

**SPECIAL VOTING MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2020
6:00 PM**

MINUTES

Call to Order

President Patricia Ann Shaw called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Pledge

The meeting opened with the pledge to the flag.

Attendance

Those present included: Mr. Cesario, Ms. Crowell, Mrs. Donahue, Ms. Evans, Mr. LaPorte, Ms. Lindsey, Mrs. Lydon, Mr. Raso and Ms. Shaw. Also present were Dr. William P. Stropkaj, Superintendent; Mr. Joseph Kubiak, Business Manager/Board Secretary; Mr. Michael Brungo, Solicitor; and Dr. Shannon Varley, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Staff Development.

Public Comment

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chelsea Martin

Re: Ms. Martin informed the School Board that there was a limit of 100 viewers for the Zoom meeting, however, many other citizens were trying to attend the meeting virtually.

Bryan Gigliotti

Re: Mr. Gigliotti talked about teachers wanting to return to school, but parents need to understand things will be different. Keeping everyone safe is the main priority.

Public comment submitted electronically to the Board was received from:

Heather Arment, Rachel & AJ Betta, Joanna Bouldin, Robert Brooke, Vickie & Scott Bruce, Lisa Clarke, Amy Defalco, Jeffrey DiGiacomo, Janell Filson, Brian Gigliotti, Emily Goff, Hannah Goforth, Barbara Guerra, Joseph Hartnett, Jessica & Joshua Haskins, Hennies Family, Justina Honsberger, Melissa & Dan Hubinsky, Melissa Maegle, Mary Jo Maggio, Massaro Family, John McCarthy, Eric Palmer, Edward Polens, Judy Purcell, Jenn Reinard, Melissa Reinert, Michelle Rizzo, Lindsey Slagle, John & Carolyn Thase, Daniele Ventresca, Jason & Kara Walsh, Tracy Wilkins, and Duane Zaborowski.

Full comments can be found at the end of the meeting minutes.

Board President Report

BOARD PRESIDENT REPORT – Ms. Patricia A. Shaw

Board Minutes

BOARD MINUTES

On the motion of Mr. Raso, seconded by Mrs. Lydon, the Board approved the Special Voting Minutes of June 30, 2020.

Motion carried 9-0

SERVICE EMPLOYEES’ INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 32BJ AGREEMENT

On the motion of Mr. Cesario, seconded by Mrs. Lydon, the Board approved the extension of the *Collective Bargaining Agreement 2017-2020* between the Keystone Oaks School District and the Service Employees’ International Union Local 32BJ to be in effect from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Motion carried 9-0

APPROVAL OF INTERIM HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN TO RESUME SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN PERSON SUBJECT TO PDE AND STATE GUIDELINES

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Ms. Shaw, the following motion was made:

In compliance with the *Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools* prior to the reopening of schools for the 2020/2021 school year, the Board approved the Keystone Oaks School District’s Health and Safety Plan as presented on July 14, 2020.

For Information Only

This plan is subject to change based upon changing conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, further guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, further guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and any guidance from the Allegheny County Health Department. Any changes that must occur due to orders from any of the mentioned agencies can be made by the Superintendent and will be communicated to the Board. Any changes that are made by the Superintendent will be ratified at the next voting meeting of the School Board.

- A discussion was had among Board members regarding the Health and Safety Plan.

A roll call vote was taken:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
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Ms. Evans	Mr. Cesario
Ms. Lindsey	Ms. Crowell
Mr. LaPorte	
Mr. Raso	
Mrs. Donahue	
Mrs. Lydon	
Ms. Shaw	

Motion carried 7-2

For Information Only

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- I. Parkway West Career and Technology Center Report *Ms. Annie Shaw*
 - Ms. Shaw reported that Parkway West Career and Technology Center passed their Health and Safety Plan.
- II. SHASDA Report *Mr. Santo Raso*
- III. PSBA/Legislative Report *Mrs. Theresa Lydon*
- IV. News from the Boroughs

Executive Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was held after this evenings Special Voting Meeting to discuss legal advice.

Superintendent’s Report

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – Dr. William P. Stropkaj

Kellington Protection Services

KELLINGTON PROTECTION SERVICES

On the motion of Mr. Cesario, seconded by Mrs. Lydon, the Board the contract with Kellington Protection Services for District-wide School Security Services for a term of two (2) years beginning July 14, 2020, as per the terms of the agreement.

- A discussion was had among Board members regarding the security services.

Motion carried 9-0

Pupil Personnel Report

PUPIL PERSONNEL REPORT – Dr. William P. Stropkaj

Wesley Schools ESY Agreements

WESLEY SCHOOLS – ESY AGREEMENTS

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Ms. Evans, the Board approved the Agreements between Wesley Schools and the Keystone Oaks School District for Wesley Schools ESY Program from June 23, 2020 until August 6, 2020 at a cost not to exceed \$12,400.00.

Motion carried 9-0

Service Agreement with The Watson Institute

SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH THE WATSON INSTITUTE

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Ms. Evans, the Board approved the Service Agreement with The Watson Institute (TWI) for consultation for autistic support at the elementary and the secondary levels and for community-based instruction on an as needed basis for the 2020/2021 school year.

For Information Only:

The fee for consultation services will be:

\$875.00 for full day (between 4 and 8 consecutive hours)
\$540.00 per half day (up to 4 consecutive hours)

The fee for community-based instruction will be:

\$620.00 per full day
\$330.00 per half day
Mileage will be reimbursed at the rate dictated by IRS regulations

Motion carried 9-0

**Health Care Staffing
Agreement – Interim
Healthcare of Pittsburgh**

**HEALTH CARE STAFFING AGREEMENT – INTERIM HEALTHCARE OF
PITTSBURGH INC.**

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Ms. Evans, the Board approved the Health Care Staffing Agreement for School Services between Interim HealthCare Of Pittsburgh Inc. and the Keystone Oaks School District for the 2020/2021 school year.

For Information Only:

Provider-Interim Healthcare of Pittsburgh will be providing 1:1 nursing services to a student in the District.

Motion carried 9-0

Aveanna Healthcare

AVEANNA HEALTHCARE

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Ms. Evans, the Board approved The Administration recommends that that Board approve the Agreement between AVEANNA Healthcare and the Keystone Oaks School District for the 2020/2021 school year.

For Information Only:

AVEANNA Healthcare was previously PSA Healthcare that the District had an agreement with. AVEANNA Healthcare provides 1:1 nursing services to a student in the District.

Motion carried 9-0

**Activities & Athletics
Report**

ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS REPORT – Ms. Lindsey

**Athletic Health and
Safety Plan Change**

ATHLETIC HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN CHANGE

On the motion of Ms. Lindsey, seconded by Mrs. Lydon, the following motion was made:

It is recommended that the Board approve the following change (added language) to the Athletic Health and Safety Plan that was approved on June 30, 2020:

Students and coaches must notify the Athletic Director if they have traveled or will travel outside of Pennsylvania. If it is determined that travels took place to a designated COVID-19 hotspot as specified by the CDC, PA Health Department and/or the Allegheny County Health Department, then students and coaches may not attend practices/games in-person for 14 days after arriving home.

- A discussion was held regarding the change to the Athletic Health and Safety Plan.

