

July 13, 2020 Public Comments at Board Meeting

1. Sheila Powers, 1290 Oakdale Drive, spowers7@hotmail.com
Is there any plan to check for confirmation of previous exposure of Covid of students? There was incredibly high absences in Jan and a severe upper respiratory infection(URI)..many of which tested negative to flu...just an idea of something measurable to give good base of how schools can proceed. My daughter definitely had a severe URI in Jan and I would gladly let her be checked...I believe that we have a willing healthcare system that is committed to the safety of this community..is this collaboration being explored?
2. Austin Stern, 875 Pinehurst Road, austinstern79@gmail.com
York Suburban School District should resume fully in-person learning this upcoming academic year. Parents should have the option to send their children back full time or keep their children home to do an alternative way of learning.

In a recent article by CNN, the headline reads, "Academic, mental and physical benefits of an in-person school outweigh virus risks, pediatrics group says..."

An article by MSN states, "One research paper estimates that the 55 million U.S. children who were out of school due to the Coronavirus pandemic may have lost roughly a third of their progress in reading and half of their progress in math." That school closure lasted a few months. How do you think a whole year would impact a kid?

A business insider report done in 2019, shows that humans feel eyestrains, blurred vision, headaches, and back/neck pain from looking at a screen all day. It also states, "kids who spent more than 2 hours a day on screens scored lower on thinking and language skills tests." Students spend around 5 hours just doing their classes let alone homework for Forward Learning.

Center for Disease Control data shows that in the State of Pennsylvania, there have been 22 deaths with Females and 38 deaths in men ages 5-14 from Corona. That is a total of 60 people ages 5-14 dead from Corona in the entire state of Pennsylvania. It is not because kids have been staying home all summer and safe. It is because the virus doesn't affect them.

Kids are at friends' homes, beaches, shopping, community pools, camps, and more. Even with cases increasing, kids/teens aren't getting very sick and dying from this disease.

A ½ one-day ½ another day is just a complicated system. How would that work especially in High School with students being all different levels classes and taking different electives? Kids don't even eat lunch with kids in the same grade. If one student from one rotation meets up with another student from another rotation and gets it then both rotations have it.

While parents are out working making money to feed their kids, they have to worry about their young kindergarten students at home all day by themselves. The workforce is opening back up and if schools are closed parents won't have anywhere to send their young kids. They will have to go out of their way to pay for a babysitter or daycare provider.

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Central York School District and Red Lion Area School District are already planning a full in-person return while still offering the online option to those who choose it.

Even if 99% of Students want to come back, they should all be able to come back. Student's education shall not suffer due to a Virus that doesn't affect them. And if parents want to keep their children home to stay safe, they can with an alternative learning system like we had this past year.

Thank you.

Sources:

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/30/us/aap-kids-physically-in-school-wellness-trnd/index.ht>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/screen-time-effects-health-vision-staring-at-screens-bad-for-you-2019-1#:~:text=Most%20Americans%20spend%20more%20than,term%20vision%20problems%20like%20nearsightedness>

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/americas-pediatricians-say-schools-should-reopen-for-the-fall/ar-BB16a4HE?li=BBnb7Kz>

3. Andrew Stern, 875 Pinehurst Road, Andrewstern1971@gmail.com
YSSD schools need to open for full-time in-person teaching. Kids are all out and about this summer at camps, pools, sport events, dining, vacations, etc. I have seen hundreds of kids huddled together at Wisehaven Pool, in volleyball tournaments, softball tournaments, at playgrounds, working in local stores serving hundreds of strangers a day. Having them all together in a class is no new risk to them. Not having full-time in-person instruction is a risk to them which could hurt them forever. Our kids NEED to get back into a routine and have REAL SCHOOL! If parents do not want their kids to participate in an in-person learning environment, there are plenty of options for them, including cyber-charter schools. PLEASE for the sake of our kids' future, get them back to school and don't waste time and taxpayer money on ridiculous alternative plans that are inferior to real school. Our high school children are already preparing themselves for colleges and careers, and these unnecessary roadblocks to education will have long-lasting effects on them and their futures. Experts across the country have all said the same thing - OPEN THE SCHOOLS!!!!
4. Ashley Turner, 433 W Springettsbury Ave
If students are only to attend in-person instruction for two days a week, it would make sense for 'Group A' to go Monday and Tuesday, and 'Group B' to go Thursday and Friday, with Wednesday being used to clean between the two groups. I want our kids to have some in person instruction and if splitting the classes into two groups allows for them to be spaced out 6 feet apart than I think those days in the building will be safe, however I believe in the survey sent out a few weeks ago it was proposed that the groups be split with Monday/Thursday and Tuesday/Friday which means the two groups wouldn't have a day to

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clean between them which doesn't seem logical or safe.

5. Seth Roseman, 2844 Woodmont Dr. York, PA 17404, sethroseman@gmail.com
As a York Suburban alumnus, I have serious concerns about returning to in-person instruction too quickly. "Who is at risk?" and the principle of "do no harm" should guide our decision making towards a plan that serves students, faculty, school administrators, maintenance staff, and substitutes. Schools are complex, constituent bodies and, therefore, all decisions relating to the novel coronavirus must be made with an eye toward the school's place in the wider community.

I fondly remember my time at York Suburban and hope others will have the same opportunity, without also processing their physical and psychological trauma caused by this virus.

6. Bryan Platt, 531 Phillips Drive Magnolia, DE 19962, plattb@yahoo.com
While I am an out of state resident, two of my three children attend elementary school in YSSD. My comment is in support of the proposed 2020-21 School Year Calendar as submitted in the agenda, including the 5 day a week schedule. This represents the best course of action based on my children's experiences with online learning this spring, and review of the coronavirus data for PA and York county.

While I commend the efforts of the district and my children's teachers in developing an online format, this is not the best way for children to learn. They are still learning "how to learn," and cannot make the most of a self-paced, guided online format more suited to adult students. Over the course of three months, the episodic and disjointed nature of the online learning format coupled with the variation in parental (and in my children's cases, grandparent) input and supervision resulted in very little retained information or lasting learning. Basic concepts could not be reinforced or expanded, skills atrophied, and the learning experience essentially amounted to busy work that occupied a few hours of the day. Children, especially at the elementary age, need more in person guidance as they develop their own "self-education" skills and motivation, which cannot be replicated in a virtual environment.

As for fears surrounding coronavirus, the data in PA and York county indicate school age children account for approximately 3% of all cases. The PA website does not record any deaths under the age of 24, and news accounts detail one death of an 18 year old in May and a 21 year old in a July for the Commonwealth. As for the Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children, there are only 34 cases confirmed in PA; none of them have died. Children are more likely to die from the flu, even with utilization of the annual flu vaccine, and multiple studies have replicated the findings that children are not as at risk nor transmit COVID-19 as readily as adults do. As for a partial schedule, what data does the Board have access to that indicates that would be safer versus a 5 day a week schedule? If you proceed with a virtual schedule, what data was used to arrive at that decision, what data will be monitored Going forward, and what results will indicate a safe return to school per the Board?

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Finally, as a forensic pathologist, my professional experience and education informs me that there is a cohort of school aged children who are safer at school than in their home environment. The reality is school districts, including YSSD, play a role in attempting to identify and protect children from child abuse. Those children have been at the hands of their abuser(s) for months now, without the daily attention from mandatory reporters in school facilities. I cannot define the numbers of children at risk at this moment, but I am certain it currently affects more children than the theoretical risk to students from the coronavirus moving forward. Thank you for your attention.

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