



Public Comment Responses Received During the WPS BOE Meeting on 10/5/2020

Below is the public record of public comment responses received during the 10/5/2020 BOE meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - No public comments were received on this item.

DISCUSSION

1. **Health Update** - No public comments were received on this item. One test response was received.
2. **Update on School Reopening Model and Process to Determine Full On-Site Schooling** - Public comments are posted exactly as received

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Update on School Reopening Model and Process to Determine Full On-Site Schooling.
John Bayers	Test	Test
Melissa Alexander	20 Bauer Place Westport CT	I am a physician with a child in elementary school in Westport participating in the hybrid model. I would strenuously urge you not to go to a full day schedule. The children will not be able to socially distance adequately (6 feet) and will be exposed to one another for multiple more hours. Proximity and duration of exposure to this airborne virus (see revised CDC coronavirus guidelines from today regarding airborne transmission) have been shown to be major risk factors linked to contracting COVID. Further, they will need to eat lunch which will require masks off and children talk a lot during meals- the ideal set-up for viral spread. Albeit less commonly than older individuals, children can and do get COVID and occasionally this can be severe and even life threatening. We have a good program in place that abides by guidelines- why would we change this? One year of a hybrid model is a small price to pay for our childrens and families safety.

Steven Seltzer	18 church st s 06880	<p>Do you think full in-person learning is a superior education to hybrid? If so, why would we not revert to full in-school learning when transmission rates are low and mitigating measures are clearly working?</p> <p>Re the qualitative study - how will you account for irrational fear and a diversion of interests between stakeholders?</p> <p>What are we concerned about as a community that our peer towns are not? Since other towns are open, what's concerning about Westport?</p>
Athena McAlenney	26 Bauer Place	<p>Lee Goldstein asked for data, from an epidemiologist for example, about how close the desks can be and still not meaningfully increase risk, with and without masks, for how many hours. Mr. Scarice answered that he would ask the staff in a survey. I am concerned that Mr. Scarice may be conflating opinion of the staff with the biological science of airborne virus transmission. The elementary school staff cannot answer for an epidemiologist.</p>
Steven Seltzer	18 church st s 06880	<p>Why would there be a need for 3-weeks more of data? Why would we not maximize in-school learning when conditions allow, as they do right now?</p> <p>If the extra 3-weeks of data is inline with current conditions, what would be your recommendation?</p>
Brooke Petrosino	11 Grove Point	<p>How is it other Districts have opened their Elementary schools full time using the state metric system, State and towns in the yellow low Covid cases, but Westport needs to hire and pay for experts, create committees, and poll teacher and parents to make this decision? Children are losing weeks of full day in school learning time which students in other towns in our DERG are getting.</p> <p>Also, I understand why BMS Middle School students cannot open in full right now with 2 Middle Schools in one building, but are you planning now how to open the middle schools when CMS goes back online?</p> <p>Is the District looking into ways to get high school students more in school learning time/days if wont be opening in full? Think it's very concerning out of the 18 days of school they have had, they only have been in school physically 8 days in person. These are critical learning years for these students.</p> <p>Thank you for your time!</p>

Steven Seltzer	18 church st s 06880	<p>Why would there be a need for 3-weeks more of data? Why would we not maximize in-school learning when conditions allow, as they do right now?</p> <p>If the extra 3-weeks of data is inline with current conditions, what would be your recommendation?</p>
Steven Seltzer	18 church st s 06880	<p>How have other peer districts dealt with the concern of a teacher shortage in the case of full reopening?</p>
Lauren Karpf	10 Hunt Club Lane	<p>Thank you all for such an informative discussion. I want to reiterate the concern I have expressed to most of you about the inability to social distance at full capacity in a significant number of classrooms across the district's elementary schools. For instance, a large number of classrooms at Long Lots are under 650 square feet (some even under 600). Thus, our students will be sitting within 3 feet of one another for 7 hours a day and will eat without social distancing and without masks. We would be eliminating two of the mitigating measures that have played such a crucial role in keeping our numbers down both within the state and within our schools - masks and social distancing. I am worried that a full time return without these mitigating measures will lead to not only health and safety concerns but also excessive quarantines and closures. I am not against a full time return if it can be done safely - eliminating social distancing is a major concern as we head into increasing cases and the winter season. I have yet to read anywhere that eating less than 3 feet apart is safe, and the CDC website says otherwise. So if we do return full time, hopefully we can come up with creative ways to better use our space to increase social distancing.</p> <p>Also, I think Lee's point is important about setting forth specific criteria for opening full time and hope that's revisited.</p> <p>Finally, I am hopeful that you will provide parents with the data they need to make informed decisions - specifically the distance between desks in classrooms. And if we are going to compare our district to other districts, it would be helpful to have that same information for those districts too. For instance, some of the full time returns mentioned are not fully comparable to our district because of the number of students per class, square footage, or hours in school.</p> <p>Thank you once again for all of your hard work each and every day during such a difficult year.</p> <p>Lauren Karpf</p>

Brian Kane	8 Sunnyside Lane	<p>I am the father of 3 Coleytown Elementary students and 1 CMS student. While a middle schooler can learn remotely, my younger children are not receiving the quality of education they need, or I expect. It is time to go back to fulltime elementary education.</p> <p>In August, the decision was made to ignore the state's recommendations and implement a hybrid model instead of fulltime in person learning. The goal was to be cautious and take a month to see how things worked out. That month has passed and now we know that the risk is low. Further, most neighboring towns have already returned to fulltime school with similarly minimal risk.</p> <p>Rather than accept the recommendations of the state and science, to return to fulltime in person education for elementary students, we are presented with a plan to create a survey. We should be setting a return date but instead are looking at weeks of delay to review opinions.</p>
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- 3. Update from the Coleytown Middle School Building Committee** - Public comments are posted exactly as received

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Update from the Coleytown Middle School Building Committee.
Sue Herrmann	5 Spring Hill Rd	I'd like to thank Don and the CMSBC for everything they have done. It is so greatly appreciated by all the CMS stakeholders.
Amy Herrera	3 Sandhopper Trail	It seems to me that regardless of whether or not students are returning hybrid or full time, we would want to fully furnish the building for full time in person learning so that we can take advantage of having all furnishings that have been stored, and will eventually populate the building, tested and approved by the industrial hygienist.

- 4. Updated BOE Calendar of Agenda Items** - No public comments were received on this item.
- 5. Proposed 2021-2022 Board of Education Meeting Dates** - No public comments were received on this item.
- 6. Update on Facilities Projects** - No public comments were received on this item.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- 1. Finance and Facilities Committee** - No public comments were received on this item.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. **Flexibility with Educator Evaluation Plans** - No public comments were received on this item.
2. **Communication Strategy and Personnel** - No public comments were received on this item.
3. **Update from Policy Committee and Second Reading of the Following Policies:** - No public comments were received on this item.
 - Policy 4118.22, "Code of Ethics" (New)
 - Policy 6171.2, "Preschool Students with Disabilities" (New)
 - Policy 4118.5, "Acceptable Computer Network Use" (Revision)
 - Policy 5132, "Dress and Grooming" (New)
 - Policy 4118.231/4218.231, "Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco"(Revision)
 - 6172.6, "Online Courses" (New)
 - 3514.1, "Computer Loan" (Revision)
 - 6172.4, "Title I Parental and Family Engagement Policy" (New)