Public Comment

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chelsea Martin

Re: Returning to school for the 2020/2021 school year.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mrs. Lydon, seconded by Mr. LaPorte, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Motion passed 9-0

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph A. Kubiak
Board Secretary

Stropkaj, William



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 12:30 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Next school year

Dear Dr Stropkaj,

I wanted to write to express my concern about the next school year. I understand that you have a great many factors to consider, but I wanted to bring up my worries about opening school with the Covid pandemic not under control. My son is an active senior who is desperate to have a senior year worth remembering. When the initial survey was sent our I was conflicted, but things seemed better and I thought it was ok and important for the students to have some kind of school day experience, if limited. With things getting worse, I've changed my mind. I do not see how school can open without endangering the students, faculty and staff.

I think that you and the school district have done an excellent job in difficult circumstances. I understand that things won't get any easier, and have faith that you will continue to make the best decisions you can. And good luck, because I know any decision you make will upset someone, including possibly myself.

I hope that you will take my letter into consideration.

Sincerely,
Robert Brooke

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 3:32 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Return to school

Good Afternoon,

Even though I would like our children to return to the classroom as soon as possible, I do not think the decision should be made at the risk of the health of the students, faculty, families and surrounding communities. I would like a return to the classroom discussion to be revisited in January of 2021 with the hope of either a vaccine for the virus or a successful way to keep the overall cases at a manageable level for several months. At this time I feel it is in the best interest of everyone that our children do 100% online learning.

Sincerely,
Duane Zaborowski

(3)

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 9:57 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: July 14 Board Meeting

Dear Mr. Stropkaj,

Good evening. My name is Lindsey Slagle. My daughter is going into 2nd grade at Myrtle and my husband works for the district with the outdoor grounds crew. I just wanted to express my concerns as a parent of a KO student. I trust that KO will do everything possible to keep our students safe. However, I am concerned for the teachers mental well being as well as the students. I am worried that the teachers, especially of the younger grades, will have so much more to worry about along with trying to provide a quality education. Children are resistant, so I am sure many will adapt eventually, but many may have a hard time as well. I'm worried the teachers will be overwhelmed with all they have to do, on top of everything else too if school is in person. On the other hand, how will working parents provide online education? Will online education be effective? I work for Pittsburgh Public Schools and I am concerned that I will have to still report daily, yet KO may be a hybrid or fully online. I'm sure you also have many employees who are parents as well to young children. Unfortunately, many daycare centers have closed due to this pandemic, so I'm worried that your employees won't have daycare options as well.

I understand this is an unprecedented time and there doesn't seem to be a perfect way to please everyone and mitigate this virus. However, I wanted to express my concerns from both ends whether it be in person learning or virtual. Thank you for your time and for listening to my concerns.

Lindsey Slagle
[REDACTED]

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 10:30 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Meeting comments 7/14

Good evening.

I just wanted to express my feelings on school reopening plans. I strongly feel opening the school would be a terrible mistake. The case counts are too high in our area and infections would spread rapidly. It is not fair to students or teachers to be put at risk.

I think full online schooling at this time is the only safe option. Let's keep our children, our teachers, our staff, and our community safe!

Thank you.
Lisa Clarke

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 11:35 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: School opening

I have a son entering his junior year. Our wish is to have in real time classes, but online from home. It would be as close to in real life as possible without being there in person and risking health and safety. The teachers would still do their full class load as well as the students. We don't want it made easier because it's online. Our wish is for the actual curriculum that was to be presented gets presented, but not in person. Nobody WANTS it to be this way- we wish for normalcy-it's looking unlikely that it will be NORMAL anytime soon. I know some children need the social aspect more than others and some will struggle more if not within the structured environment of an actual building. We can all at home, help the children to keep up or worse case next year catch up. But if we force in real life too soon, we may lose children, teachers, family members that regrettably after the fact would have wished we stayed home. You can undo a year of struggled learning-you can't undo death.

Stropkaj, William

(6)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 11:47 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Comments for board meeting

Good evening. .

Personally, as a parent of two KO students, I would love to see everything go back to normal for the coming school year. Forcing kids to wear masks and social distance is weakening their immune systems. Most, if not all, kids are not social distancing anymore anyway! Every child I know is having playdates and hanging out with friends! They need a sense of normalcy! I believe this virus and the numbers given to us from social Media are blown out of proportion. These kids cannot and will not go back to school and wear masks and social distance. If this will be implemented, I will be homeschooling them from here on out. I do not want them to live in fear and forced to comply with outrageous regulations.

Thank you for your time.

Sent from my iPhone

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 11:52 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: July 14th meeting Questions/Comments

Greetings,

I am a former student and member of the community. I have these questions/comments to contribute to the July 14th meeting. These items are listed below.

Questions/Comments for School-board

Does the board FULLY understand that they are making choices that may impact LIFE OR DEATH of students/faculty?

Why is there only one Certified Medical worker on the response/planning team (school nurse)?

Will CDC guidelines be followed? Or federal government? As comments from Department Chair DeVos has contradicted CDC recommendations/Procedures.

Can the board faithfully certify that all choices made — are infact for the priority of Student/Staff health in mind?

Will the ventilation systems be using a MerV 13+ rating for ventilation in the school?

What chemicals will be used for disinfecting?

Why does the ethos of this plan base its intention on If and not When?

Page 12, Yellow/Green phase Phase column. Is the 'three feet distance a typo'? If not, what sources back up this guideline?

Will the school utilize UV light sanitization? This kills the virus in seconds, and can be safely used on moisture sensitive items.

Why are Secondary Students not being required to wash hands before eating, but elementary are? These policies should be implemented on both student types.

Two per bus seat, what CDC/WHO guideline supports this as proper social distancing when the minimum is 6 feet?

How will the district deal with Student's Families who believe/promote conspiracy theories regarding the virus?

How will the district protect their student's from negligent parents who do not follow/use CDC/WHO/Department of Health procedures to prevent COVID?

Why is temperature checking for students not being implemented? If it is a HIPPA issue, what can we do to satisfy any HIPPA requirements? (I am personally HIPPA certified).

--Comments--

Not requiring face masks during class-time will increase the spread of COVID-19. As students move into different class groups per period. As such, you are spreading this around. It will only take 1 person infected to infect the whole class (Remember they will be exposed for 42 minutes CONTINUOUSLY), as the 6 feet distancing ONLY works with moderate air movement, along with the mixture of fresh air.

Any exception to this rule should ONLY be granted to those with a documented condition preventing the issue. Dermatological, Psychological (Sensory issues, autism). As such these kids should be grouped together, and separated from their other peers to control spread of COVID-19.

I wish to remind all administration and school-board members that this virus spreads and infects EXPONENTIALLY. We are talking x^n not $x(n)$; as such this means that time is an inverse reflection of the function, meaning with more-infections, the time it takes for another infected student to appear GOES DOWN (Meaning less time needed to infect more students on the same exponential function).

Thank you for your time, and see you tomorrow.

Kind regards,
Edward Polens.

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 12:30 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Next school year

Dear Dr Stropkaj,

I wanted to write to express my concern about the next school year. I understand that you have a great many factors to consider, but I wanted to bring up my worries about opening school with the Covid pandemic not under control. My son is an active senior who is desperate to have a senior year worth remembering. When the initial survey was sent our I was conflicted, but things seemed better and I thought it was ok and important for the students to have some kind of school day experience, if limited. With things getting worse, I've changed my mind. I do not see how school can open without endangering the students, faculty and staff.

I think that you and the school district have done an excellent job in difficult circumstances. I understand that things won't get any easier, and have faith that you will continue to make the best decisions you can. And good luck, because I know any decision you make will upset someone, including possibly myself.

