

NOVEMBER 16, 2020

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
DISTRICT #63-240 COUNTIES OF
OAKLAND, LIVINGSTON AND WASHTENAW
HELD VIRTUALLY IN SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

CALL TO ORDER

President Hanshaw called the November 16, 2020 regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Anthony Abbate, Randy Clark (remote call in), Craig Dashner, Carrie Hanshaw, Eric Kennedy, Dan Schwegler, Jennifer Urtel

Absent: None

Administration Present: Steve Archibald, Superintendent, Lisa Kudwa, Asst. Superintendent, Stacy Witt, Asst. Superintendent

Administration Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board, administration and the audience joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Hanshaw offered an opportunity for public comments. The following comments were received and read by President Hanshaw and Mr. Abbate.

- *Joseph Humphreys* indicated that since our COVID counts were low, the district didn't need to go virtual. He wants our kids to be in person for schooling.
- *Allison Hingst* implored the Board to vote to go remote until after Christmas break. She added that the rate in which our area's COVID rates are increasing is very concerning to her, and that the inevitable family gatherings which will happen over Thanksgiving will only exacerbate that.
- *Valerie Wedge* asked the Board to support the elementary schools continuing in-person instruction. The state supports in-person instruction up to grade 8. Most of the outbreaks identified by the state at educational centers were linked to high school students. She stated that she has seen a vast improvement in her 1st grader's learning since returning to in-person class. She has trust and confidence for our teachers and schools to be able to continue this plan safely.
- *Rob Troyer* wanted everyone to know that he personally comes in contact with over 200 students and staff daily as a Specials teacher. He asked the Board to think about the health of all and be more honest about the actual amount of positive cases, not just the ones we think are contracted within the district.

- *PJ Szewczyk* asked the Board to reassess their opinion after the 3-week closure by our Governor. So many kids are struggling mentally with virtual schooling. Their education is suffering greatly, along with all aspects of socialization. Please consider the mental health of these children.
- *Jason Scott* stated emphatically that in-person schooling is the only option. Our teachers are doing a great job with the hybrid version. Keep it going!
- *Kim Craighead* felt that online learning is not a one size fits all approach. While online does work for her son, it does not work for her daughter with special needs. Her daughter didn't start progressing until she went back to school with face to face. The Governor is in support of our middle and elementary schools staying open. If you don't want to hear the parents, please hear the Governor.
- *Michael Petrou* indicated that the Governor did not put restrictions on elementary schools. She encouraged in-person schooling for elementary and middle schools. Our children need in-person schooling.
- *Stacie Moser* shared her concern how remote learning will work for parents that have full-time employment. She asked if there are resources for parents that cannot accommodate a 9 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. schedule.
- *Stephanie Rife* stated that elementary hybrid learning should remain face to face. The state mandated that secondary students should go virtual. The Board should make every effort to provide our students the best learning possible.
- *Cynthia Candela* complemented all the staff for the great job they are doing. She is concerned about continuing as a guest teacher in the district as the spread of COVID-19 increases. She feels the school district should take a break.
- *Michelle Roslinski* stated that the 4 weeks of in-person school has been very beneficial for her children. She asked the Board to continue elementary and middle school (and high school after 3 weeks) with the hybrid plan vs. full remote until January. She asked the Board to do the hard, but right thing for our kids and keep them in person two days a week.
- *Joseph Keimig* implored the Board to allow the younger and most vulnerable students in K-8 to continue in-person education. The negative effects on their education and mental health outweigh the 0% risk to their long-term health. Education is essential!
- *Janelle Negri* asked the Board to follow the Governor's orders and allow the elementary children to stay in school and get the education that they deserve.
- *Jennifer Propps* suggested to the Board that they try a half-day model for K-8. She stated that it would keep consistency for kids while limiting time in the classroom and less staff hours.
- *Rachael Showerman* asked the Board to accept the administration's recommendation to move all grades to fully virtual at least through January 8. The virus is exploding and spreading in ways that greatly disrupt in-person learning and threaten public health.

