Bucks sets for its students. First, this program fails to align with our district curriculum. This poses serious concern about the transition from elementary to middle school social studies and the gaps that would be created should we move to this program. Second, Core Knowledge lacks primary and second sources and quality non-text content such as historical photographs and meaningful maps and charts. Third, Core Knowledge provides digital resources that are severely lacking. Since our district is currently navigating through distance learning and moving to 1:1 devices on the elementary level, the digital materials and use of media were of great importance. Again, Core Knowledge fails to meet expectations. Fourth, Core Knowledge resources for intervention and enrichment were missing as well.

Laura Sorenson

Doylestown

(continued)

Instead, Core Knowledge did provide lengthy narrative passages with limited opportunity to differentiate learning or provide rigor. All in all, Core Knowledge does not meet the Central Bucks standards for excellence. Core Knowledge does not offer students the opportunity to work collaboratively and highlight different student abilities, interests, and learning styles. Reflective learning is replaced by fact learning. The ability to tap into and develop higher level thinking skills is nonexistent. The lessons and speculative and narrative nature of the text lack opportunities spark questions and sustain inquiry. Core knowledge fails to offer an idea of cultural literacy where students take an active, not passive, roll in becoming productive and culturally aware citizens. As teachers in Central Bucks, we take pride in leading the way with research-based, best practices and instructional approaches. We looked high and low for evidence of these practices, but failed to uncover meaningful approaches to education. In this current time, our community and county need critical thinkers and global citizens. Core Knowledge lacks student involvement. It returns to a time and approach where students are empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, which in this case, contains glaring misconceptions and bias, which will be further explained in a subsequent statement. Please help us pilot social studies programs that are worthy of Central Bucks' diversity and high expectations for quality learning experiences. I am asking you, the Board, to give our students the social studies education they deserve, and prevent the adoption of Core Knowledge.

Lisa Cirulli

Bucks

Hello. My name is Lisa Cirulli and I am a member of the committee who has recently reviewed four possible programs for an elementary pilot this coming school year. The process used to review the social studies curriculum was problematic due to the rushed timeline, limited number of committee members, and timing at the end of the school year. The committee was composed of a small number of members; it is not representative of the entire elementary program. We know from past successes, there should be several teachers from each building/grade level, a true representation of teachers, who are given a voice. While all of the committee members pledged to put a best effort forward, the timing of this review, at the end of the school year, hindered our task. Last, the timeline to complete the overview of each program, collect and analyze data, and to draw accurate conclusions was extremely fast. The district recently took on this same endeavor in math and the process took 3+ years; we were charged to do the same in two weeks.

Lisa Cirulli
Bucks
(continued)

In spite of not having time in this review process for an in-depth, thorough examination with teachers from many buildings, there were so many serious concerns and red-flags that arose from our consideration of the Core Knowledge program that a marked gap emerged between our ranking of Core Knowledge and the other three social studies curriculum we considered. Across the board, the entire committee gave a resounding thumbs down to Core Knowledge. The district was also currently reviewing programs for the upcoming RELA (reading/language arts) adoption process. A review that was already progressing with rigor. The district has abandoned this review for several reasons, so it is concerning that an additional curriculum review would be started and completed at this time. Teachers in Kindergarten to Grade 2 will be learning and implementing a new intense phonics program in the fall. Having two new programs run concurrent will certainly be a challenge for the classroom teachers. For these reasons noted, as well as others of concern, I am asking you, the board, to do what is best for kids. My hope is for you to not consider the adoption of the Core Knowledge Curriculum for our students.

Lisa Spring

Warrington, PA

I applaud the hard work that the CB school district and teachers have put in over the past few months. They had to adapt very quickly during a short amount of time. Some teachers have been amazing and really working to engage their students and keep them connected. I especially would like to recognize Mr. Sanchez for his efforts to conduct the Corona Cabarets at Tamanend to allow the students to showcase their talents. They were very uplifting events for the entire community. Despite the fact that everyone would love to have the kids back to school and participating in activities, in order to keep the students, faculty, and families safe, I believe we will probably still need to implement precautions in the fall. I would like to hope that precautions can be put in place that we may actually allow the kids back into the buildings and allow extra-curricular activities to continue, whether that means plexiglass barriers on desks, masks for people in the building, temperature checks, some hybrid approach between distance and in-person learning, or holding some activities outside.

Lisa Spring
Warrington, PA
(continued)

However, I feel that it is imperative to look at the current scientific evidence when making these decisions. We cannot let those that shout the loudest dictate how things should be done. We must consider the health and welfare of everyone and not cast aside those who may have more health risks, or whose family members may have more risk. I am against the petition that is circulating because it advocates returning with little to no precautions and disregards the needs of people who may have some health issues, but still could return if proper precautions are put into place and protocols are followed. My biggest concern is parents sending sick kids to school during this time and disregarding the effect it may have on others, and if there are no safeguards in place, this is very irresponsible. I trust that the school board will review all evidence and look at scientific facts when making decisions about the 2020-2021 school year to best serve the interest of everyone involved.

Stephanie
Saltzman

New Britain
Township

I feel that the best solution for this upcoming school year, while we're still learning about this virus, is to continue distance learning. However, because there is such a big push for in person instruction I would like to suggest offering both in-person instruction and distance learning as options. There are so many variables but ultimately we need to keep the vulnerable safe, especially because there is little understanding of why some suffer severe complications while others do not.

Vonna DeArmond

plumstead
township

When considering what to do for our children for fall 2020-2021 school year, I want to ask you to consider that our kids need to have a normal school year. That means no masks, no forced social distancing. As a former research scientist, I've spent a lot of time researching studies on this virus. We have more to learn about it, but what we know now is that it is not harming children the way that it has the potential to harm the elderly or those with comorbidities. I am asking that you consider the studies linked here as well as CDC data showing that this virus has not been as deadly as the news might lead us to believe.

Vonna DeArmond

plumstead
township

(continued)

I also believe that COVID was here before March (based on illness and antibody tests) and just as with the flu, there are many more infected and immune than we know. With regard to masks, I am extremely concerned with the negative health effects that masks could cause. Please look at the data that is available in regards to the detrimental effects and lack of efficacy of masks. I'd also ask you to consider alternatives where you might offer classes as normal, but also an option for CBSD cyberschooling/distance learning for those at risk who wish to remain at home.

<https://childrenshealthdefense.org/news/lockdown-lunacy-the-thinking-persons-guide/>



Public Comment

JUNE 9, 2020