I hope that you will take my letter into consideration.

Sincerely,
Robert Brooke

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:05 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Questions/Comments for Board Meeting 7/14/2020

While I am personally having my child do cyber academy, I am still concerned because my brother is janitor at the school and he lives with me and my son who is high-risk. On top of that, I simply worry for the safety of the staff and other students. I will also be gauging how this is handled before I decide to send my child back for in-person instruction at all.

Here are my concerns for the school board meeting:

1.
****MOST IMPORTANT****
Masks should be REQUIRED in the classroom unless the student has a documented medical excuse for things like skin or sensory issues. The air will be circulating among them, and they will be in a closed room together for a long time. Not requiring masks is folly; you will be literally sacrificing the teachers and students if you do not require them. Covid will spread — it will only take one student or one teacher for this to happen.
2. How will we be sure that parents at home are taking the required safety measures before sending their children in for the day? This is another reason masks should be required in the school building, except while eating. You cannot know for sure what's happening outside of the school while the children are at home. There are so many even within our district who think this is a conspiracy or that this isn't serious. How will you protect the students and staff from those parents?
3. Secondary students should also be required to wash their hands before eating just like the elementary students.
4. We need more medically trained staff on the response planning team.
5. How can you allow two students per bus seat but still maintain 6 feet distancing? Unless the students already live together it should be one per seat right? Maybe stagger bus drop offs?

Thank you for your time!

-Emily Goff (parent of Luka Voorhies, grade 6)

Sent from my iPhone

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 8:23 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: School Reopening Question

Good morning,

I have a child in Myrtle Elementary and have one question regarding opening. Will we be permitted to change the mode of education we select for our child as infection rates change? Meaning if we decide upon virtual learning and infection rates improve, can we then send our child to in-person learning at school, and vice versa if we had decided on in-person learning and infection rates rise, can we change to virtual learning? Thank you and thank you for all the hard work everyone is doing to ensure a safe and successful school year for our students and the staff.

Jenn Reinard

Sent from my iPhone

(11)

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 8:23 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Attendance

Is the school planning on adjusting their attendance policy? I think families shouldn't be required to submit a doctor's note for absences over 10 days. This policy in the past was pushing parents to send their kids to school with sniffles and colds. I think the number of days needs to be adjusted to reflect possible covid19 exposures. Thank you

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:12 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Concerns for Upcoming Academic Year

Dear Mr. Stropkaj,

The intent of this letter is to express serious concerns about the start of the upcoming 2020-2021 academic year. As the numbers of COVID-19 cases in Allegheny County as well as across many parts of the country have been elevated in recent weeks, it does not appear safe for our children to return for in-classroom learning at this time. My family has shifted our preference towards virtual instruction since the initial survey was taken. Health & safety are very much the top priorities for our children (1st and 7th graders.) While we very much value the many positive aspects of in-person instruction, the risks to all stakeholders - children, teachers, administrators, families, and the community at large seem much greater at this time. Please consider this as you continue planning for this academic year. It would also be much appreciated if we, the parents, could have more specific details about what virtual learning would actually look like for our children. I know that the communication to this point has been confusing, including reading through the planning document in its entirety.

Sincerely,
Heather Arment

Sent from my iPhone

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:27 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Cc: rabbit@voodoovelvet.com
Subject: OPEN THE SCHOOLS!

Once again I would like to make it known we support you opening the schools for in person instruction with the possibility of an at home option for those with unresolvable concerns. Our children need this, they need the hands and in person instruction for them to properly grow and develop into worth while adults. Come what may we cannot live in fear, if we choose to do so our children will pay the price and their education will suffer.

-The Hennies Family

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:38 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Comment regarding July 14th Vote

"In regards to the proposed Keystone Oaks Health and Safety plan, our family strongly urges the board to consider the recent, continuing and rapid spread of the virus and commit to an online only reopening in the fall. It has been clearly demonstrated in recent weeks how quickly an outbreak can occur in closed indoor settings, especially amongst the young and less self-disciplined. To populate a small classroom, rely on interior ventilation, and not require masks is simply inviting the disaster we are seeing globally when the hubris to reopen outweighs common sense. We all love and cherish our children, but consider what cold and flu season looks like at schools normally and telegraph that through the lens of this global pandemic. We encourage everyone to stay patient, stay vigilant, and protect the health and lives of our community by making the hard choice now that gives us the best potential for the future." The Pazzint family

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 8:37 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Vote tomorrow

Good afternoon Dr. Stropkaj,

I wanted to write in because, unfortunately, I won't be able to attend the meeting tomorrow. I was supposed to have several procedures done Friday, but failed my covid screening for pre-approval, so now I'm waiting on a Covid test and isolating until it comes back. Unfortunately, this is reality. As I sit here, thinking of how my life has to come to a halt to make sure I'm keeping others safe, I wonder how this school year is going to look.

I know you and your team have spent countless hours going over procedures and protocols from the CDC. I also know you are getting ultimatums from federal officials to re-open the schools without delay.

My questions are these;

1. Currently, my children's school (Myrtle Elementary) has around 300 students. How will you be able to socially distance (6 feet apart) the desks and lunch areas so that these kids are able to safely learn and eat during the day?
2. If a child was to test positive for COVID, does the entire classroom and staff that are with that child get contact tracing? What about the siblings of that child? Are they required to quarantine as well or do they attend school while being in contact with a positive case?
3. If we end up going to red, does the entire district move over to the Keystone Oaks Cyber Academy or will it be synchronous learning with teachers teaching from home?
4. Currently, the set up is for my 5th grader to have 4 teachers and transition between classrooms. I understand per CDC guidelines, you are supposed to try to keep transitioning at a minimum and have one teacher for each class. Will the kids be with one teacher the entire day? This question is in regards to the elementary schools, but I'm sure middle and high school have even more transitions.
5. If a child tests positive (or contact traced) and has to stay home but feels well, are they able to transition smoothly to synchronous learning or cyber academy while they are out and then back into the classroom? Are there devices available for said child to take home to use from the district (computer)?
6. When is the deadline for the parents to make the decision as to which option to choose?
7. Will the children be allowed to wear face shields if they can not tolerate face masks?
8. If a child has a fever, with no other symptoms, what is the return to school protocol?

Thank you for taking the time to read this and answer all our questions. We truly appreciate you and your team making sure our kids are safe while continuing their education.

Sincerely,
Vickie and Scott Bruce

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:48 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Planned Reopening Question
Attachments: The Permasafe Difference.JPG; How It Works Page.pdf

Good Morning,

I hope this email finds you well. I know you have been working hard to put together the best and safest possible plan for reopening our district's buildings. I was on the school board notes to see what your plans were to follow CDC and OSHA guidelines to keep the buildings sanitized and cleaned on a regular basis and noticed that the district has no mention of any type of anti-microbial being sprayed on a weekly basis. As a parent with three children in the district, this concerns me especially since this is the line of work I am in. Using an Anti-Microbial in the buildings on the surfaces and through the HVAC system is 99.9% effective and continually kills germs, microbes, allergens, and viruses on contact. This product perpetually destroyed harmful microbes such as the SARS-COVID without leaving any harmful chemical odors behind. Over the last several months we have been keeping our first responders safe by spraying this in their buildings and vehicles. I would like to know other than regular sanitizers and daily cleaning products, what type of major weekly sprays are being used to protect our children and administrators?

