



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes – Board of Education Special Meeting – August 5, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mrs. Yesenia Rivera, President. The meeting was held via Zoom.

Present: Mrs. Y. Rivera, President; Mr. M. Wilcox, Vice-President; Dr. E. Joyner, Secretary; Mr. D. Goldson, Dr. T. Jackson- McArthur, Mr. L. Conaway, Mayor J. Elicker

Student Members: Ms. L. Arouna

Absent: Mr. A. Fiore

Dr. Jackson-McArthur led participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Rivera announced that translation is available and she explained how to access it.

Superintendent’s Report

Presentation and Potential Action, NHPS School Reopening Plan

Dr. Tracey welcomed everyone to the meeting and commented that she is happy to come to you this evening to share what her team’s thoughts are and to answer the question, “To open or not to open”, that is the big question and the bottom-line of what we are doing this evening.

Dr. Tracey stated that before she begins she would like to clear up some concerns parents have about losing seats if they opt out of school and choose remote learning. The answer is no, you will not lose your seats in your schools, however, if you decide to home school it means you are withdrawing your students from New Haven schools and at that point, your students are not our responsibility any more. If you opt into the remote learning, they are our responsibility and we have to provide for their learning. She hopes this clarifies your concerns. Dr. Tracey also commented that the other thing she must say is that parents should have the option to select or decide for their children. Teachers should have the right to choose if they come in, based on CDC guidelines that fit into that aspect when they do the ADA application.

To the Board, Dr. Tracey stated you unanimously selected me to lead this district and she hopes there has been a reason why; there has been a lot of concerns around school reopening across the nation. Our decision to reopen or not to reopen falls within the nations concerns, so we are not unique in the New Haven Public schools. To compound the issue we serve a large group of black and Latino students. With that said, we are petrified about the spread of the virus among our students and staff. She listed what ifs from her teachers, “what if I come in and get sick and die?” and from the parents, “what if my child gets sick?” A lot of legitimate what ifs and wisely so. We listen to the concerns of teachers, staff members, and Board members and we try to update the protocol as best we could and have sent it to you.



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Dr. Tracey remarked that she knows there are some unanswered questions and there may still be concerns. She will not stand before you, my teachers, students, parents, community and Board to say I will guarantee 100% safety. Then she would make herself God. Even at home no one can guarantee safety unless we all stay home and do not interface with one another.

Dr. Tracey said that the following is what is in her control. She can make sure the buildings are kept clean providing extra custodial help, she can ensure that we are changing the ventilation systems to one that is better, she can ensure that we will have face shields for our staff, she can recommend that staff be tested but she cannot require staff to be tested, because that is illegal. She can ensure a nurse in each building with the help of the Mayor's office and the nursing community; she can ensure that parents are asked to report to us if their students are sick and for teachers, out of good faith, to report to us if they're sick, among other things.

Having said that, Dr. Tracey said she was given a charge to grade three plans, which she did, with the Unions, teachers, administrators and community members. We also asked Board members to join in with us, but at that time it seemed it was not feasible. We spent more than three months on these plans and then we were informed that we do not have a plan. At no time did I say the plans are perfect, but they have received great reviews from other superintendents and our State's technical team. There are folks who are being vocal that there is no leadership and that the Superintendent needs a plan, if what we produced is not a plan I would gladly step back and have these folks produce a plan that they deem a plan. I believe my team and I have comprehensive levels and adhere to what was expected of us. I have shared the group's complete development plans with the Board on June 29, 2020 and prior to that shared sections of the plan with the Teaching & Learning Committee who then shared with the BOE. Also we shared the cleaning protocols that were solicited. It was dubbed a great and comprehensive plan by the majority of the Board members. We have shared the plans with the entire learning community and this is the feedback.

Dr. Tracey stated that when we received the State's guidelines, we checked it against their criteria to ensure that we had addressed all the areas that were deemed requirements. We had a deadline of July 24th to submit a complete plan to the State, which we did. Prior to that submission, we again shared the PowerPoint with the Board. Later we sent a condensed version with low risk, moderate risk, and high risk on every domain. As a result, my charge this evening is to share with you our teams preferred plan, which the Board received in an email a week or two ago and we resent today. Someone accused me of saying that I'm the only one who makes the decisions. That is far from the truth. The Commissioner, the Governor indicated in a press conference in a webinar, that it is the responsibility of the local Superintendent to decide on a plan and that it does not require a vote from the Board. She would be very foolish if she did not have her Board be a



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participant in what plans are made, because Board relations with the Superintendent are very important to her and she values that them.

Dr. Tracey shared a summation of a meeting with her Board. I have no political stake in this and this is not the time to engage in a back and forth debate. What she needs to do is present to you what we think is a plan that will meet our families half way. At no point should one sector of the community speak for another sector of the community because they speak the loudest. She is for parental choice. These are their students. If there were no children, none of us would have a job, there would be no Board.

Dr. Tracey remarked, furthermore, she doesn't believe the ongoing dialogue is about the plan, although she may be wrong. What about reopening vs. no opening? That is the question; and whose decision is that, the States or the local boards. The Board certainly has the right to talk about the issues facing the community and I am not standing in the path of my Board. So, here are the pros and cons of a Hybrid vs. a Remote model.

The pros for a Hybrid model, for those of you looking at this model, are in person instruction two days a week. There is social interaction, parents' choice of in-person two days a week or total remote. Teachers provide more support to families through in-person instruction, school community building is possible. The cons: students and staff having increased contact, highly dependent on technology to a lesser degree than total remote. Think of the little ones who need this teacher interaction, who need to know their teachers are there; keep this in mind.

A Remote model: safety by minimizing contact. The cons: unlike Spring, students don't know their teachers, there is no parent or choice, complete dependence on technology, lack of devices for all students, at this juncture there is a national supply lag in terms of demand and orders are backlogged; limited social interaction via technology, connectivity issues, so she needs all of us to keep those things in mind.

Dr. Tracey commented that at this juncture we have placed \$3.8 million in gathering what we promised, one-to-one devices for our parents for all students. Things are backlogged because of the demand. Should we go remote? Right now, we have a lot of students and parents without connectivity, without devices to help them. I just wanted to make it clear, my job is to give the pros and cons; my job is not to make decisions.

Here is the difference between the Hybrid and the Remote model. In the Hybrid model students have access to teachers twice a week and work independently three days a week. Through live instruction, teachers can provide real time feedback, teachers can provide small group instruction to differentiate based on the student's needs; students can have a variety of experiences both on and off devices. Labs and hand-on activities are more robust in person, teachers will adhere to screen time limits but this will be in addition to the two days in



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person. This provides families that struggle with daycare issues to have a place for their children at least four days per week.

Remote learning: students will have access to teachers for lessons via devices adhering to screen-time limits every day. Screen-time limits: ages 3 – 5 preschool and kindergarten, 1 hr./day; ages 6 – 10 elementary, 1.5 hrs./day; ages 11 – 13, middle school, 2.0 hrs./day; ages 14 – 18, high school, 2.5 or 3 hrs./day. On-line instruction content will prioritize literacy and math in our PreK because we had a wide lapse for 4-5 months including the summer lapse. We want to focus on content area classes and graduation requirements 5th -12th grade. Specials will be included in this remote plan. We also have no impact on bandwidth. If all our students were in our schools and using computer technology at the same time, we would have a major problem with the bandwidth because schools were not set up that way.

Next, Dr. Tracey discussed, how they teach PreK remotely. We are going to run into a lot of equity issues for families who are most needy, our homeless children, and we're going to have a major problem with our disengaged youth, just like we had in the Spring.