- *Renee Laskowski* asked the Board to keep ECC and elementary schools open. Virtual is not working.
- *Gina Hochgraber* stated the Board is robbing kids of basic education when they are remote. The governor says that young students can continue in school. Kids learn from socializing in person.
- *Rebekah Wagenschutz* asked the Board to let parents have the opportunity to make the choice for their children regarding schooling options. Children can safely attend school in person by adhering to the safety guidelines in place.
- *Andrew Kirby* stated that virtual learning does not work for his child. The district needs to give the parents the option of in-person school. Please let the younger kids stay in school four days a week.
- *Allison Ritter* asked the Board to keep kids in the classroom. Schools all over the world are finding ways to do it.
- *Andrew Moser* asked the Board and central administration if they will consider revisiting a switch to remote learning. Science has shown that the safest place for our elementary students is in the classroom.
- *Jody Brzovski* understands that some classes are being forced to go remote because of possible COVID exposure or staffing issues. She asked the Board to keep doing what we are doing and keep the majority in school.
- *Tara Sharpe* asked the Board not to close the elementary schools. She indicated that our kids can rebound from this illness, but the structural development they are missing from not being in school will haunt this district for many years and will not be the acclaimed SLCS like we once were.
- *John & Diane Fawcett* urged the Board to continue in-person learning for students in the self-contained special education classrooms. For their non-verbal autistic son, remote school equals no school. These students have exceptional needs.
- *James Morris* thanked the Board for everything they do to keep our kids safe. He is disappointed in the lack of education with the remote learning system. He fully supports keeping the schools open, as he can't idly watch the train wreck of remote learning any longer.
- *Michael Rzyzi* stated that based on the recommendations of the governor, the state is only closing high schools and wanted to know what the justification is for closing elementary and middle schools. He questioned if it was a money issue.
- *David Millenbach* indicated that in-person learning is in the best interest of students, when compared to virtual learning. Application and adherence to mitigation measures can help schools reopen and stay open safely for in-person learning.

- *Julie Cassano* asked why it is the decision to close the school for such a long time. It would make sense to close them for two weeks and open them up again which would give a reset back to the starting point.
- *Gina Glaszek* stated that her biggest concern is for the special needs/special education students. They have already lost so much this year and now it seems that they will continue to slide further behind. She has already seen growth in her children over the previous weeks, and it is heartbreaking that accommodations aren't being made for them during this time. Visual learning does not work for these students.
- *Bryan Sleek* stated that he supports the decision to shift to fully remote instruction beginning Thursday, November 19, 2020.
- *Melissa Turner & Diane Dobritt* asked the Board to consider keeping self-contained special education classrooms in person during this time. Their students have significant developmental delays. They felt that their students' needs are best met through hands on learning and face-to-face instruction.
- *David Price* asked the Board to accept the proposal for remote learning. He is a 3rd grade teacher in the district and since our return to face to face he has had to move his class to remote learning twice. It has been very disruptive to his students' learning. He asked the Board to provide his class with a consistent learning environment for the remainder of the calendar year or until we can figure out a way to learn in person safely.
- *Kate Rosowski* urged the Board to reconsider fully remote learning for the elementary level students. Most cases in the state are not related to the elementary age group. Elementary students need to be in the classroom.
- *Cynthia Bryant* does not agree about shutting down the schools again. It has been beneficial for her kids to be face to face. One of her biggest concerns as a parent is about mental health and the need for more social interaction.
- *Megan Murthy* stated that closing K-8 is not beneficial for our kids. The decision is not based on science, evidence and trends within our community. Our young kids need face-to-face interaction in order to be prosperous in their education. Please keep our schools open to allow our kids the proper education they need.
- *Juliann Sleek* asked the Board to support the administration's recommendation to move to fully remote instruction through January 8.
- *Ashley Bentz* is a special education teacher at Hardy and is concerned regarding a prolonged remote period for students in our CI program. She is hopeful that there can be some wiggle room for special education students to have the potential to come back sooner than January 8, 2021.
- *Alan McArthur* hopes that the Board will consider the recommendation of the Governor's office and the MDH on the closure of high schools vs. schools at the elementary levels. Our youngest learners need the structure of the classroom.