I have attached some information below on this product and its effectiveness to keep our teachers, administrators, and our children safe.

Janell M. Filson

[REDACTED]

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:50 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Board meeting question/concern

Good morning, Dr. Stropkaj,

I heard the board is possibly voting on a school decision at the meeting.

My husband & I have heard of schools potentially doing temperature checks at school. One of our big concerns, besides keeping both kids & teachers safe, is the bus ride. More specifically, the issue of potentially sick kids being on the bus BEFORE they get to school for a temp check. My daughter (Myrtle) says her bus is crowded, & they've often had to sit three to a seat. (Part of this issue is certain kids refusing to let anyone sit with them, so I know the bus isn't over capacity.)

I know you can't change the fact that there are parents who might send kids to school with symptoms. I also know that kids can be contagious before showing any symptoms.

We just wanted to bring up this concern, though I'm sure you've heard them all! I don't have a solution, unfortunately. I know a temp check before boarding each bus is probably not feasible. I know a bus driver probably doesn't have time (or the desire) to check each kid. I wish I had an answer.

Good luck with all the decision-making.

Melissa (& Dan) Hubinsky

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 9:48 AM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Public Comment re: Keystone Oaks Board of School Directors Meeting - July 14

Dear Superintendent Stropkaj,

Thank you for coordinating the responses of parents to the Board of School Directors.

Dear Board of School Directors,

Thank you for your time and your service to our community.

I'm writing to you today because I want to strongly encourage you to vote to open the Keystone Oaks School District on a remote basis ONLY as long as possible / needed. It is too early to open the schools. The number of diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in Allegheny County is still increasing!

I understand that the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend it would be best for children to return to live instruction WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. So far, too many risks exist with in person instruction. It is critical that we stay home and reduce the exposure of many to protect the immunocompromised and at risk populations in our society. We all want what is best for our children. I urge you to vote for remote instruction at this time.

Further, the Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan (draft July 13, 2020) does not go far enough to ensure that children and District employees will remain safe. It seems that a major focus of the Plan is for increased handwashing and use of hand sanitizer. While important, the most recent science indicates that this virus is mostly transmitted via aerosol and droplet (i.e. exhalations and coughing) of an infected person. Since individuals can remain asymptomatic for up to two weeks, permitting anyone to remove one's mask inside the building for any duration of time is a great risk. Additionally, in many places, the language "To the extent feasible," or something similar, is utilized which leads me to believe that the item identified may have a difficult metric by which to meet success. For example, when describing classroom space, the following text is provided: "Class sizes will be balanced as much as possible. Classes that are unable to maintain three feet of separation will be assigned an alternate space to the extent possible." (page 12). Most guidance available suggests that individuals are safest if they can maintain a social distance of six feet. If classroom space cannot adequately meet this requirement, aren't we setting our children up to contract COVID-19? The guide goes on to describe group work and states "Physical interaction, such as group or partner work, will be limited to the maximum extent possible." (page 13) and elsewhere that group work may occur if masks are worn and " a distance of 6 feet are maintained between students/staff." (page 20). How can group work be conducted from a space of six feet apart?

I must ask, in order for these requirements, as well as remaining in one's classroom for the majority of the day and likely seated at one's seat for the majority of the day in order to maintain social distancing, will the school day for elementary students indeed feel enough like a regular day that it is worth the risk of sending all the children back to school? I think we have much more to lose than we have to gain.

Penultimately, the Plan does not adequately address what will happen once someone in the District is discovered to be positive with COVID-19. It talks some about the need to quarantine the individual and then to provide a 24-hour isolation of the room. What happens if multiple individuals show symptoms on the same date? At what threshold does the district close a building? Are there sufficient substitute teachers to fill the role of teachers who fall ill or whose children do?

Let's support our children, teachers and staff, and also one another as parents, during this crucial time. Now is not the time to reopen physical school buildings. We must carry on safely and with the lowest risk to protect our children and our community.

Thank you,
Melissa Reinert

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:17 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Comments for School Board Meeting

Hello,
I'm writing as the parent of 2 young girls, one who will be in first grade at Myrtle Elem and one who will be entering the middle school in the fall. I'm concerned about the re-opening of our schools for many reasons, and frankly, it is just not safe to do so right now. We have increasing cases in Allegheny County and when you think of putting kids/teacher/staff in classrooms in August (and beyond) that turns into thousands of contact tracing points and therefore puts so many at risk. I know there are safety measures that will be put in place, but can we really ask our teachers/staff to not only teach our children, but now they have the added responsibility to be in charge of enforcing all the safety measures/requirements also? Plus, these safety measures sound fair at best on paper, but can you really tell me with certainty that it will work? That my children and their teachers will be safe? My children will now be exposed to many at school and if being honest, I wouldn't feel comfortable with them having contact with their grandparents or close family after being at school and that is just not ok. They should go to school feeling safe and come home feeling safe. When you have contact with SO many others at school, and not knowing if those families are also following the safety rules outside of school, it just isn't in our children's best interest to be at school right now. What happens when there is a positive case (teacher or student) at one of our schools? Do all students/staff exposed have to now stay home and quarantine? How could you even know how many people this person had contact with? There are so many unanswered questions like this and it is scary to think of the possibilities of danger with opening schools. I don't know how we can logically and safely think opening our schools back up is ok. We are putting our teachers and children at risk. I know it is tough to educate online, but for now, until we have a vaccine and we can keep our children and teachers/staff safe, we have to acknowledge that online education is our best option. Please don't make us choose between our children's safety and their need for education, but ultimately do what is best for the safety of everyone and keep them all at home while still giving them an education. One day, we will be back in the classrooms and it will be safe, but right now, it definitely is not.

Thank you for your time,
Melissa Maegle

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:54 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Statement for 7/14 board meeting

Dear Dr. Stropka and Keystone Oaks School Board of Directors,

My name is Mary Beth Kenny-Massaró and I live in Green Tree. I have twin boys who will be in second grade at Aiken Elementary for the 2020-2021 school year.

First, let me say that I understand approving an educational plan during these current circumstances is a daunting experience at best. So I commend the district for their time and effort during these trying times.

I also know that the guidance you are receiving from local, state and federal officials is ever changing and any plan that you approve tonight, may need to change completely, perhaps multiple times, before the start of school on August 24th.

However, I do have some concerns that I would like to bring to your attention.

First, I am concerned about the plan to have elementary students eat in the cafeteria if we are in "green". The CDC has said that congregating in large groups in school settings is not advisable. Will multiple lunch periods can be added to the day to further separate the children and have less students in the cafeteria? If not, I do not see how this is safe. At the same time, I recognize eating in a small classroom is far from ideal because students will be in a smaller space without masks. I feel this issue needs further guidance and reassessment.

Second, I am concerned with the mask policy. Just for clarification, will elementary children be required to wear masks in the classroom? Are there any classrooms where desks can actually be 6 feet apart if school is in session for all students 5 days per week? I believe that students should have to be wear masks in the classroom to protect each other and the educators in the building regardless of what the governor's order is. We know wearing masks helps stops the spread of the virus. Please continue the policy to wear masks regardless of the governor's order, as long as the virus exists in our community.

Third, I am very, very concerned about the busing plan which does not appear to include any social distancing at all. Two children in a seat (unless they come from the same household) is not acceptable. You state that masks will be required. Who will enforce this? The driver can not possibly be expected to do so and also drive the bus safely. Students should not be allowed to sit in the same seat as another student or even one to a seat. It should be every-other-seat at minimum. It is simply unsafe for everyone involved, including the driver.