Dr. Tracey commented that they also have updated information that she will share. They have a staggered hybrid model, which we will share with the community. She asked Dr. Whyte to put on screen the cleaning protocol. Dr. Tracey also mentioned that they also have an instructional model of Hybrid that is showing a staggered Hybrid model. After listening to other folks, some are using staggered Hybrid models where we are phasing in students and then adding as we go on, but we still have a plan.

Dr. Tracey remarked that she doesn't determine whether we reopen or open that's above her, the State determines if we reopen or open. What the State has done is to say we have to reopen school whether we do it in person for a full five days or through a Hybrid model, there was flexibility for that. Then if the Board desires and we move to what we call the Remote model, then the Board has to present to the State Board of Education all pros and cons for the Remote model, whether or not it follows the CDC guidelines or the guidelines from the State as to where the virus is currently in our community, that is not her decision.

Dr. Whyte presented the Cleaning Protocols. He noted that the key thing is that additional staff has been hired and added to the day shift. He explained the protocols in detail. Cleaning and disinfecting will be happening frequently on those services related to CDC guidelines. Cleaning supplies will be available to staff and hand-sanitizing stations will be added to the building. Water fountains will be banned and off limits and PreK toys and play equipment will be disinfected frequently throughout the day. We are also trying to upgrade HVAC systems to improve the amount of fresh air coming into classrooms and to improve the filtration. The bathrooms will be cleaned three times daily and bathroom doors will be left open, where possible, to allow for less touch points and soap dispensers and towels will be filled continually to make sure they remain useable during the day. He continued at length.



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Additional nursing staff is being hired and we will have at least one nurse in each school building. We are working on having isolation rooms established for students or any individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID 19.

Ms. Redd-Hannans shared the following schedule. The plan on the left was the original is our initial Hybrid model that we presented where students in PreK to grade three will attend school four days a week and grades 4-12 physically attending school two days a week alternating days and the fifth day would be a remote learning day for all students. Staff will have the opportunity to engage in professional learning as well as planning time.

Ms. Redd-Hannans explained the Remote learning plan, where all of our students will be engaged in remote learning activities, school will be closed. The new plan is a staggered Hybrid model. As Dr. Tracey mentioned, given feedback we received, we wanted to create a staggered Hybrid model so schools will open on a staggered schedule. In week one, in-person instruction, students will come to school two days a week and we will rotate them on a schedule. Ms. Redd-Hannans explained the entire schedule in detail. The reason why we are doing this is because we will be able to implement our cleaning protocol and make adjustments as we need them. We will be better able to implement our social distancing with fewer students in the building.

Dr. Tracey asked Dr. Whyte to share the transportation protocol. Dr. Whyte noted with transportation this is a continuation of what First Student presented to you previously. Cleaning will be through the use of ZOOONO-Z71, a product that disinfects the buses and ensures the buses are virus free and it lasts for 30 days. He explained the reasons why they are using this particular disinfectant.

Regarding capacity, Dr. Whyte commented that the expectation is that buses operate at full capacity. We are also working on the boarding questions parents have submitted. Students will be required to have face coverings at all times on the bus provided by caregivers. The district will have masks on hand if the students don't have one available. The drivers will of course be wearing a mask and will observe and help with the social distancing guidelines as directed. They will also assist in the loading and unloading practices given them as the guidelines change.

Dr. Tracey remarked to the Board, this is what we had to present. We are not promising to have answers to all questions, but we will entertain your questions, comments, concerns and feedback about these things. Time is running out for us to open school for our youngsters and so we have to make a decision one way or the other.

Mr. Goldson wanted to know what model Dr. Tracey is recommending. Dr. Tracey said as she has said before and what she prefaced her statements with tonight, is that my team and I prefer and recommend a Hybrid model.



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Mr. Goldson thanked her and asked about the Hybrid model which stated that kids would go to school two days a week and work independently three days a week. He wanted to know what independently means. Dr. Tracey answered it does not mean that they would be working by themselves, they will be provided instruction in the remote model and she explained in detail.

Mr. Goldson said he didn't quite understand and asked for clarification. Does that mean if the teacher is working with the kids in the class with her, she isn't going to be able to work with the kids that are not in the class with her, is that correct? Dr. Tracey said no, that is not correct. She asked Dr. Ivelise Velázquez to explain.

Dr. Velázquez explained they are training teachers to actually plan lessons to a very small group. So in a given block if it's reading time, the teacher would meet with a small group that's in person and then meet with another group that's in person. The third group would be a group that she would use a computer to deliver the lesson to, while the other students were doing writing or spelling in the classroom. Dr. Velázquez added this is the way we run literacy stations in a traditional classroom. The only added piece is that now one of the groups would be a remote group.

Mr. Goldson commented that you mentioned disengaged youth and that you feel the model that you are recommending would be better for them than the model where they would be located at home. He asked, don't we have truancy officers and other staff whose job it is to work with our disengaged youth? Dr. Tracey answer yes, we do, and commended Ms. Joseph-Lumpkin and her team along with the SRO officers who this summer supported us in finding our kids and giving them devices and food and helping them out. She thinks they connected with about 5,000 students over this summer, so they did a phenomenal job in finding our students. Dr. Tracey added that she feels that if we don't have a chance for them to come in and do some face to face with teachers, then they are going to be even further removed from the learning experience.

Mr. Goldson remarked that these truancy officers and other staff were able to do, as you say, a terrific job locating and working with these kids when they weren't in school during the pandemic break. Can they continue to do that work if we continue to do at home learning as opposed to in class at the beginning of the year, is that correct? Dr. Tracey stated, no, there would still be a lot of inequities.

Mr. Goldson then asked questions about cleaning protocols. You said that you were going to increase cleaning staff, has that already been done. Dr. Tracey answered yes, what we have done is to move some of the night staff to the day shift to help out. Mr. Goldson then asked, so you haven't hired new staff you're just moving staff around, is that what you are saying? Dr. Tracey called on Mr. Pinto to answer Mr. Goldson.



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Mr. Pinto explained what we are doing is creating an additional day shift from 9a to 1p so we will have people dedicated to effectively cleaning the bathrooms and high touch areas during these high traffic areas that are high traffic times when the buildings are fully occupied and there are students and staff in the building. We can have cleaning three times a day during the fall session. Some of these people will be dedicated to go through the building, top to bottom effectively, every two hours.

Mr. Goldson, for clarification, asked Mr. Pinto are you moving some of the night shift to the day shift. Mr. Pinto said that is correct. Mr. Goldson stated the night staff are contractors is that correct. Mr. Pinto agreed. Mr. Goldson remarked we just received an email last night that said that the contractor hasn't been paid for six weeks and still doesn't have a contract so, how are you going to manage that, when you haven't even managed to pay them yet. Mr. Pinto noted that that has been corrected, the purchase order was completed, and they are fully on board.

Mr. Goldson's next point was the mention of providing more cleaning supplies to staff. When you say staff he is assuming that means teachers, paraprofessionals, those kinds of folks. Mr. Pinto agreed. Mr. Goldson asked if those Unions have agreed to now make their members both teachers and custodians. Dr. Tracey remarked that is not fair to say. What we need to have are extra supplies on hand in the classroom for the staff. We are not asking staff to clean and she doesn't want that misinterpretation out there. Dr. Tracey explained in detail.