- *Prea Ferrante* called in and spoke to the Board. She is a choir teacher at CMS. It has been a challenging year for her. She feels that she is being forced to work in an unsafe environment. She is 6 months pregnant. She believes the best place to learn is in the classroom, but currently she is in favor of temporary remote learning.
- *Megan Murthy* stated that closing K-8 is not beneficial for our kids. The decision is not based on science, evidence and trends within our community. Our young kids need face-to-face interaction in order to be prosperous in their education. Please keep our schools open to allow our kids the proper education they need.
- *Emily Trcalek* wants the elementary schools to remain in person. Our children can't go in person and then online and back again over and over through the school year. It is challenging for them to follow new and different protocols as compared to a "normal" school year.
- *Kristina Cobb* asked the Board to consider keeping self-contained programs in person. Many of these students are not able to access the curriculum online because of the nature and severity of their disabilities. Many of the students in her self-contained classroom have limited verbal output. She has seen many of her students' language bloom in school since we have been back. She asked the Board to please consider this group of extraordinary learners.
- *Crystal Springer* is a Pearson parent and wants remote learning due to lack of enough staff.
- *Larry Lewis* stated there is little to no transmission within schools and no evidence of ongoing transmission. He felt that schools are the safest place for our kids right now. He asked the Board to follow the science.
- *Kim Shaieb* stated that it is ludicrous that the Board would shut down our entire school district for only a small amount of cases. The Board must consider the mental health of our children being stuck inside and the struggle the families are going through at home with two working parents. Depression and suicide are on the rise. She asked the Board to use facts and common sense before voting.
- *Matt Sebastian* indicated that the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly advises in-person learning. They openly acknowledge that they are seeing negative impacts on children from the spring virtual curriculum. The governor also supports in person learning at the elementary level. The goal is not to eliminate risk, but rather mitigate risk. We should continue to treat it on a class by class basis.
- *Meagan Day* asked the Board to think about the emotional and social issues this is causing our children when they are considering a return to remote learning. Can the Board keep the elementary age and younger in school? She personally feels that all kids should be in person full time as the transition back and forth with the younger children is hard for all involved. She asked the Board to think beyond the virus and think more about the other issues this is bringing to the children.
- *Stephanie Hardesty* is a Sayre parent who chose the hybrid plan for her child. She did this knowing there could be classes shut down. Why does the district have to shut down when there has not been one case in a few elementary schools? Do not live in fear. Think beyond the virus and what this is bringing to the children.

- *Todd Slisher* stated that he and his wife support the Administration's plan to move hybrid students to a fully virtual option at this time. The current situation with increasing caseloads and higher positivity rates including cases in the schools now make it more dangerous than when school started the hybrid mode over a month ago. It is the right step to take.
- *Amanda Berman* wanted to thank the parents who have been supportive of their student's teachers. This pandemic will not go on forever. She supports remote learning. She asked parents to keep the positive comments coming to them because it motivates them when they are teaching to blank screens with just colored initials.
- *Kathryn Wells* stated that the Governor thinks it is important that K-8 schools stay open. Where is the logic to close schools that haven't had cases? Why not just move a single room to virtual if there is a case? She asked the Board to wait to see if closures help before being drastic to go all virtual.
- *Craig Poet* was scheduled to call in but was not available. President Hanshaw invited him to join them later if he chose to do so.
- *Ralph Cortese* stated that the State of Michigan has indicated that 2/3 of the COVID cases in school are related to high school students. The Governor has indicated that elementary and middle school can remain open. He asked if the Board was going overboard when they halt in-person education at the elementary level for the hundreds, if not thousands of students when only a handful have contracted the virus. Perhaps the winter break will eliminate the breakout.
- *Lauren Kaye* expressed that teachers need to take care of themselves. They are doing an amazing job with an impossible job. She is not excited with the shift to fully virtual but supports it and the teachers in doing what they need to do to serve their own families as well as their students. Thank you for everything you do!
- *Jen Myslinski* wanted to speak in support of being fully remote until January 8. President Hanshaw invited her to join them later if she chose to do so.
- *Craig Poet* applauded the efforts of the Board and recognizes the difficult decisions they are facing. No matter what they decide, a portion of our community will be upset. They will never please everyone. He thanked their efforts to serve our school district. To a large extent, it is a thankless job. There are many parents who appreciate what they do and understand that any decisions they make are made with the best interest of all our children in mind. Thank you.
- *Margaret Pierce* stated that the Board and administration must find a way to educate our kids at school. Remote learning does not work for elementary age children. These kids have done everything asked of them and deserve an education. Get creative if the true reason for canceling in-person school is staffing. Eliminate specials, have AM classes only to avoid lunch. Focus on reading, writing and math. You are failing our kids by refusing to be innovative.
- *Mrs. Badish* did not call in but indicated that the hybrid model does not allow for safe or effective face-to-face learning. It should be called mask to mask learning. In-person students cannot get close enough for personal help, nor can they see each other's faces. She experiences anxiety trying to juggle both online and in person while not getting sick. Students do not stay distanced from her or each other. She is currently at home quarantined. We need a break.

- *Jen Myslinski*, a teacher and a parent in the district, called in and spoke to the Board. She was in support of going fully remote. She has watched her colleagues in the classroom. They must deal with quarantined students or them being quarantined then having to teach their in-person students while teaching their quarantined students. There is a tremendous amount of mental and emotional stress on our teachers, and it is getting out of hand. It is a fact that cases are rising. She is a teacher that has COVID now and she and her family have been very careful not to do anything to spread the virus. She thinks the district needs to look beyond just what remote instruction means for academics and all other ways.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Ms. Hanshaw, supported by Mr. Dashner to approve the November 16, 2020 agenda with the removal of Item 8a (Bond Update Presentation) which will then be added to the agenda of the December 7th meeting.