Additionally, will the bus drivers be given extensive training on proper cleaning and sanitation procedures? It states they will be expected to clean in between bus routes. How are the route times being adjusted for this? How much time do they have to properly sanitize an entire bus? Some of the drivers are older and perhaps not as agile, what accommodations will they be given during this sanitation?

Fourth, there is one sentence (in red) at the end of the first page of the plan (page 1 of 42) which states the district is still looking into an A day / B day schedule. When will this be decided? Working parents who are unable to work from home need to be able to plan accordingly for childcare. If there is an A/B schedule, will students be expected to complete assignments virtually on their off days? Will this be expected to be synchronous or asynchronous? What happens if a parents work obligations make it impossible for an elementary student (who still needs assistance) to participate in synchronous instruction? What accommodation will be made?

Fifth, it states extended day services are still going to occur. Where are they going to occur? I only know the set up at Aiken, but extended day services are located in a small room. It is not even as large as most classrooms. Will that be moved to a bigger location to allow for better social distancing?

Some additional concerns that I have not necessary addressed in the plan include:

Will tables in kindergartens and any other classrooms (a 1st grade class at Aiken used tables this year) be replaced with desks to allow for better social distancing? While working at a table might be better for young children educationally, it is not safe at this time.

Will a nurse be at every school, all day, every day?

Where will students be quarantined if they have symptoms? Students go to the nurses office for many other reasons (medication, injury, etc...) so I have concerns if the nurses office will also serve as the quarantine location.

What mitigation efforts will be put in place if and when a student tests positive? Will the whole class be quarantined? At the secondary level students are changing classes, will every class that student was in be quarantined? What about the teacher? At the secondary level that teacher will have gone on to teach 5-6 other class periods. Will all those students need quarantined?

The plan states that a flexible attendance policy will exist for students. What about staff? Are staff going to be expected to use their sick days if they must be quarantined through no fault of their own? What if they run out of sick days? Will they go unpaid? I hope that flexibility will be given to staff as well.

Does the district have enough substitutes for when teachers are out? Will substitutes be permitted to sub in multiple districts? How will that work if they are exposed to the virus at another district?

I fully understand that you may not have all these answers and as I said I know that things are changing moment by moment. But, I believe that some of these issues need to be better thought out, reasoned through and explained in more detail. I appreciate your hard work and diligence in trying to keep our students and families healthy and safe.

Thank you for your time.

21

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:37 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Back to school plan

Dr. Stropkaj,

First , thank you for your dedication to the students of this district. As the "back to school " plan evolves, are their provisions to keep the teachers safe amid the rising COVID cases? What happens if someone , student or teacher or staff tests positive? Will there be a way to minimize that risk? And finally, Can students really social distance at any grade level. Eat distance, hall distance , class distance with masks all day? Is this a reasonable expectation? And what will happen if that standard cannot be met?

Thank you in advance,
Judy Purcell

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:23 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: School Board meeting questions

Dr. Stropkaj,

I have every intention of attending the meeting tonight but if I can't get in I do have some questions for the Board.

1. Will these security guards have arrest powers?
2. What is the training/qualifications for these security guards?
3. Will the same security guards be at school on daily basis or will there be different ones daily?
4. Who will be handling the Active school shooter training/drills at the school?
5. Who will handle the Safe 2 Say submissions? Security guards, local police, or other school administrators?
6. Who will coordinate the state mandated drills with the local departments?
7. How much money is the district saving by going with security over an actual school police officer?

Hopefully I'll see you tonight.

Mayor Jason P. Walsh

[REDACTED]

23

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 3:13 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Comments for School Board Meeting

Good Afternoon Dr. Stropkaj,

Below are my comments for the board meeting tonight.

- 1.) Will more janitorial/maintenance staff be hired to help with keeping the schools clean?
- 2.) If the county has a mandate for gatherings indoors of 25 people or less why is the district not following the mandate.
- 3.) The state has a mandate for masks to be worn in public, why will that not be enforced? If not being enforced, will plexiglass be attached to each students desk?
- 4.) In the event schools get shutdown again how will the students attending school in person transition to online school and how will that look?
- 5.) Why is our school district willing to use our kids and teachers as testing subjects for the transmission of COVID 19? The meeting is being limited to a number of attendees, again why will this not apply to our children and school staff?
- 6.) Why will only 3 feet of space be used between students when 6 feet is recommended?
- 7.) Our family will elect to not send our children to school in person if these are the guidelines that will be followed.

Regards,
John and Carolyn Thase

Sent from my iPhone

24

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 1:37 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: School Reopening Plan

Dr. Stropkaj and Members of the School Board,

I am writing regarding the school reopening plan and would like my comments to be part of the public record. I have several concerns regarding this plan that I will list below.

1. The team involved in developing this plan lists two parent stakeholders who also happen to be school board members. I feel this is a conflict of interest and that an effort should have been made to find a few parents who are not involved with the school board to be involved in the process. I am also disappointed that there was no student participation in the process.
2. The plan lacks detail. The key questions are answered in the most basic way possible. I don't have a clear understanding about how kids, teachers, and school staff will be kept safe, how social distancing will be maintained, or what will happen if there is an exposure in the school setting.
3. There is a lack of transparency with this entire process. The plan was released to the KO community one day prior to the vote. You gave stakeholders less than 36 hours to read and respond to a 42 page document. You are only allowing for limited in-person participation at the meeting, which I understand is due to the need for social distancing. It's great that you are offering Zoom to allow others to participate but you should allow for public comment via Zoom as well.
4. There appears to be lack of teacher input and I find this to be the most significant issue with the plan. We are asking our teachers to put their health, and the health, of their family at risk and it does not appear that they were included in the conversation.

While I understand this is a difficult task and I appreciate the amount of work involved, I hope that you will reconsider the options and vote no on this plan as it is currently written. When I completed the survey, I choose returning to the classroom setting with the assumption that changes would be made to make the environment as safe as possible. I no longer think it is possible to fully reopen safely given the recent surge in COVID cases. I now think a blended reopening would make more sense and be a safer option for students, teachers, and staff.

Thank you for your time,

Daniele Ventresca

Sent from my iPhone

25

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 1:19 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Public Comment for Tonight's Meeting

Dr. Stropkaj,

My wife and I are commenting to support the District's plan for students returning to school. We appreciate your balance of student safety with the feasibility of the school environment. If this plan should need to be altered to be more restrictive, please consider allowance for individual or very small groups - such as individual testing or small groups for specialized services. Thank you,

--
Eric Palmer

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 1:05 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Please pass on to board at meeting tonight

Regarding the difficult decision of how to resume in the fall, I beg you to please offer full schedule in person instruction.

From what I have witnessed, online learning pales in comparison to classroom instruction, and I fear that further isolation for these kids will cause long term damage to their social/psychological development.

Cyber would still be available to those who want to keep their children home.

Sincerely,
Joseph Hartnett

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:50 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Health and Safety Reopening Plan Questions/concerns

Good Afternoon Dr. Stropkaj,

I have read the health and safety plans for the district, and I have a few questions regarding the high school, as this is where both of my kids attend school. First of all, I am certain that this has been very difficult and I want to thank you and everyone that has been working on getting school to reopen as safely as possible. But I am a little concerned about the fact that the 'parent stakeholder group' is actually two school board members. This is not true parent input, this is input by parents who ALSO happen to be on the school board. As in outsider looking in, this does not look like parent input was taken into consideration at all. And I find that troubling, at best.