Mr. Goldson noted that there has always been a complaint that we don't have a supply of soap in our schools. So now you're saying that there's going to be more than enough supplies than there was before. Dr. Tracey stated to Mr. Goldson that she was a principal and she hears her teachers load and clear. It is not that things are not there, it is that students break things down consistently; as soon as soap dispensers are installed they are torn down. Dr. Tracey stated what we need to do is to make a concerted effort to teach our young people how to take care of our bathrooms during this time and how serious it is that they keep those dispensers where they are without breaking them down. Mr. Goldson responded, "Okay, I get it, we're blaming the students." Dr. Tracey objected to his comment and he told her she can finish her response after he finishes his questions.

Mr. Goldson asked if there will be an additional cost for the extra cleaning to our bus budget or are they doing that at their own cost. Dr. Tracey said before she answers that she will respond to what he said. Mr. Goldson interrupted Dr. Tracey and wanted to know if she is allowed to interrupt when he is asking a question. Mrs. Rivera remarked we are nine Board members. He continued this dialogue.



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Mrs. Rivera stated to Mr. Goldson that we are nine Board members and we don't ask questions that way. Mrs. Rivera told him if you are going to ask a question, let her answer. He continued to say that he is going to continue to ask the questions that he feels are important. This exchange continued.

Mr. Goldson, again, asked Dr. Tracy how much additional bus cleaning will cost us. Dr. Tracey stated that she is not going to sit here and allow for a zinger to be thrown in without responding and it was not appropriate to say that. She will answer both his questions.

Dr. Tracey remarked we are not paying extra money for the bus cleaning. The bus company indicated how they are going to clean the buses. It is part of their contract. The only things we are giving to the bus company are extra masks, if a student forgets theirs.

Mr. Goldson's next question pertained to the bus driver's and how they are supposed to safely drive and monitor the students at the same time. Dr. Tracey commented, that's a good question. How do they monitor in times without COVID? The answer is that we have a monitor on special education buses not on all of our buses and then the next question who is going to pay for that; the best way we can. Children will arrive on the bus in an orderly fashion and drivers will monitor them.

Mr. Goldson remarked that he did not see in the plan any form of contact tracing or a plan informing parents when a child has become sick or is identified as sick in the school. He did not see a plan on a method for contact tracing nor contacting other parents when a child is sick and/or isolated. If a child is isolated, is there going to be testing of that child or are they just sent home.

Dr. Tracey remarked that is all in the plan. These plans were given to the Board at our last meeting and she explained. We sent it out again today. Director Bond is available to talk about the contact tracing and protocols around that.

Director Bond greeted Dr. Tracy and Board members and thanked them for having this discussion. She also thanked the parents and teachers who are participating on-line. She remarked, as you know, the Health Department has been working in conjunction with the Superintendent and the Administration. We have a Health Committee in place, protocols have been developed relating to contact tracing efforts, which will be led and facilitated through our Director Of Nursing Bureaus Office, as well as notification of parents through our Nurses Division. We are working diligently to ensure that there is a nurse in every school to help facilitate that plan and the plan has been submitted. Hopefully, you will be able to review it and she will be able to assist with any further questions.



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Mr. Goldson questioned Director Bond further. He commented you make it appear as though we haven't seen the actual contact tracing plan yet, is that correct? Director Bond remarked the protocols were submitted to you two weeks ago.

Mr. Goldson asked if a child is symptomatic he's put into an isolation room, what happens next. Director Bond responded if a child is symptomatic and has been identified as a potential risk and put in an isolation room, the parent is to be contacted immediately and then needs to make arrangements to pick up their child. This will begin the contact tracing effort to determine if the child needs to go to the doctor. If the child meets those criteria, they are to be tested before the child can return to school. Mr. Goldson asked for further clarification of the process and Director Bond explained at length.

Mr. Goldson then asked what about the children who rode on the bus with the child that was ill. Director Bond stated that is part of the contact tracing interview. That is why a cohort be established so that we can ensure social distancing. Regarding keeping a cohort on school buses, Dr. Whyte explained why this would be impossible. Mr. Goldson commented so one child on a bus who is ill or may be ill, will not only have contact with those children on that bus but with the kids in his classroom as well, is that correct.

Director Bond answered it is her hope and it is very critical, for us to make a correction right now, if a child is symptomatic and it is already recommended that they should not be going to school, they should stay home. This is why it is critical that we emphasize, especially with parents who are on the call right now so that we do not put out a misconception about people who have been symptomatic. If people are symptomatic, they should not be sending their child to school. They should be contacting the doctor to make sure that their child is seen and cared for. The same thing applies to adults as well, and she explained in detail.

Mr. Goldson then asked about the children that are not identified as symptomatic but can still spread the virus. Director Bond explained the process that was in place for this scenario. She commented what is important, is that parents are practicing the safety measures that are already in place in getting their students ready for school.

Mr. Fiore asked for clarification. Is it correct that teachers are not required to be tested? Director Bond answered just like in any workplace it is recommended and encouraged but we cannot require individuals to be tested. Mr. Fiore then asked if teachers are not being tested, how we will know if they have the virus. Dr. Tracey commented that is the same for teachers, how can we be certain that kids are not infected. It goes both ways, no one can be certain.

Mrs. Rivera asked Director Bond to respond to Mr. Fiore. Director Bond remarked that is a good question and it goes back to the safety measures that are in place, which are making



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sure you wear a mask, practice social distancing, washing your hands often, and using hand sanitizers as well. These are the three main key points that we want to emphasize for the adults and the children.

Mr. Fiore commented being a high schooler, he sees kids breaking soap dispensers all the time. He wanted to know if there is a plan to try to stop kids from breaking the soap dispensers. Ms. Redd-Hannans remarked it is increasingly important to remember that it takes a village to solve this; the cleaning, handwashing and social distancing protocols to ensure that everyone is following. She mentioned that we will have to do a huge PR campaign on the importance of handwashing, on the importance of using our cleaning supplies, etc., from our custodial staff to when we're at home. She noted that several families are saying, people send sick children to school all the time, and they're right. However, now is not the time to take that risk and she continued to say the more that we have these conversations with the school community and the New Haven community as a whole we are hoping that it catches on and that people are understanding the importance of that because it is important to everyone's health.

Mr. Fiore then remarked that he is assuming that testing will not be available in schools, is that correct. If they are not able to be tested in schools, will there be facilities available for students and teachers to go for testing. Director Bond responded that is a good question. We are working with our partners to offer pop-up testing throughout the school district, so access to testing is not an issue. We are also posting a list of current testing sites that are currently available in the City of New Haven, on the COVID-19 page. We will certainly make sure we work with our staff to promote those different testing options.

Mr. Conaway thanked Mr. Fiore for asking the testing questions. He also asked Dr. Tracey if he heard her say that testing is illegal. Dr. Tracey said she meant we cannot force teachers to take a test. Mr. Conaway said he thinks testing for students and teachers is very important. He feels that just like we have to do a hand washing campaign, we should do a testing campaign. Mr. Conaway then pointed out that many of our students take public transportation and we should look at how that can be traced as well. He continued to explain the implications of this scenario.

Mr. Conaway mentioned to Dr. Tracy that he heard Ms. Velázquez talk about training teachers. He heard there were only three teachers per building trained that got paid. He wanted to know how many other teachers are going to be trained and how are we going to have them trained before school starts in 3½ weeks. Dr. Tracey answered Mr. Conaway and commented that training is part of the continuous improvement for all of us, it never stops. She remarked that prior to school closing, we spent two entire weeks training teachers how to use Google Classroom how to use the suites, etc. We used that live instruction into the next phase of training and she explained the process in detail. Training is not a one shot deal.