Roll Call: Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Clark-yes, Ms. Hanshaw-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Clark, supported by Mr. Kennedy to approve the following minutes:

- November 2, 2020 Regular Meeting

Roll Call: Mr. Clark-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Ms. Hanshaw-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

- *October 2020 Prepays*
- *November 2020 AP Board Run*
- *November 2020 Bond Bills*
- *October 2020 Wires & ACH Transactions*
- *October 2020 Revenue Report*

Moved by Mr. Dashner, supported by Mr. Schwegler to approve the bills as presented.

Roll Call: Ms. Hanshaw-yes, Mr. Clark-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

SLCS EXTENDED COVID-19 LEARNING PLAN RECONFIRMATION

Mr. Archibald began by narrating a short presentation that offered highlights of the recommended mode of instruction (November 2020) on the Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan. The full presentation can be found on the district website.

At the September 21, 2020 Board of Education meeting, the Board approved the district's Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan. Our district is required to reconfirm, once per month thereafter, the instructional delivery method, along with reviewing the weekly two-way interaction rates.

The administrative team is recommending shifting the hybrid in-person/remote pathway to fully remote instruction beginning Thursday, November 19, 2020. A fully remote model will continue through at least January 8, 2021 with a tentative return on or after January 11, 2021. Wednesday, November 18 will be a workday for teachers.

Our weekly two-way interaction rates are included in the report and are well above the required 75%.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, supported by Mr. Dashner to approve the instructional delivery method as recommended.

Ms. Urtel noted that she had multiple concerns on remote and in-person instruction. She felt that it would be beneficial for the elementary children to be in school. She is concerned with the timing that we are coming up on with the holidays. There are a lot of large family gatherings being planned along with traveling. She shared her concerns with cases spiking the week after Thanksgiving. She is also concerned with problems that occur at the high schools when teachers are out and there are no subs. They are struggling significantly to put adult bodies in the rooms to keep tabs on the kids. If the high school is closed, could they take the small pool of subs that we have and put them into the elementary level where that issue is lessened? Are we having that same kind of scenario at the elementary level?

Mr. Archibald noted that we do have non-teaching staff who help at all levels. He added that our nurses, as well as our administrators at each level are the main contact tracers as cases surface within a building, along with all the communication and follow-up. He also shared that just today alone district wide, we had 10 teaching positions that were unfilled and five support staff positions that were unfilled which meant there was internal coverage.

Mr. Clark stated that Ms. Urtel made some great points and there is an opportunity for us to push some of the support staff down into the elementary and middle schools. If the high schools are closed for three weeks, he felt we need to give our elementary kids the opportunity to continue with in-person face-to-face learning. He has had numerous parents reach out to him beyond what we heard from this evening about the importance of this and how much their students are struggling. The parents are frustrated, but the kids are frustrated attempting to learn in the virtual environment. Mr. Clark felt the Board should strongly double their efforts and try to keep these kids in the classroom as much as we can. For that reason, he cannot support our proposed plan.

Mr. Dashner stated that currently we are shutting down per class. Sometimes per building with the impacts that are there. He asked Mr. Archibald why this is not working and why can't we continue down the path of shutting down classes when you know there is not a teacher, or a teacher is in quarantine?

Mr. Archibald noted that the high school is a challenge. Students who were quarantined were able to just stay home and work remotely. If we have teachers who are not in quarantine, but isolation who aren't able to teach from home or if they are able to teach from home, we still need a sub in their classroom. It is just simply a sure volume of cases in the strain on the overall system having the bodies to fill the holes with the number of staff.

Mr. Dashner questioned how Mr. Archibald selected going into January as opposed to matching the three-week pause that the governor has suggested for the high school level. Mr. Archibald noted that the spike was up, and he wouldn't anticipate things turning around fast enough to come back between the holidays. He wanted to provide some time after the holiday break to be able to assess the situation.

Mr. Schwegler started off by saying that given the challenges that COVID has on so many different industries and so many different people's lives, especially based on one's own vulnerabilities, he didn't really think that one size fits all really works. He thinks that the Board needs to look at other solutions. He asked Mr. Archibald if he could give them any more insight on how statistics are broken out by elementary school vs. secondary. Mr. Archibald did not have that information to give him now but will send it to him in the next couple days. Mr. Schwegler noted that he heard from some teachers that they were really surprised about the lack of depth of cleaning on deep cleaning Wednesdays. He asked if the janitorial staff from the high schools and middle schools could be used to help support the cleanliness on deep cleaning Wednesdays. Mr. Archibald noted that they can reallocate staff. Mr. Schwegler noted that for him personally, he thinks that there is a significantly large population of the elementary school students who struggle to learn remotely. They don't have the tools necessary. He felt it would be a better approach to make sure that we are doing everything we can to fully support the staff to feel comfortable and safe to continue to deliver the education in person. In closing, Mr. Schwegler stated that for him to support the plan he would want to see the plan amended so that K-5 and any special ed classrooms that can function like the CI classes without interruption to have in-person instruction. He would fully support going remote for secondary.