I, like many parents, are hoping to get our kids back in the building... when it is safe. I am especially concerned about my daughter, as working online was very challenging. Honestly though, I don't know if it is a realistic goal to be in the buildings right now, especially now when the county has more cases of community spread than when we were shut down in March. I am willing to see that maybe it isn't possible to accommodate students in the building, and we will have to make the best of it, as this pandemic will hopefully not last forever, or at least become more manageable with time. Also, I know folks want things to get back to normal and think that sending kids to school is a piece of that normalcy. I don't know if folks really understand that school is not going to look like it did in the fall of 2019. It can't. And it won't look or feel normal, at all.

I read at the beginning of the plan a mention of of an A/B rotation system to limit the amount of kids in the building, but I cannot find any further information on that. Is that part of this reopening plan? How will that look/work logistically? As a parent, knowing how many kids will be in the building and if there is more room to spread out makes a difference in my decision to have my kids return or not.

I also read that ventilating learning spaces is part of the plan. I am not sure if the windows open. Do the windows open at the high school? That would be helpful. Are there any other ventilation options? Also it was mentioned that there would be social distancing when possible. It is that last part, when possible, that makes me nervous. We now know that wearing a mask and keeping apart from others by at least 3 feet is necessary to stop the spread. So kids need to stay away from everyone all the time and wear masks. I am highly concerned that there appears to be a giant loophole for people to not comply to the mask order by saying they have a medical reason for not wearing the mask, and you cannot challenge the reason. What is going to happen if masks are not on every child when needed? No group work or partner work can be done unless with masks. So if a student refuses a mask, do they not participate? Or do all kids suffer for the one who won't comply? In one section it said kids would not have to wear masks during instruction time, but it also stated that the PA guidelines say masks are to be worn at all times in the buildings of any public spaces, i.e. schools. It is confusing to the reader as to what the actually policy is and how it is going to be implemented daily. I need further clarity on when masks are to be worn and what happens when too many kids are not using them. This is a big, warranted concern.

I noticed there is a plan for cleaning throughout the day, and hand sanitizer being made available throughout building and in classrooms as students enter and exit. Great! Also staggering bells to have less kids in

the halls is a good idea. I am concerned about the impact on direct teaching minutes. Are teachers going to have the same amount of time they are used to, or are they going to need to adjust lessons?

Where is the protocol on what to do if a child or teacher or other personnel in the buildings becomes ill? I read about a quarantine room, but what happens after that? Is the whole school shut down? Are there pods already being created to keep the spread limited? I also read that students need to take their own temperatures at home before coming to school and stay home if elevated. So we are expecting everyone to be on the honor system for taking temperatures every day before entering the building? This makes me nervous, and there is no way you can make sure that is happening 100%. Folks can't even put their grocery carts away, so I don't have a lot of faith in people to comply or be truthful, not when parents need to get to work and need childcare. Unfortunately, many people view school as childcare so parents can work. And without kids in school, parents can't work and the economy can't reopen, and I honestly feel that that is the political force driving the reopening. I hope KO can find a way to not feed into that pressure and is viewing all of this through the lens of "safety of everyone". Period.

My last question is what if a student starts out going into the building, but then later doesn't feel comfortable as there are many many kids without masks and social distancing really isn't happening. Can those kids then opt out and go with the other option of online learning?

I am certain I will probably have more questions, or maybe others are asking questions I didn't even think of, but this is where my head went when I read the plan. Thank you for considering my questions and taking them seriously.

Thank you for helping to get us through these unprecedented times.

Mary Jo Maggio
Parent to Elena and Zach Shefler

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:42 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Athletics

Hi, I'm writing I'm writing in response to the new mandate up for discussion with Fall athletics. First, I want to say that I attended the zoom meeting and voiced my concerns then. I emailed Dr. Stropkaj , and we were all emailed a day later stating that we could leave the state for vacation but upon returning we would need to quarantine or get two negative tests. So my family and friends decided we would still go on to vacation to Myrtle beach, stay at our condo and private pool, order groceries and food, and distance ourselves at the beach. We all agreed to cut our already paid for vacation short so that my son could get two negative tests and return to football. After receiving the email yesterday we agreed to cancel our vacation. My son loves his football team and would rather miss vacation if it meant he couldn't play football. I canceled with very little refund as I did it with little notice. My issue is, my son was in contact with a couple children who did test positive for covid. When he did he was allowed to return to football. If we went on vacation and made contact with nobody and got two negative tests we still would have to quarantine and not attend football. It just doesn't make sense. Now back to the kids that tested positive. My son played basketball, football, and just hung out with those boys. A question about it was brought up on a Facebook page. Someone who said she was on the covid team at k.o. said she would notify us if the rumors were true and our children had contact and may be exposed. We never received a call. My son had direct contact with these kids. My point is the children obviously had been exposed and it was in our own community and we weren't notified nor quarantined. But.....if we leave the state and practice all precautions to avoid covid we have to quarantine, even if we test negative. Those kids that tested negative after being exposed didnt have to quarantine. It's not right

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:36 PM
To: Stropkaj, William; Kubiak, Joseph; Shaw, Annie; Gallagher, Kevin; Orsi, Mike
Subject: School Re-opening Plan

Dr. Stropkaj,

As an older member of the teaching staff who has an elderly family member living in my home I read the districts plan for opening school back up this fall very carefully. The plan, although very short on details, gives parents and students many choices with great flexibility while providing, in my opinion, very few safe guards for staff members. Reading the plan has caused me to have many questions. I am asking for answers to the following questions below. I am sure I will have additional questions as I think more about this situation.

As the CDC has stated that masks are the number one tool for prevention and that you wear a mask not to protect yourself but to not spread the virus to others. Why is the district allowing students to come into the building and sit in classrooms without masks?

Why does a students right to not wear a mask carry more weight with the district than a staff member's health and possibly their life?
(The district is requiring student athletes to wear masks at all times other than while competing in games)

Why is the district willfully and knowingly putting staff and students at greater risk by allowing students without masks to be in enclosed buildings and enclosed classrooms where the CDC has said pose the greatest risk of community spread of the Corona Virus?

If a student or staff member is infected with COVID-19, who will carry out the contact tracing to inform all people that the infected individual came in contact with during the school day?

If a student or staff member is infected, will everyone who that person came in contact with be forced to quarantine for 14 days?
(The district is requiring staff members to quarantine for 14 days if they travel to a hot spot before they can return to work)

If a staff member is forced to quarantine do to exposure to an infected person in a school building or at a school event will the the staff member have their sick days reduced? Would this be considered a workers compensation claim?

If a staff member contracts COVID-19 from a student that they are teaching is this going to be considered a workers compensation claim? The district is knowingly forcing teachers into classrooms that the district knows may not be safe for staff, especially if there are students not wearing masks within that classroom.

Is the district adequately insured for liability if a staff member, family of a staff member, student, or family member of a student contracts the virus at school and as a result suffers long term health issues or death?

What are the plans when students who have not had parent's sign them out of having to wear a mask shows up to school without one? What happens if this is a daily issue occurring with multiple students in this category daily?

If a student or staff member is infected with the virus will they have to prove that they had a negative test result before they are allowed to return to school?

