

WILLIAMS BAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
August 18, 2021

Board Members Present: J. Lothian, K. Nelson, E. Nichols, P. Peyer, D. Woss

Absent: None

Administration Present: District Administrator Dr. W. White
Middle/High School Principal B. Mansky
Directory of Special Education K. McOmber

Guests: 42

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 6:00 p.m. President J. Lothian called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tara Wegner expressed her appreciation for the board putting together a reopening plan that reflects a lot of deliberation, work and collaborative effort. She also addressed the board regarding questions that she had in regard to the Social Emotional Learning curriculum.

Chris Potsch spoke to urge the board to consider requiring kids to wear masks.

Melody Bartel spoke to the board regarding the concerns that she has regarding the new SEL curriculum. She asked the board to re-evaluate the program and ask for parental input.

Lilan Marunde expressed her thanks for the thoughtful reopening plan and that she is very pleased that masks remain optional. She also spoke about her concerns regarding the SEL curriculum and concerns she has around her student's right to medical privacy surrounding vaccination status and COVID beliefs.

Dr. Clark Heller spoke to the board regarding masks not being good for kids. He also thanked the board for their time and the opportunity to discuss the plan.

Tawny Boardman asked the board regarding leaving the decision about mask wearing to the parents.

Brandon Board requested masks should be optional.

Gretchen Witowich voiced her desire for a more conservative approach to reopening school and that wearing masks is one of the few things left to protect the kids.

Heather Perkins addressed the board regarding parents not being surveyed in order for them to share their opinions. She also expressed her concern over the lack of transparency and lack of trust that she has.

Tara Wegner questioned the board regarding how the guidelines are set up and if she can find out if there is any financial gain to the school regarding masking.

Heidi Stocking recited data points regarding kids and covid. She also spoke to the board about how she is against kids wearing masks.

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Discuss and Approve the 2021-2022 Reopening Plan

J. Lothian opened the board's discussion by thanking everyone that is here tonight and everyone that helped with the plan. He stated that the board and the administration had received a lot of feedback about the reopening plan by email, phone and other communication with the board. There is no way that the board can please everyone. He stated that the board is a non-political entity that has to make decisions on political issues. The board listens to all the feedback given. He stated that the plan that has been presented reflects the local, state and federal guidelines. Williams Bay is a community that works together to solve problems. Everyone is trying to find the best way to learn in person. This plan reflects everyone's combined opinion. He reminded those in attendance to affect change, they can get involved and run for the school board.

Dr. White then updated the board that he is still working on providing COVID testing at school that will need parental consent and will not be required. He also received an email from the district's attorney regarding the plan that will not affect the overall plan. He noted that the SEL piece is to support our students. The program is nothing that we have not offered to our students during the eight years he has been in the district.

E. Nichols said that he spent a lot of time on the phone today. As a board, they've heard from a lot of people. He noted that he works in Rosemont and the August 3rd meeting was scheduled at a time that was convenient for the public, which is how it should be. He also said that this is not just a school issue. It has a social and an economic component. He represents the entire village and is looking to do what is best to keep students safe in school

D. Woss thanked the parents for sharing their concerns with the board. She noted that there are a lot of meetings that no one attends, so she is thankful for the turnout. She has lived here since 1972 with her children and grandchildren attending Williams Bay Schools. She has seen other times when there is controversy in the community and encourages attendees to run for the board in order to get involved. D. Woss feels that there has been some good news that has come out of the last year. She believes vaccines are safe and that there is benefit to spending more time outdoors and with the windows open. She feels that there is going to change and we have to learn to be accepting of others and respect those that chose to wear a mask and those that do not. She noted that children are adaptable and they need to be guided and taught responsibility. She noted that the board will continue to be flexible and adaptable. As the virus evolves, we have to evolve. The reopening plan gives us that ability to protect our children, community and common good.

K. Nelson said that she has taught in the school, has been a room mother, part of what was the SCA and was involved in her children's education here in Williams Bay. She noted that the last

two years have been the hardest. It is her choice being at the table to be able to give back to the community that she has been so involved with. She said that they make as many meetings as they can. She wanted the audience to not feel in any way that the people sitting at the table aren't invested in what they do. People spent a lot of time developing the plan and this year is harder to start than last year.

P. Peyer noted that it has been a hard 18 months and he thanked the audience for coming. He said he has had a lot of sleepless nights. He said the plan is not perfect and that it needs to be fluid as the situation dictates. The job he feels the board has is for the health and safety of education.

D. Woss / E. Nichols motion and second to approve the 2021-2022 reopening plan as presented and provide Superintendent Dr. White the authority to move between and modify instructional models and plans as needed within the parameters of Board Policy. Carried, 5-0.

IV. ADJOURN

At 6:52 p.m., P. Peyer / K. Nelson motion and second to adjourn the meeting. Carried, 5-0.

Ed Nichols, Clerk
Ds 08/19/2021