Mr. Kennedy was inclined to agree with Mr. Schwegler. He doesn't disagree with the comments from the community. He tried to look at the bigger picture. He emphasized that the situation we are in is not the fault of our district, staff, administration and teachers. It is what has happened. The bigger picture is the numbers have skyrocketed. Whether you are exposed in our classrooms in our buildings or outside of our classrooms, we have had to shut classrooms down. We have had to quarantine too many people. His question is how do they fix that? He doesn't disagree with shutting down till into January. It is a long time. He would like to keep our JK – 8 students in person as much as possible. The attendance in person at the high school is below 25%. That has led to teachers being quarantined and classes not being covered. We must do better than we have been doing. He would like to believe that Mr. Schwegler is correct that with some small more mitigation factors and things that we do, those numbers will level off.

Mr. Abbate started by connecting with what Mr. Kennedy was saying that none of this should come as a surprise. We need to hash this out in detail. Every number that we are looking at is worse than it was when we started the year remote. None of the board members are trying to make the case that virtual learning is the answer to anything. Nobody here is trying to suggest that virtual learning is the best thing for our young learners because it isn't. We are in the midst of a pandemic that is worsening. We have to recalibrate our thinking right now and focus on the safety of things because it is necessary because the lives of our kids and our staff and our community are more important than a couple of weeks of flipping back and forth between remote and in person. Every building in the district has been impacted by this current wave. Mr. Abbate feels that our youngest kids need to be in school.

Ms. Hanshaw remarked that this was a good discussion with the Board. It is evident that everyone on the Board is listening to the community. She agrees with what has been said. It seems feasible that secondary should stay remote until January. The elementary and self-contained students have a higher need to be in person. She would like to see them finish this week at least in person and maybe give them an opportunity to come back maybe two weeks in December. The Board and Administration promised the community that they would do everything they could to get students back and they did that. Administration has now come back again to the Board and said they can't do it anymore. Ms. Hanshaw is inclined to trust their judgement and if the Board asked them to bring the students back as soon as they can, I trust they will. She asked Mr. Archibald if there is a possibility for the elementary to finish this week before Thanksgiving.

Mr. Archibald summarized what he heard from the Board.

- JK – Elementary and our self-contained through the remainder of this week.
- A checkpoint between the holidays for that population. The governor has put a pause for three weeks through December 9. On the ninth or tenth a lot of the countywide data that he was referring to earlier doesn't come out till the Thursday of the week. Mr. Archibald indicated that he could make a turnaround or a decision at that point to try and bring students back that following Monday for what would amount to one week prior to Christmas. He asked the Board if they can get these populations through the remainder of this week and do a check-in at some point between the holidays. Administration can do that and certainly if directed by the Board.

Mr. Schwegler doesn't like the idea of just keeping the elementary in for the rest of this week and then taking three weeks off. He personally would like to see those self-contained and Elementary stay in session through the rest of the semester. He would personally propose to leave K-5 and self-contained alone and then send the middle school and high schools full remote and give it to January 8.

Mr. Clark agreed with Mr. Schwegler's proposal.

Mr. Abbate stated he can understand the discomfort with the stretch of time from now until January, but he doesn't understand the idea of taking no time whatsoever for those kids between now and then. There is a zero chance that the holidays will not stir this up. I want the elementaries to be in person as much as we possibly can, but to not do anything at least on the back side of Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year's is irresponsible.

Ms. Urtel stated that her preference is to keep the K-5 in until Thanksgiving. Take the week after Thanksgiving (11/30 – 12/4) as remote to allow everyone's travel and family gatherings that they are going to do take hold. Come back for two weeks in-person and then you have the two weeks of holiday break and then the week after the Christmas break (12/21-1/4) again start off remote and come back in person (1/11). She asked the community to have a nice quiet Thanksgiving at home, and if their kids are sick, do not send them to school. She has heard from many parents and teachers that parents are sending their kids to school sick. Stay home. Remote learn after Thanksgiving. If symptoms are going to manifest, it will happen within that week. Then get them back for two weeks before the Christmas holiday.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he is supportive of exactly what Ms. Urtel laid out. He thought her suggestion is exactly what he was thinking. He feels this is a compromise and a little more of a happy medium. Let's implore our community to buckle down.