Will there be testing available at the school?

Will there be a large supply of masks at the school?

How many infected students and or staff members are needed before the district shuts a particular school building down or to shut the district down?

Will the district hire a large number of additional maintenance staff to ensure cleaning of the building not only at night but during the school day?

Is the district going to require teachers to do janitorial work during the school day for cleaning purposes, thus putting staff members at an increased risk of getting infected and increasing the risk of district liability?

Since the quick re-opening of many states in the south and west have led to an explosion of Corona Virus cases, hospitalizations and deaths, why is the district in such a hurry to re-open schools without knowing the consequences?

Did the district consider starting the first grading period doing distance learning keeping students out of the buildings so as to see the results of other schools in western PA opening thus allowing the district to safely see if an explosion of new cases would occur?

Since this plan is going to cause major changes to the terms of my working conditions, has KOEA leadership been a part of this process?

We are watching daily on the news what has happened when states such as Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Arizona, just to name a few opened up early and haphazardly. Unfortunately in my opinion we are opening our schools back up in the same haphazard manor this fall which will lead to a major increase in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and death in teachers, para professionals, maintenance staff, secretaries, cafeteria workers, nurses, counselors, bus drivers, administrators, students and other members of the school community. I firmly believe that it would be prudent to start the school year as we finished last year where students work remotely from home for the first grading period. Students could follow their schedule live and teachers can be in the school building safely social distancing while teaching. This would give the district time to see if opening up schools caused a major increase of Corona Virus cases and allow the district to learn best practices from observing what the districts around us did that worked or did not work. If we proceed in the manner outlined in the opening plan that the district approved last night, we will make the same mistakes as the states that are now the so called hot spots and put ourselves not only at risk but also we will be responsible for the possible loss of a student's or staff member's life.

John McCarthy

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 3:37 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Special Voting Meeting on Schools Re-Opening

Good afternoon,

My name is Jessica Haskins, my husband is Joshua Haskins, and our son is a rising 1st grader at Dormont Elementary School. First of all, I want to start by saying I realize being a member of the school board is a difficult and at times thankless job, and appreciate all of you for stepping up. These are very difficult times and no decisions are made easily or lightly. We adore our elementary school and love to brag about it to our friends all last school year. We would love nothing more than our son to be able to return to that wonderful school. After much consideration, we have come to realize that isn't going to happen no matter what we do this school year.

I am a licensed clinical social worker focusing mostly on children, and my husband is an attorney who practices Juvenile Law for the County. We both work closely with children and families, so we started our thought process feeling very concerned about the consequences of our son having little to no socialization during the upcoming school year as well as the ramifications no schooling would have on children and families generally. After careful consideration, we have realized he won't be able to socialize with other kids in a normal way regardless of what we do and just need to accept that fact. We have also realized we were being quite selfish by not considering what we are asking teachers and school staff to do this school year and how it will affect their safety and well being.

After reading the safety plan presented, we are extremely disappointed to see our school district has chosen the most aggressive, and least safe, in person learning option the state allows. I will be honest, I am not sure if there is any way we can resume in person learning safely. However, it is pretty clear from the data we have over the past few months about how this virus spreads that large numbers of people indoors for prolonged periods of time is very high risk. All of the hand sanitizer and hand washing in the world isn't going to reduce this risk. The class sizes need to be significantly reduced, social distancing would need to be maintained at all times, everyone would need to be wearing masks (including in the classroom), and classes would be outside whenever possible. As I read this plan, it does not address these points adequately. It isn't even doing the bare minimum of reducing hours or number of school days to reduce the number of kids in the building. I am aware the rate of transmission is low with children but it isn't nonexistent. I am not ok with even 1 child dying or teacher dying from this when it could have been prevented.

We both hope our school board will decide to do the right thing, which we have come to realize is focusing on providing the best distance learning plan we can for our kids. The current safety plan is woefully inadequate, because we have accepted it isn't really possible to safely go back to school at all, but with the minimal safety measures you've outlined here it is actually outwardly dangerous. We hope you decide to back up your teachers and school staff that are already underpaid and asked to do too much. We hope you think about the big picture and what is best for the greater good instead of pressure you may be feeling from the federal government or people who just don't seem to take this virus as seriously as we should be.

Our county is currently the hotspot of the state of Pennsylvania and we are talking about sending our kids into a situation many adults are not willing to do. Most office meetings and even school board meetings are taking place virtually or limiting the number of people in the room to 25 or less. The current safety plan is saying it will be fine to put kids in a cafeteria together to eat lunch? I think we need to face some hard truths here. We expect a lot of our schools, too much sometimes. However, what we don't expect is a complete abdication of responsibility to keep our children, teachers, and school staff safe during a once in a lifetime pandemic. Thank you.

Jessica and Joshua Haskins
Dormont

Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:56 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Tonight's meeting

Good evening Dr. S

I know these are confusing times as we all try to navigate getting back to a normal atmosphere.

The Board of director's faces a challenge that they have never had to deal with before in the history of our great school district.

No matter what decision the board makes for our kids, teachers, coaches and staff to return to school this fall it will receive praise and criticism.

There is not one decision that could be made that will make the entire district comfortable with returning. I would love nothing more than to be able to get my children back to school and my Swim team back in the water. I trust in you and our board of directors to make the best decision for the safety of our children, teaches and staff.

I don't see how we can send kids back to an indoor class room when professional sports teams like the Houston Astros can't even get on the field for practice outside .

My last comment is the board meeting is limited to 25 people because of this virus.

How can we limit a meeting with responsible adults wearing masks but expect to send hundreds of children and teachers into the same building seven hours a day five days a week.

Thank you for reading my comments and good luck with navigating our great district through this pandemic.

Jeffrey A DiGiacomo

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:53 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Health & Safety Plan - Comment

Dear Dr. Stropkaj and KO School Board Members-

My name is Joanna Bouldin. I am a Dormont resident and the parent of a soon-to-be eighth grader at Keystone Oaks Middle School.

First, I want to sincerely thank the team that worked hard on this Health & Safety Plan as well as the entire School Board and School District Administration for your service during this incredibly difficult time. I also recognize that due to constantly changing guidelines and conditions on the ground, this plan is likely to evolve quite regularly. In fact, I believe I've seen some changes since just last night.

That said I want to reiterate our family's priority: the health and safety of students as well as all the teachers and staff.

Like so many parents, I fervently wish for my child to be able to resume in-person education this year. However, I am concerned that the in-person component of the current plan does not yet achieve an adequate level of safety and leaves KO families, employees, and our community --- which has been experiencing a surge of Covid 19 cases for weeks-- at even greater risk.

Unless a significant percentage of families chose an online learning option, thereby notably reducing the number of students in the buildings, I do not see how the social distancing and other mitigation efforts built into the current plan have a chance of working.

I urge the Board to consider creative strategies to minimize the number of people in the building at one time, prioritizing, of course, our most vulnerable students and students who are unable to engage in online learning for whatever reason.

Lastly, a question. Could you clarify the response plan if a student or teacher tests positive for Covid 19? For example, will the entire school be closed and for how long? What quarantining measures will be instituted and for whom? And what supports are in place to ensure teachers and other employees are able to comply with these measures in a fair manner?

You face so many challenges in the development of this plan: constantly changing guidance, lack of adequate funding, an alarming increase in local case numbers, lack of adequate testing, delayed test results, and more. We recognize this and are grateful for your work and hope you continue to engage the full school community in the process.