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Mr. Conway remarked that he knows she is working very hard to get one-on-one devices to students. He wanted to know when she thinks when they will be available to all students. It was very concerning to him when he heard that there is a backup because we have been working on this for 22 weeks. Dr. Tracey answered that we could not get the devices we expected without having the funding source for it. We heard we were going to get the CARES Act and we were going to invest that in getting one to one devices for all of our students and she means that. What we are seeing right now is that every student will have one to one access, whether it's the iPads for the lower level or the laptops for the upper level. She gave the statistics on what they have on-hand and she explained in detail. Mr. Conway asked if she thinks we will have them by the time school starts. Dr. Tracey answered yes; we are told we will.

Mr. Pinto gave a report on the devices that are on-hand and stated that we will have the one to one ratio by the start of the school year. Dr. Tracey didn't agree and noted that when we did the first phase our babies were left out. She continued to explain. Our challenge right now is that we do not have the iPads on-hand necessary for our younger population.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked for clarification. Why is it illegal to have employees be COVID tested? Mr. Pinto replied that it would have to be collectively bargained and you can't unilaterally change the work conditions. He explained the reasons why.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur remarked we are in a Pandemic where people are getting tested to go back on college campuses, there are certain businesses in this state that are asking for COVID testing to come back on-site, so she would like to know, along these lines, why testing is illegal. Dr. Tracey explained in detail. Dr. Jackson-McArthur commented that she is concerned that our district is not asking people to come back to our buildings without testing. She is a little disappointed. Director Bond explained to Dr. Jackson-McArthur the variables that have to be taken into consideration. This discussion continued.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur then spoke about the remote process. Her understanding was that there was going to be real time participation. The teachers would be teaching and they would have their kids in the classroom and then the kids that were distance learning would be participating remotely. She doesn't feel that gist about real -time participation in the classroom anymore.

Dr. Velázquez remarked we are planning the training supports for the teachers to plan within a block and she explained this in detail. Dr. Jackson-McArthur continued to ask questions about remote teaching and she mentioned that she is one of those parents who have selected remote teaching. Dr. Velázquez explained the entire process of remote learning. She noted that they are trying to streamline the process for students. Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know if there is any specific learning infrastructure for them to use. Dr. Velázquez



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explained they are creating a template for them to use from the learning hub that has been established and they will be pulling from the regular core curriculum used in the traditional classroom; they have access to all that material.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur mentioned that she has compiled these questions from what she has received from some of our parents and students. Have the classrooms been fitted with Plexiglas and can we be shown a schematic of how the classrooms will be set up. Dr. Tracey answered we were planning for Plexiglas in the classrooms but we have since shifted from that. Teachers will be wearing face shields with a mask under it.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur's next question was, are we providing all PPE for the students and staff. Dr. Tracey said we are only providing the face shields, not the masks. We are only providing the masks if the student enters the bus and doesn't have one. We are not proposing buying masks for 21,000 children and 3,900 staff members. Dr. Jackson-McArthur then asked what type of masks are we providing and Mr. Pinto answered, we are providing the disposal blue surgical masks. Dr. Jackson-McArthur commented we should be supplying the face shields and we should be supplying those masks as well because they are dirt cheap. That is her opinion.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur then went on to ask if Wi-Fi and Internet access would be available for remote learning and where are the access points and what do they cover. Mr. Pinto explained that we are in the process of installing in 13 schools in Fair Haven and the Hill. We're also working in coordination with the City, and the State has now offered some assistance in providing Internet access for all students. Dr. Jackson-McArthur then asked when will that be completed and what about West Hills, Rockview, and Newhallville?

Mr. Pinto remarked that right now we have the funds on-hand and the reason those areas were selected is because they have the highest concentration of students. We are working in coordination with a plan to provide at least the Internet essentials package throughout the district. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if that means installation in your house or is it hot spots and Mr. Pinto said it's the installation.

Mayor Elicker interjected and commented that he can answer with a little more detail. Mayor Elicker commented that the Governor announced last week that about 60,000 students across the State would get Comcast Internet essentials paid for by the State for a year and, in addition, many students who would not be appropriate for the essentials would also get the hot spots. He explained this in detail. Mayor Elicker said that it is going to be stronger quality than the hot spots on schools and libraries. We are working through the logistics to make sure that every kid that needs it has access to the Internet.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked about the isolation rooms in the schools. She asked if we should be concerned about that room. Is it going to be a room where the nurse's station is?



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Director Bond explained that it is just away from everyone. It's not a clinical isolation room because we don't have the capacity within the nurse's area. It is just a temporary location until the child can be picked up.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur then asked about cleaning supplies and she commented that Dr. Tracey noted Clorox wipes. She wanted to know if we have them on hand. Mr. Pinto explained they are on order and they are not Clorox wipes but a disinfectant wipe that has a disposable top. Mr. Pinto explained in detail.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur remarked that she has a lot more questions, but she knows our time is short. She is highly concerned from the data that we've gotten from other districts. There are other districts that have said they are going to wait until at least January. She doesn't know how ready we are, it's just so huge. The fact that we are not going to be supplying PPE is a big issue for her. She is going to wait to hear what everyone else has to say. Dr. Jackson-McArthur thanked everybody for all the hard work that they have been doing. It's a crazy situation; who would have thought.

Dr. Joyner commented he tried to be disciplined enough to listen to everybody. He wants to make some points that really disturbed him. The first point is that we were resource poor before this pandemic. We're one of the poorest cities in America and we never had the funding for public education. In spite of the fact that we are resource poor and the mishandling of this pandemic at the highest levels of government, we showed a lot of discipline to get to where we are now. He thanked our local health officials, Dr. Tracey, her staff, and Mayor Elicker and his staff for working hard to help us manage it at this level. Not only was it mishandled at the highest level of Government, and he is not talking about our Governor, but all the agencies responsible for helping out, like Homeland Security. We were resource poor in the beginning and we certainly don't have the assurances to keep all students, families and staff safe under the current circumstances.

Dr. Joyner remarked that he would just like to leave you with this thought. We are 40 schools plus. If five kids or staff or a combination of five kids and five staff were infected in the first week, we would enter week 2 with 200 infected. Dr. Joyner continued to explain his thoughts.

Dr. Joyner remarked that he thinks we have to manage this locally and we have to do what the majority of the people in this community believes is best for the kids in this community. We shouldn't do anything unless we have the resources to do it. The combination of not having the resources before the pandemic and then needing more resources now and not being able to have those resources puts us in a real bad position. There are more kids that are infected than we previously thought and they also carry a larger viral load than adults. We have to do what the majority of the people in this community believes is best for their kids. Dr. Joyner again stated we have to manage this locally and we should not do anything unless we have the resources to do it.



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Mr. Fiore mentioned if we do online learning, will teachers be funded or supported to do digital things with better equipment to teach online. Dr. Tracey commented that teachers in the schools do have the equipment in terms of their computers, and we are ordering software resources for teachers to provide the best they can with the resources they have.

Dr. Tracey alluded to Dr. Velázquez who noted that they are doing a detailed inventory of every classroom and equipment has been on order. She added you should know that we are equipped to do remote learning with the computers in the classrooms. 85% of our classrooms are equipped and now it's finding the resources to make sure that the rest of them, 100%, are equipped.

Mr. Fiore explained his concern if schools close a week after opening because of an explosion of cases, where does that funding go. Dr. Tracey remarked she is glad he asked that question, it makes a lot of sense. The question is will we be given the same resources if we go back to hybrid, or will those resources be taken from us. She is not sure what the consequences will be. She explained this in detail.