There was further discussion among the board members.

Mr. Kennedy withdrew his original motion.

Moved by Ms. Urtel, supported by Mr. Kennedy to propose that ECC - 5th grade stay in session through Thanksgiving. The week of November 30 we move the entire district remote; back in person for 5th grade and younger on December 7; stay in person through to the holiday break (December 18). High school and secondary is based on the governor's recommendations, so they stay through the January 9 and come back to their 50% and then full district remote the week of January 4 and then back to current situation January 11.

The Board suggested doing the motion in two steps. One motion for elementary or through grades 5 and younger and then a second motion for middle school and high school.

Mr. Kennedy suggested that it may be easier for Mr. Archibald to put that in the plan because we're approving the extension of the plan would require that language for him to put in the spread sheet, they looked at earlier.

Moved by Ms. Urtel, supported by Mr. Kennedy to propose that ECC - 5th grade and all self-contained special education students stay in person through Thanksgiving. Students would go to full remote learning the week of November 30. They will come back to in person again or their hybrid in person starting December 7 through December 18. Holiday break is scheduled December 21 – January 3. They would go remote again the week of January 4 – January 8. They would go back to the original plan on January 11, 2021.

Mr. Abbate questioned whether the Board may have made it more difficult on the community in terms of their planning for this whole stretch of time in the holiday season because we have this sort of in and out movement. He suggested that it may be smarter to try to stop now and give the families a week of buffer to protect them.

Mr. Dashner stated that all of the input they have received from the community, it seems like those who want face to face don't want that to stop and are more than willing to put up with the two-week class quarantines and things of that nature In order to keep in face to face as much as possible.

Mr. Kennedy agreed with Mr. Dashner and feels that with contact tracing we should be able to figure that out when that happens. He felt by doing this, the Board is putting the ball in the court of our community. The Board has compromised, and they think it is up to the numbers in our district, the community and the county what their next move will be after Thanksgiving.

Mr. Clark stated that he would support what Ms. Urtel has put forth at this point. It is a good compromise. It is going to keep us in person as much as we can. It is a good effort to keep our kids in the classroom.

Roll Call: Mr. Clark-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Ms. Hanshaw-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

Moved by Ms. Urtel, supported by Mr. Schwegler to propose that secondary (6th – 12th grades) be full remote until January 11, 2021.

There were no questions or comments.

Roll Call: Ms. Hanshaw-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Clark-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

LEGISLATION

Mr. Archibald stated that there was nothing to report.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Hanshaw acknowledged the following board committee reports:

- **Legislative** – No new legislation
- **Policy** – A meeting is scheduled next month.
- **Finance** – Nothing new.
- **Facilities & Grounds** – They met recently with Barton Malow and are moving forward with projects that have completed schematic design. The projects are SLHS Science Lab renovation, SLHS pool, SLEHS Auxiliary Gym, SLEHS Stadium turf field and track replacement and SLEHS Foods Lab & Project Planning Room conversion and SLEHS Chiller replacement. A presentation from IDS/Barton Malow is scheduled on the December 7 meeting agenda.
- **Curriculum & Communications** – They have not met recently.
- **Oakland Schools Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee** – Ms. Hanshaw reported that they talked about specific language used when talking about people in diverse backgrounds. They also discussed a racial equity habit building challenge.
- **Oakland County Health Department School Board Update** – The last scheduled meeting did not occur. A report is available if you search Oakland County Weekly COVID Cases and it will bring up their weekly report. The report for last week is showing metrics just going through the roof in not a good way. The only thing that was positive out of it is that our Healthcare capacity in the county is still strong.

OTHER

Mr. Archibald asked to revisit one item that was not covered or included in either of the motions. He would request consideration to maintaining Wednesday, the 18th as a workday for teachers in preparation to going fully remote. He is asking our elementary teachers to move in and out of remote and in person and up against breaks. He is requesting the latitude to try and work out some additional work time perhaps on a Wednesday between now and then for them. It is an important element that shouldn't be lost. He will accomplish this with the Board's guidance.

Mr. Abbate, with full Board support suggested giving them as many Wednesdays as they need. Mr. Archibald noted that this public conversation took place and will maintain it for this Wednesday but will also look at it for future ones for our elementary teachers. Mr. Archibald thanked the Board and will keep them informed.