Thank you,
Joanna Bouldin

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:53 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: In Regards to Reopening

Good afternoon Dr. Stropkaj,

These are difficult times and we are all trying our hardest to come to a good solution to an impossible problem. I come to you today as a parent, but also as a fellow educator. For reference, I am a state certified visual arts specialist who has taught in PA for four years, previously in Georgia and Indiana. There are several points that I would like to address in regards to the Phased School Reopening.

A) On the elementary level, we are very aware that kids move through the school throughout the day for their specials classes. As an art teacher, I don't see it as responsible or reasonable to hold specials in the building. This would obviously require a hybrid model of education and as stated in the document, all of these plans are subject to change. Specials teachers see the entire school and in some cases within Keystone Oaks, multiple schools. What would happen if one of these teachers would test positive? Would every student/class they interacted with be under a two week quarantine? In a dream world I would like to see a pod model at the elementary level where kids are receiving core subject learning from teachers at the school with specials taught virtually, along with Science and Social Studies if time would not allow for those to be in the classroom. Students could go to school either morning or afternoon with a lunch break for anyone who wished to have a socially distanced meal on campus.

B) I'm concerned over the lack of planning in the event of students or teachers contracting the virus. Would we be looking at positivity rates for the county or state in order to decide if the district should close or within a margin of error for KO's district?

C) As someone who's been in the field of education for over 13 years, I know and understand all too well that there is an ongoing shortage of substitutes, pre-pandemic. Is there a plan for if we are unable to fill positions within the school? Because we cannot combine classes or shift teachers from room to room, this is one of the biggest concerns I carry.

Under this current plan I am not comfortable with sending my children to Keystone Oaks for the 2020-21 school year. I hope that constructive dialog is able to make the plans more solidified and safer for all the families in our district and the staff members that faithfully and wonderfully serve them.

Lastly, I want to make it abundantly clear that we are all in this together and that we will all be working towards the same goal of educating and nurturing young minds to be responsible and caring adults.

Sincerely,
Hannah Goforth

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:52 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Tonight's Meeting- Next School Year

Here are my reasons for why I don't believe that it is feasible to reopen KO this fall:

- I don't believe there is a way to safely bus students to and from school while practicing social distancing.
- How likely is it that every child k-12 will keep their masks on during the entire school day? From getting on the bus in the morning, all classes, and the way home?
- How will KO be able to keep up with sanitizing the school? Bathrooms, hallways, lockers/locker rooms, classrooms, lunch tables and chairs?
- How would containment work if/when someone has to quarantine? Say I get COVID but I don't know and send my daughter to school? Then I get tested, get a positive result and have to quarantine? My daughter would also have to quarantine, as well as every other child, teacher, cafeteria worker, janitor, office administrator, etc. With schools traditionally being a breeding ground for sickness and the easy spread of sicknesses from student to student to teacher, it is even more true during this pandemic.

For these reasons, I believe KO should keep their doors closed during the upcoming school year and move all classes online. Differing from the previous semester, I think it would be better to have actual Zoom/Skype calls during class times. Then students would be engaged with their teachers and peers instead of working independently without the classroom environment. An engaging, digital classroom would help so many students stay engaged as if they were in a physical classroom. My daughter struggled to get courses/assignments done because she would get lost/confused/distracted and I think that could have been avoided if classes were held over Zoom call rather than independent reading and assignments.

Signed, Tracy Wilkins (mother of 7th Grade student Allonia)

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 5:15 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: COVID-19 comments

July 14, 2020

First, we want to thank the teachers, staff and administration for the remarkable work done in the spring to create and steward online/remote learning for the district on such short notice. The work done to keep our children on track was great and the resource provided to parents were appreciated.

As we look toward the coming school year, we have grave concerns about the safety, health, and educational needs of our students and teachers. While successful reopening of schools sounds like the ideal plan, we must acknowledge the reality that we live in today.

Cases of COVID-19 are rising across the country, and right here at home. For the last several days, the Pittsburgh region has accounted for more than 50% of reported new cases in Pennsylvania. There are cases of COVID-19 in all three communities served by Keystone Oaks schools and those numbers are rising as well.

As parents, we want the best opportunity for our children to learn and thrive, but we can not put them at risk of serious and lasting health conditions for convenience's sake. We can not open schools until it is safe to do so. That decision must be based on medical science, not convenience or simply the loudest voices.

If the district chooses to risk the lives of students, teachers, staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and custodians, and all of their families, there must be a comprehensive, public plan in place that addresses the following issues at minimum:

1. Who is responsible for cleaning/disinfecting classrooms and other areas of the school? Will they have proper protective gear?
2. What is the procedure for reducing risk if a teacher or student is exposed to the virus? Will teachers have to use sick days for quarantine? Will student attendance rules be in place?
3. How will distancing protocols be implemented in classrooms, on the school bus, in hallways?
4. Will testing be available to staff and students? Their families? How will you know if someone is exposed or sick? You can't rely on self-reporting because too many people are asymptomatic.
5. What training will school nurses have to address COVID-19? Will they have proper protective gear?
6. How will supplies and books be handled to reduce contamination? Library books? Art supplies? Gym equipment?
7. How will music classes be impacted? Singing is proven to be a superspreading activity.

The answer to these questions is not "the teachers will figure it out." You can not expect teachers and other staff members to risk their lives to make school convenient.

We must have at-home school options that are fair and equitable for all families including books, supplies, computers, internet access, tech support, free/reduced meals, etc. If schools are opened, families must have the option to do remote learning with no penalties.

Sincerely,
Rachel & AJ Betta

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Stropkaj, William

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: Tonight's Board meeting

Dr. Stropkaj, In case I don't get in the board meeting

To: Dr. Stropkaj, School Board Members, and Administrative Staff

As Dormont community stakeholders and parents to a Dormont Elementary student, we are writing in with great concerns and reservations over the proposed 2020/2021 School Year Reopening Plan. While the plan appears to be thorough, we feel that many gaps which raise a lot of questions. Out of an abundance of caution, we request that that you reconsider this plan of opening school face to face this fall and pivot to a virtual opening.

Many states have moved forward in reopening and have seen a subsequent spike in COVID cases. In our area, cases plateaued in May and once again spiked in June when we moved to the current phase. It is likely we will see a similar or worse spike as we move forward. In addition, with KO students returning late-August, we are at a particular risk for a rapid community spread of COVID. By prioritizing reopening businesses and social venues, teachers and students have subsequently been put at risk. We ask that you NOT follow this model.

It is highly likely that we will return to virtual learning at some point for some length of time. We are asking you to prioritize the safety of our teachers, our students, and the staff as well as give them the best possible chance to teach/learn while in a virtual environment.

Thank you,
Jason and Kara Walsh
1410 Edgehill ave (Dormont)

Sent from my iPhone

Stropkaj, William

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 4:48 PM
To: Stropkaj, William
Subject: School year 2020/2021

Hello,
I am writing to voice a request for the upcoming school year. I understand that these decisions are not being made lightly and that there are many factors with both clear and nuanced effects on the communities. I can understand a call for in-person elementary instruction, but I think it is crucial to also offer an online option for elementary age. Many families would opt in for this, which would help to create space in classrooms for the safety of faculty and other students. I hope that as we learn more about what this school year will be looking like, a remote option for elementary-age students will be on the table.

Thank you,

Justina Honsberger
[REDACTED]