Mr. Wilcox wanted to know if in any of these plans, do parents have an option if they are going to elect for their children to be online only or if the hybrid model is the way the district goes, they can elect to have them in that. If they choose not to, will they be able to have their student do 100% online or if the hybrid model is the way the district goes, can they elect to do that and if they choose not to, will they be able to have their student do 100% online and not lose their slot at that school. The only exception would be if they actually go through the process of withdrawing their student completely from NHPS to do a homeschooling arrangement. Mr. Wilcox stated he just wanted to make sure this is correct. Dr. Tracey commented, that is correct. Mr. Wilcox said this is a question many people have asked because they are concerned that if they mess up on this decision then their kid loses a slot.

Mr. Wilcox then wanted to know if there is a mechanism in place for teachers and other staff members that can apply through a process with HR for an exemption if they have serious health concerns, not to report onsite. Dr. Tracey said yes, he is correct. He is happy to hear this because he works at a university and having an option for teachers to make a case, is key in this.

Mr. Wilcox's next question was for Director Bond. He knows that the Federation of Teachers has some numbers that they're looking for being in support of schools having on-site learning. He is curious to know what the local threshold is that is being set in Connecticut, New Haven County or New Haven City for when we shut things down. He looked it up today and the rates varied from different sources and he explained in detail. Mr. Wilcox wanted to know if they have numbers they are considering when we shut this down.



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Director Bond remarked that is a really good question. She thinks it was raised about two weeks ago as to what our public health indicators would be. Mr. Conaway wanted a response by August 17th. Public health figures have officially been published and were updated today.

Director Bond explained that what they are doing from the public health side is looking at indicators weekly. Those indicators are a seven day rolling average that is utilizing the Harvard Global Platform. Currently, we are at two cases per 100,000 of the population, so that puts us at the low risk category. Looking at second indicators, percentage of positive rate vs. the percentage of total tests, we will be looking at this data on a county-based level. She will be happy to share that information if anyone needs it.

Mr. Wilcox commented that he wants things to be extremely safe and things in a global pandemic might not be. He alluded to the summer camps when we allowed use of our space to take place; he wanted to know if there were any reported cases. Director Bond explained the precautions they put in place. She remarked we were very fortunate during summer camps without any positive cases.

Mr. Pinto added that we were very fortunate during the summer when the athletes were training. One student athlete was reported having contracted from his mom who worked in health care. There were no further transmissions because we took the proper precautions.

Mr. Wilcox said that his next question is around the category of safety concerns and some of the plans in place for mitigation. He is interested in what Dr. Tracey stated with some of the pros and cons that comes with fully online and there might be some concerns when we start up, with problems of connectivity. Mr. Wilcox asked if they could elaborate more on the risks of our students getting an education in that online environment, not just with the technology but with the equity issue for those parents who choose to send their kids to school.

Dr. Tracey remarked if we were to use the spring time as gauging what may possibly happen in the fall with remote learning, we will face connectivity issues. We will have some students not having access to the opportunities and education that is there through online learning. We will have families who are struggling to get places for their students and to get support for their students. Dr. Tracey continued to explain in detail.

Dr. Tracey commented that she strongly believes that parents should have a choice to say A or B. A lot of parents have told her that online learning did not work for their kids. Dr. Tracey noted that the whole idea whatever the plan parents have a choice, under the remote plan there is no choice. She explained the concerns and choices parents have in detail.

Dr. Tracey remarked as a superintendent that is in charge of the educational aspect of the school system and the operational aspect, she doesn't have the answer. She is leaving it to



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her Board. We have given the pros and cons to the Board to decide, A or B. That's where she is right now and, we know as educators, it would be more feasible and more helpful to our families and she is leaving it to the Board to make a decision one way or the other.

Mr. Wilcox commented at this point he is hesitant to support the hybrid plan. He is hoping that the training that the district has been working on will help mitigate some of those issues and the different platforms that are in place, to rethink how instruction might happen.

Mayor Elicker thanked everyone for the really good questions and comments. He particularly thought the comments on how we can promote testing of teachers and students were very helpful and something to give us more to think about.

Mayor Elicker stated he is strongly leaning towards a hybrid plan as well, for a number of reasons. There were a couple of questions raised if students don't go into school physically, even if it's a couple of times a week. He thinks a lot of kids are suffering from what he imagines are a pretty significant mental health impact of being isolated in some cases being at home in potentially problematic environments, but in general, this is a real struggle for all of us in particular for our young people. It's a very difficult time to manage and having that interaction and additional support from guidance counselors, social workers, teachers and paraprofessionals at schools is very important.

Mayor Elicker mentioned nutrition is another element that he thinks is important. Dr. Tracey has worked very hard to promote having food access for families but that is not as good as kids being in school and actually having food provided for them. We talked about equity and there have been some articles about those families that work and can hire a babysitter and there are care providers that are not able to hire babysitters. It is important for us to provide opportunities for education and care for those kids. Mayor Elicker pointed out that Dr. Joyner mentioned the idea that if there were five kids at different schools that were positive and they went to school, then all of a sudden you have 200 kids that have COVID. He thinks that there's definitely a lot of fear with all of this.

Mayor Elicker remarked that he and his wife are planning to send their daughter Molly to in person school and they have thought about this as well. If we do the right thing as far as protections, which Dr. Tracey's team is working very hard on, everything from the teachers having face masks, people wearing masks, decompressing the classroom, etc., the likelihood of those five kids getting another 200 kids sick is much, much lower. Mayor Elicker commented if we are doing the right things according to plan, we are less likely to have the kind of potential outbreak that your scenario might suggest.

Mayor Elicker pointed out that the cases in New Haven right now are very, very low. He doesn't think we are going to see much better in the next maybe two years and while there's a lot of effort to find a vaccine, there is no guarantee that a vaccine is going to happen



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anytime soon. The experts he has seen have said that even once we find a vaccine that may work, it could be another 12 to 18 months before it is available to the public. If we choose now to continue to not send any kids back to school, are we prepared to keep our kids home for two years. We cannot compare ourselves to Georgia and what is going on in the South, they're doing it in a sloppy way and their cases are through the roof. Dr. Fauci said that he thinks we are ready to go back to school. We are doing this in a very cautious way and he thinks it is really important that we send our kids back to school in this cautious and hybrid way.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if we have money for a really good campaign around testing, physical distancing, etc., some kind of campaign using radio spots and billboards that is everywhere for people to see would be beneficial to everybody. She wanted to know if the City or the Health Department has any COVID funds to do something like this.

Director Bond remarked that they are planning with the Youth Department developing some palm cards that are targeted for youth, going out to different communities. We also have a summer intern that's creating packets to go out to different communities in partnership with Connecticut VIP. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if they are doing radio spots and billboards to get the word out.

Mayor Elicker responded that he thinks that is a very good idea and we should explore that. We did that with the mask campaign, before wearing masks was cool. He explained what they did.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur gave an instance of one of her adolescence being bored and she said she and her friends don't wear masks when they go out, they don't care about that. Dr. Jackson-McArthur said we could be influencers in those circles with a really good visual campaign.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur commented that her biggest concern is about the asymptomatic infection in kids and she continued to explain. What worries her is that when asymptomatic kids come home they infect the home. This weighs on her a lot and it is happening more and more in other places because they are not protecting the community. It weighs very heavy on her and maybe Dr. Bond could address that.