REPORTS

South Lyon Educational Foundation – Mr. Abbate reported that the South Lyon Educational Foundation Board sent a message to share with everybody this evening. Thank a teacher this season with a South Lyon Community Schools Star Award who has made a difference in a student's life. It is a great way to help our schools and show our appreciation for Education professionals. For a \$20 donation to the SLEF, a 5x7 personalized color certificate is sent to the honoree. This offers families a way to recognize a teacher or staff member for whatever reason they choose. As we enter this season of thanks and giving, we look for your generosity and ask you to join us and give a text that is a deductible donation to the South Lyon Educational Foundation. Information is on their website.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Hanshaw offered a second opportunity for public comments. She shared the following questions and comments with the Board.

- *Jen Gundersen* was scheduled to call in regarding face-to-face instruction. She was invited to call in later if she happens to join us.
- *Mandy Venning* asked the Board not to give up on face-to-face learning. She asked if it was possible to look at school by school and class by class cases each week and only switch in and out of virtual to those that need it or is it possible to just take a 2-3 week break rather than several weeks at a time.
- *Kim Bezas* stated that SLCS needs to temporarily shut down for the best of the community. This is about the health and safety of the teachers and staff and about protecting our community and being responsible during a pandemic.
- *Jay Koda* asked the Board to take parents comments into consideration. Many families ended up leaving the district because of the poor decision that was made based on emotions and not data. He asked every teacher who is calling in and supporting remote learning to please back their request by real data.
- *Christine Campo* stated that January 8 is way too long for kids to be out of the classroom! This district is managing our kid's education with ZERO regards to their growth year over year.
- *Christina Reeves* called in and spoke regarding remote learning. She wanted to address the date to decide whether she wanted to sign up with virtual pathway or stay in remote. She asked the Board how they expect parents to make a decision with all the changes. She added that she appreciates the Board's hard work.
- *Katy Michaels* is a brand new social worker in the district. She feels the Board is putting all staff and families at risk of this virus. Kids and staff are being quarantined at such a high rate that their learning is in jeopardy.
- *Kelli Kluba* questioned why live streaming isn't an option when class shifts to remote learning.
- *Mr. or Mrs. Tierney* was a call-in but was not available to speak. An invitation to call back was given.
- *Tricia Z.* shared her concern with her daughter's class size of 28 students during a pandemic. It is unacceptable and should not be allowed if the district chooses to leave elementary students in face-to-face instruction.
- *Katie Duncan* spoke to bus cases. Her children are quarantined from sitting within 6 ft. of a positive student. Instead of kids being sat in accordance from when they get on the bus, they should be sitting by how long they will be exposed to another individual.

- *Hannah Schultz* stated there are many of us who are completely uncomfortable sending our kids to school every day. Kids are not separated 6' and are not wearing masks appropriately. If remaining in person, these safety issues need to be addressed. Families should be allowed to switch to virtual now.
- *Mark Grant* stated that if elementary stays in person, classes and extra safety is needed due to increased numbers and the community needs appropriate distancing six feet and not eating lunch in school since it requires removing masks. Kids also need two weeks off after the holidays because symptoms may not appear for two weeks after the holidays.
- *Christine Campo* stated that January 8 is way too long for these kids to be out of the classroom. Once again, our children suffer!
- *Jay Koda* asked the Board to please have a doctor on the call next time they discuss medical circumstances.
- *Christine Campo* commented that the mere fact the Board is basing decisions in the presumption of what parents and families will be doing over the holidays is absurd! Kids education is dangling in the wind.
- *Ann Kruschka* asked the Board to please consider allowing quarantined students to attend elementary class via google meet. This will improve cooperation from families with sick kids. Not allowing elementary students to join the class virtually will increase people sending kids to school with sniffles.
- *Patrick Maguire* stated that this multi-tiered in-and-out again and again proposal is ridiculous. The superintendent and staff came up with a reasonable plan and parents have been planning on it for a week now. There is no way families can keep up with the madness you are now proposing.
- *Hattie Maquire* stated that this compromise is ridiculous! Be brave and follow the science. There have been constant outbreaks. Keep your students and teachers safe and move virtual through the holidays.
- *Jennifer Balog* asked about the Special Ed self-contained students in the middle school. They were put in the elementary group and now it sounds like they are now lumped in the secondary and are remote.
- *Elizabeth Lightle* indicated that having elementary go remote for one week after Thanksgiving and then coming back isn't even giving people 14 days of not being around extended family members. Families are going to get together. To only keep kids out for a week and then bring them back for two weeks prior to Christmas break is just asking for more quarantined students, teachers and classrooms. That means some of us will have to quarantine during winter break. Elementary should be remote December 9 – January 11 to keep safe.
- *Jennifer Gomori* asked if a list of secondary classes available next semester in Virtual Pathway could be sent out as was done for this semester prior to the Nov. 24 deadline.