Dr. Bond commented it weighs heavy on her also and she is not alone. You know we see it in difference populations and nursing homes and other sectors as well with people being asymptomatic and she thinks that's why it's so critical for us to work on messaging and really stepping up our prevention measures, especially with the care packages that we will be developing in orientation on how, when children get home, they make sure they change their clothes, wash their hands or take a shower. She continued to explain this in detail.



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Dr. Jackson-McArthur's next question was around immunocompromised teachers and teachers who may be living with people who are immunocompromised. She said that teachers want to know what the process is or what other options are around coming into school or being a distance learning teacher.

Dr. Tracey commented as she said before, they would apply to HR using the ABA considerations and HR would then send the information to the doctor. The doctor would then send back to HR verification of the teachers' situation as outlined by CDC guidelines or department guidelines, and then Ms. Mack, HR Director, will handle each case individually. That is a protocol; it is not a protocol for a teacher or even an administrator or any other staff member to say I'm opting out because; there are guidelines.

Ms. Arouna reiterated what Mayor Elicker said about social and emotional support for staff and students. She thinks that is a key aspect that we should focus on as well. She commented that when it was said that we would do small groups for the hybrid model when we go back to school, what exactly is a small group. How many students does that entail per teacher? Ms. Velazquez answered that a typical class is 27 and in a hybrid model $\frac{1}{2}$ of those students would be assigned to two days and the way the data is coming back, $\frac{1}{2}$ of those students, about 13, would be remote so it would be about 6, 7 or 8 students in a small group.

Ms. Arouna also wanted to know what the plan is for teachers if they get COVID. Would their work load be handed off to a substitute or be virtual? Ms. Redd-Hannans responded that as Director Bond mentioned earlier, some of the protocols for our students, the same will apply to our employees. The Health Department determines who remains in school and who we may need to advise not to attend. We may have a substitute in place if a teacher is out and we would cover that the same way we normally cover classes.

Ms. Velázquez commented she just wanted to clarify and reiterate, if we were to open with the Hybrid model the parent choice that we are talking about is that parents can still choose to do remote and if they do so, that child would still have instruction from the teacher, using the technology twice a week. The Hybrid model still involves remote students with a plan that she feels is better than we had in the spring because it does include connection with teachers and live instruction.

Mr. Fiore wanted to know if a student refuses to wear a mask while they are already in school what will happen, and if they continue to refuse to wear a mask, how many strikes do they get before they are allowed to go back to school. Dr. Tracey said that question comes up all the time. There is a discipline plan in school. If we are taking this COVID seriously, the schools have the right to follow any consequential discipline their managers have for students who continue to refuse the mask because that puts the rest of the student body at risk.



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Mr. Fiore remarked a lot of people are wondering if we are judging that students are safe to go back to school, at least moderately, will we have meetings in-person as a Board of Education or will they remain digital. Mrs. Rivera answered that it seems we would be having our meetings in-person, although it sounds like some of the Board members would do that remotely, so you would have the choice.

Dr. Joyner noted that he would like to clear up something that he said earlier. His conclusion that he's already stated and he would love to be wrong. What he believes is problematic; everything about this disease is speculative. He reiterated what he stated earlier. He said if 5 kids in 40 schools would lead to 200 infected cases, not just kids. He went on to explain this in detail. Dr. Joyner said that the South and Midwest are allowing politics to determine how to respond to a scientific question. He commented that we have done a better job here, but oftentimes when you get a good result you have to keep on doing what you've been doing to get that result. Dr. Joyner stated that he actually agrees when we bring large groups of people together without the adequate personal equipment, testing supplies and compliance, taking it off would get the whole group infected. Everything he said was speculative and he explained. If anyone wants him to write it down he would be glad to do that.

Mr. Conaway commented that he wants to make a resolution. He supports the hybrid model proposed by Dr. Tracey and her team; he just doesn't support it now. He thinks we should wait ten weeks, one marking period, and we should look at the triple T's, which are testing, transportation, and teacher training and he thinks we should open in October with the hybrid model. He wants to put that in a motion. Mr. Goldson seconded.

359-20

Mr. Conaway made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goldson, in support of the Hybrid model submitted by Dr. Tracey and her team; he just doesn't support it now. He feels that we should wait ten weeks and we should look at the triple T's which are testing, transportation and teacher training. He feels that we should open in October with the Hybrid plan.

Mrs. Rivera asked Dr. Tracey if she knows what the consequences or implications would be in waiting ten weeks as Mr. Conaway proposed in his motion. Dr. Tracey commented she doesn't know what the consequences are at this time. Mr. Conaway stated we should start the hybrid second marking period.

Mr. Goldson thanked Mr. Conaway for making that motion and commented that he actually supports it. He remarked that he also supports 100% what Dr. Joyner said, "the reason we are in the place we are in in this City, is because we have been doing the right thing." Mr. Goldson continued to explain. Mr. Goldson commented that he feels we should continue on the path we are following, safety first, and a lot of teachers have said it is not worth one



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student's or one teacher's life to open now. He absolutely supports Mr. Conaway's motion and Dr. Joyner's commentary on where we should be moving at this point.

Mr. Goldson added that he finds it quite odd that the State Legislature puts all of this responsibility in the Board's hands and then the Governor and the Commissioner take it out of our hands. It is almost as though we are not the body that is making this decision about how our local school system should open; we are here to protect our students, teachers and staff and we should look at what our options are, legally, to address that issue. He suggested that if we get any pushback from the State, we should look at what legal options we have for addressing that issue.

Dr. Jackson-MacArthur congratulated her colleague, Mr. Conaway, for that courageous resolution. Somebody had to talk about this and she thanked him for bringing it up. Mayor Elicker talked about Dr. Fauci when he showed up at the Governor's press conference around COVID and opening the schools and she was offended by that because she felt it was a little power play. She didn't hear Dr. Fauci say, open up now. She heard him say that when conditions are right, when you have all the things that you need to open safely and effectively in place, then you open up. She doesn't think we are completely ready to bring people together in buildings and she supports Mr. Conaway's resolution.

Mayor Elicker wanted to know what our authority is here. Is the goal of the resolution just to make a call on the Governor to ask us to be allowed to do remote learning for this additional month or two or do you believe we have the authority to do this on our own? His second question is, he is not clear what the purpose for waiting is, for example, Yale and other universities are actually doing the opposite because they anticipate that with the flu season coming in, it will be more difficult to identify COVID vs. the flu and also there will be more intense pressure on the hospital system should there be another outbreak. He is just unclear what the purpose is of waiting because our cases seem to be quite low now.

Dr. Tracey commented that she knows that the State has the authority and under COVID she does not know what exercise of authority they will use. She does not have the pros and cons of what it would be for remote learning, would there be financial implications, she does not know she has yet to see. She came here today to share with you why our team preferred the Hybrid plan. She mentioned that we are leaving a whole group of parents out of this mix and that is unfair to them. Dr. Tracey reiterated that her job is to present our preferred plan, what the Board does with that is up to the Board, because you hired me.

Mayor Elicker stated it is not entirely up to the Board to decide what to do, Dr. Tracey, that's what he is trying to understand. The Governor has given directives on what we are supposed to do. The Board may choose to have a resolution but it doesn't mean the Board can go on all remote learning. I think it is very important for us to understand what the consequences are of that. We're getting \$8.5 million to invest in a lot of infrastructure



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that may not be used. If we go to online learning for another year, we may have to reimburse \$5 million and the 180 days requirement that kids have is going to be at risk. We need to ask these questions if we are outright rejecting what the Governor is requiring us to do.

Dr. Tracey commented that she will reach out to our State's technical team and field those questions. She also stated her concern that at this juncture when school is supposed to be opening one way or the other a decision is not made, our teachers are in a quandary what plans to make, etc. She will ask the State what the consequences are. Although there may be members that don't care about the consequences, she does. She continued to explain her thoughts in detail.

Mr. Wilcox remarked that unfortunately he is not going to vote in support of the current motion and, depending on the resolution of that, he will be making a motion to support the staggered Hybrid plan because he thinks it accomplishes some of those goals that Mayor Elicker and Director Bond talked about and our community numbers are low right now. He continued to explain in detail.

Mr. Goldson remarked that to have someone say that we will be going fully remote means that there is going to be some increase in infections, which again boggles my mind that we would even consider that we are going to reopen.

Mr. Wilcox called a point of order on Mr. Goldson and said he would appreciate if someone doesn't make my conclusions for me. Mr. Goldson had the floor and conveyed what some of the teachers were saying to him about opening with Hybrid. He continued to explain his points in detail. This dialogue went on at length. In conclusion, he suggested to his fellow Board members that we support the proposal that is in front of us and suggested they call the question.

Dr. Joyner stated, regarding this question, he doesn't believe that we should allow any authority to tell us what we should do, locally, to promote the safety and welfare of our children.

It is a real problem with him when State laws give the Board the authority and we have a Governor who gave Dr. Tracey three options and then he restricted that to two. Dr. Joyner commented that he supported Mayor Elicker and thinks he did a great job, he supported Dr. Tracey, and she was right out of the gate working on this when it came up. Dr. Joyner remarked this is not an indictment against them, this is a decision that he has come to on his own analysis and long experience as an educator and as a human being. He is going to support Mr. Conaway's resolution.



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Dr. Jackson-McArthur commented that a few weeks ago we were waiting for the State to tell us what to do. Recently, the State said that it is up to the district. She asked if she was wrong about that and Dr. Tracey said it was up to the Superintendent. At the beginning of the meeting you said that you were going to work with what the Board put forth.

Dr. Tracey commented that she always said our team wants the Hybrid plan. She has heard through the grapevine that the Board does not want a Hybrid plan, they prefer a Remote plan. Knowing that, she still has to present what our team prefers and that is the Hybrid plan for the sake of allowing parents to have choices around what we are offering because it is both not and/or. She is not going to allow a situation like this to have bad blood between the Superintendent and the Board. Therefore, the Board has to make a decision to present to Commissioner Cardona the rationale for wanting a remote plan. Dr. Tracey mentioned that she sent to the Board the criteria that they are using to determine if that's where we are right now. There's a possibility that they may say, yes; they may say no. She also doesn't know what consequences are attached to this.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know if they said you make the decision and this is what is lying in wait for us financially if we don't do what they want?

Dr. Tracey commented that it is her understanding the decision was between two plans. A high risk plan was reserved for if pandemic increases in an area in the school and then we would default to the Remote plan. Dr. Tracey continued to explain in detail at length. Dr. Jackson-McArthur continued to make comments and ask questions. She thinks the push to open up from Hartford is a little much for her.

Director Bond remarked what they know how metrics will be used is that if you make a decision when we are in the low and moderate category to go the route you are proposing, the Superintendent would have to go before a panel that consists of the State Department of Education, the Department of Public Health and would have to justify and have that approved. While we are in a low and moderate category, there needs to be an exception review panel that needs to make that determination. So that will be the next step.

Mr. Goldson made a motion to call the question.

Dr. Tracey explained that she is going to send out a survey to our families as to what they will decide, in an effort to be proactive. She doesn't want people saying that she had no plans for the New Haven Public Schools. So she is going to send out to her families to see who would opt out for a hybrid plan or a remote plan.

359-20
Call a Question

On the motion by Mr. Goldson to call the question, seconded by Dr. Jackson-McArthur, it was voted by roll call, Mr. Goldson, yes; Dr. Jackson-McArthur, yes; Dr. Joyner, yes; Mr. Wilcox, yes; Mayor Elicker, no; Mr. Conaway, yes; Ms. Arouna, yes;



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Mr. Fiore, yes; Mrs. Rivera, yes. Motion passed

359-1-20
Open School in
Ten Weeks with
Hybrid Model

On the motion by Mr. Conaway, seconded by Mr. Goldson, it was voted by roll call, to support the Hybrid model submitted by Dr. Tracey and her team; he just doesn't support it now. He feels that we should wait ten weeks and we should look at the triple T's which are testing, transportation, teacher training and paraprofessional training. He feels that we should open in October with the Hybrid plan. Mr. Goldson, yes; Mr. Conaway, yes; Mr. Wilcox, no; Dr. Joyner, yes; Dr. Jackson-McArthur, yes; Mayor Elicker, no; Ms. Arouna, yes; Mr. Fiore, yes; Mrs. Rivera, no. Motion passed.

Mrs. Rivera said now the question is, Dr. Tracey, what do you need to do with the State Department? Dr. Tracey stated that she would need the Board members to sit before the state board and convince them why they selected the remote plan. If she doesn't believe in something she cannot fully argue it. Or the Board gives her the language that they want to use and she would have to get the arguments from the different Board members as to why this should not be. She wants to have enough support from Board members before she goes up to speak.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked Dr. Tracey if we have a full distant plan are will we be bouncing between that for a while. She doesn't know how we don't have a remote learning plan. We've been talking about improving remote learning so now the board has issued a directive that we would like to start off partly remote because there is some uncertainty about the way we were going to open and the fact that we need more training for teachers and staff. So I don't understand why the Board is now supposed to be sitting in front of the State and not the people that work for the Board.

Dr. Tracey explained. There are three plans that we developed, and we shared those plans with you. The CSDE said we need to have a waiver from them to be able to do the plan the Board wants. She is suggesting if the Board would strongly make an argument like they did tonight. Dr. Jackson-McArthur argued we are not ready, this is a new normal and we have not trained enough teachers to the level where she is comfortable, along with the infectious disease. We have only had a few teachers trained. Dr. Jackson-McArthur continued this discussion.

Dr. Tracey remarked that she thought the conversation this evening was around the safety of students and staff not around any particular plan. Dr. Tracey called on Ms. Redd-Hannans to talk about the training because she feels there is some misinformation out there around training.

Ms. Redd-Hannans commented she just wants to clarify some misinformation that is around training and she would like to clarify some of the comments around professional



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learning. As previously stated, last year in June we spent two weeks in intensive peer to peer training, which was available to all staff members throughout the district. This training focused on Google Classroom 101, how to access it, how to integrate it with our current subject areas and use it as a landing pad, a platform, for all of our teachers to use. This was training that occurred for every single staff member. Then the Board approved for us to bring on the learning innovation catalyst to go deeper into how to teach teachers, how to transform their instructional practices in the past to talk about small group instruction that was ongoing over years. The training we are engaging in now, doesn't end in four or five weeks, it will be going on and will occur over time for years. We started with a small cohort of teachers from each school with the understanding that we spark interest in these teachers. Ms. Redd-Hannans explained at length.

In closing, Ms. Redd-Hannans remarked that she doesn't want anyone to walk away thinking they haven't been trained. We have actually done far more than many districts across the nation. What we've been able to put together, and you have to be commended for it because you allowed us that flexibility. So, I just want to clarify the conversations around training because we have done a lot and we've done it with your support.

Dr. Whyte added in speaking to the other part Dr. Jackson, it was said that if a district chooses to do anything other than full in or Hybrid, that would require sitting with the State Board and the Commissioner and having it approved. Those are the things we have to do as a next step to this.