- *Joseph Keimig* stated that public school teachers are missing a great opportunity to prove themselves as essential. He would gladly vote for a pandemic bonus for those willing to keep face-to-face learning going. Our kids' best interests are being overlooked and their future jeopardized. Don't assume you know already that people will not do the right thing over the holidays.
- *Nan Houtman* expressed her concern for the COVID Plan that was voted on tonight for the elementary. Asking the students to go remote for one week and then come back in person is not going to provide the consistency that the students need. The elementary going remote for one week will not lower the spread of the virus.
- *Trevor Davey* suggested that the Board just extend school into the summer.
- *Craig Skalski* asked the Board if they can get rid of block schedules if middle school is going fully remote. Two hours is too long for one class. Can school start later than 7:30 am? Why do schools need to start at the early time if there is no in-person instruction? He also recommended to bring the students back after the 3-week state medical order if cases in the district plateau or decline.
- *Elizabeth VanSteenkiste* thought the first plan that was presented was the best plan, going remote for all until January 8. The back and forth in December seems too choppy. She does not want her child in the building two weeks before Christmas. She does not agree with the elementary plan that was approved tonight. Please go remote for even the youngest learners.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Hanshaw acknowledged the following resignations:

- *Amanda Grawburg (Pearson Elementary teacher)*
- *Nicole Watson (Sayre 3rd grade teacher)*

MEETING DATES

Ms. Hanshaw noted the following meeting dates.

- December 7, 2020, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- December 14, 2020, Special Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- January 11, 2021, Special Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- January 19, 2021, (Tuesday) Organizational/Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- February 1, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- March 1, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- March 15, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- April 19, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- May 3, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- May 17, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- June 7, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- June 21, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

BOARD COMMENTS

- *Mr. Dashner* did not have any comment.
- *Ms. Urtel* stated it was an interesting meeting. She felt they had some healthy debates and healthy conversation. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Everybody be safe and stay healthy. Have lots of Zoom Thanksgiving Day family time.
- *Mr. Clark* applauded the Board for working out a compromise this evening. Obviously, this is a very emotionally charged issue for the whole community. He addressed administration and thought this might be a prime example of maybe holding off sending the administrative orders down to the buildings and the individual classrooms until the Board has made a decision. He felt there are a lot of parents now that are going to be totally confused with all the communication that has already gone out, and now we are changing it. It is just one he would like to wave a caution flag in the future.
- *Mr. Abbate* began by addressing the original plan. He supports the compromise but felt the original plan was the safest. It now makes him nervous for our staff, students and for our families heading into the break. It is really going to be super important that we all take things seriously in the next coming weeks especially during those days where we are about to come back. We have to watch our kids for symptoms and err on the side of caution and keep them home even if it's a sniffle or a cough. I think we can get through the holiday season and get on our feet without any interruptions. He thanked Ms. Urtel for jumping in and helping to get this done. He appreciates Mr. Archibald for coming out there and putting a plan out to the community that is ambitious and cautious at the same time. I hope everybody has a good Thanksgiving!
- *Mr. Schwegler* shared his appreciation for the Board's respectful dialogue even though they might not have an initial agreement upon a big decision and through that dialogue they can come up with a solution that they can all feel comfortable about. He respects the professionalism the Board brings to these meetings. He thanked Mr. Archibald for bringing together that plan to get this conversation going. He respects the decisions that you have to make to guide this district and hopefully the Board is doing enough to support him in those decisions. Be safe with the upcoming holidays.
- *Mr. Kennedy* agreed with what Mr. Abbate and Mr. Schwegler said and much appreciation for the discussion they had today. We can agree to disagree, but he would also say that he has everybody else's back. He thinks the Board is doing the best they can in a difficult situation. He shared his appreciation for the immense amount of work everybody on staff in our district is doing. It is up to us now to bring those numbers down so that we don't have to worry about this. Happy Thanksgiving!
- *Ms. Hanshaw* reiterated what everyone else has said. She appreciates the Board having really good, thorough conversations and listening to each other and listening and respecting the opinion of administration and their expertise. Our administration has done everything they have asked of them since March 13. They have gone above and beyond. She knows that teachers and families are nervous, but they will continue doing the best that they can. Hopefully everyone will do their part and we'll all get through this.

ADJOURN

Moved by Mr. Schwegler, supported by Mr. Abbate to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 p.m.

Roll Call: Mr. Clark-yes, Ms. Urtel-yes, Mr. Schwegler-yes, Mr. Dashner-yes, Mr. Abbate-yes, Mr. Kennedy-yes, Ms. Hanshaw-yes. Motion carries 7 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anty Abbate". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Anthony Abbate, Secretary
Board of Education