Ms. Arouna commented that her question was answered earlier but Anthony asked her to emphasize what he said in the group chat. He wants to make sure that we allow enough time to announce to the public in an effective way, so that we're communicating with New Haven school students and families of any changes that might be happening.

Mr. Wilcox commented that Dr. Tracey's request to have some Board members assist in making a draft of the letter capturing the majority will hear in this case will be more convincing to the State if it also incorporates the student voices since they were voting in the majority as well. He thinks it's also prudent because last year when we as a Board majority directed the Superintendent to seek tuition waivers and there was a lot of discussion afterwards about whether or not the Superintendent did that sufficiently well.

Mr. Wilcox stated he thinks for two reasons, that it would be more convincing to the State and it would just be better to make sure that the majority will is transferred. He's more than willing to assist, simply because the Board decided and I'm going to support the decision and move forward. He would assume the members of the voting majority would prefer to have a hand in it instead.



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Mr. Conaway commented he is more than willing to support that since it was his resolution. He will certainly work with the Superintendent on that and he could give his rationale was for it. He also talks with a lot of teachers, students, administrators and he is more than willing to support that.

Mr. Goldson remarked that he believes we should make this a very transparent process. He thinks that Board members should see the letter and have a chance to have input before it goes up. He also believes that there should be some parent and teacher oversight on that letter because there are a lot of teachers and parents who have to comment on this. He hopes this process is as transparent as possible and as open as possible.

Ms. Velazquez wanted everyone to know that on August 11th and the 18th there is an announcement going out to invite parents to attend a “What Every Parent Wants to Know about Google classrooms, as an information session. After those two sessions we’re then going to run a training series for parents on all the technical pierces to support them as well. Ms. Velazquez announced that on the week of August 17th training is open to all teachers and when they come back the training will become part of their regular school day and it is ongoing.

Public Participation

Name * Gabrielle Germain

Email * germaing2021@gmail.com

Comments *

In August 2019, the city of New Haven declared a climate emergency. As a whole, the city proclaimed that climate change is a serious issue that demands our attention. Since then, little has been done to actually put an end to our city’s emissions, let alone educate the public. Why isn’t that something that is required to be taught in all New Haven classrooms? Not only are students the ones who have to live with the effects of a system they did not create, they also are experiencing a dearth of knowledge on the matter.

The New Haven Board of Education needs to recognize that our school system plays a crucial role in educating our students on environmental issues and preparing them to take action on the very real threat climate change poses in their lives. Without climate justice, these children have no need for school- why prepare for a future that they will not have? We demand that you recognize that climate change is the greatest challenge facing future generations. Education plays a key role in preparing our students, future citizens, to be actively working together to create solutions to this problem.

Climate change is a complex problem that requires the full support of the school board. Too often we see mere suggestions of climate education rather than requirement and enforcement. But we need to go further than that, climate education demands a multi-disciplinary approach. This is necessary in fostering Environmental and Climate Change Literacy (ECCL) and in reducing the very real, very harmful effects of climate change. A citizen who is well-versed in ECCL understands their influence on the environment and climate as well as climate’s influence on themselves and society.

The Board must create regulations requiring climate education in the areas of science, social studies, history, and health. Teachers must be provided resources and training to help them implement environmental and climate literacy into their classroom. Projects should be integrated and action-based.

In short, the city of New Haven needs to implement climate education immediately. The Climate Justice Schools



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proposal by the New Haven Climate Movement addresses the holes the current NHPS curriculum. Implement Climate Justice Schools to support our future!

Name * Julia Kosinski

Email * jkosinski21@students.hopkins.edu

Comments *

My name is Julia Kosinski and I am a rising senior at the Hopkins School. I am urging you today to support the New Haven Climate Movement’s Climate Justice Schools initiative that will broaden New Haven school’s climate education and leadership opportunities for students as well as make schools run more sustainably. Last summer, the New Haven City Board of Alders voted unanimously to passed a climate emergency resolution, recognizing the urgent need to address climate change, including New Haven’s commitment to, and I quote “educating our residents about the climate emergency and the broader ecological crisis.” (end quote). It is impossible to understate the impact that the climate crisis has had and will have on our generation. Our generation will truly be the last to have an opportunity to reverse the disastrous impacts of climate change. How do you expect children to be adequately prepared to handle this crisis if we are forced to bare the burden of researching this issue entirely by ourselves, learning about it on social media and in the news but not in our classrooms? How does it seem fair to not educate us on what is bound to become one of the most pressing issues of our future? Moreover, climate change is already impacting youth in New Haven schools. Whether it is prolonged periods of extremely hot temperatures, low air quality, or increased ozone pollution, all of which put New Haven’s youth at a far greater risk of developing asthma than youth in surrounding towns, and are shown to negatively impact student performance, health, and wellbeing, it is clear that creating climate solutions will help to address other underlying issues faced by New Haven youth. On hot days when my breath catches in my throat and I can’t get enough oxygen into my lungs, it is truly disheartening to think that my asthma was most likely caused and definitely exacerbated by this unsafe climate that me and other students in New Haven are inheriting. I am urging you to support the Climate Justice School Initiative because I believe that students deserve to learn about the crisis that will define their future and what they can do to address it. I am urging you to support this initiative as it is a big step in creating a more sustainable New Haven. Thank you for your consideration.

Name * Danielle La Pan

Email * danielle.lapan@new-haven.k12.ct.us

Comments *

Dear BOE Members,

I understand how difficult your job is, especially during these unprecedented times. I understand the unknown data around Covid-19. I understand that because Connecticut has low numbers right now that the governor, and others, feels it is safe to return to in-person learning. I wanted you all to know that I 100% disagree.

We were recently surveyed, and honestly, that was one of the most poorly constructed surveys I’ve ever taken. Will you or won’t you return to school? Will you only return if there is a vaccine? The questions were not fair. The questions didn’t get to the heart of the matter, either.

I do NOT feel safe returning to in-person learning in any form at this time. I don’t believe the PPE needed for staff and students will be available. I don’t believe the cleaning will happen that needs to happen. I don’t believe the air quality in my school is safe given the nature of this virus. I also don’t feel prepared as a teacher to do this hybrid model.

How am I supposed to teach a cohort of students in person while providing online learning for another cohort of students at the same time. The way you approach these two styles of education are completely different, and both are extremely time consuming on their own. There is no way around it - this is double prep that we will not have



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time to do. This means instead of doing distance learning well, most of us will be doing this hybrid model in a very haphazard way, which will not lead to quality education. I do not understand why assistant superintendents are referencing a rotation model for our lesson plans, yet we are three weeks from the start of school and we haven't seen it. How are we supposed to begin planning and getting necessary materials for next year? Most teachers plan in the summer, and even if it is "time off." Preparing for a new school year takes time and thought, and yet during the most difficult year in my fifteen year career, I will have less than three weeks to properly begin preparing for the school year.

I am also extremely concerned by the misunderstanding of educational terms. Blended learning and the hybrid model are not the same. Blended learning is when you incorporate technology into your lessons. A flipped classroom is when students do learning at home, usually by accessing technology through videos and readings, and then demonstrate their learning or grow their learning in the classroom. Hybrid learning means teachers are doing online and in person learning at the same time - it is neither blended learning or a flipped classroom in reality. It is extremely misleading when people refer to the hybrid model as blended learning. They are not the same.

I find all of this particularly upsetting when we are now being asked to reopen our contract and not get our raises this year, even though the workload will basically be doubled.

I love my job, but I am not a healthcare worker. I did not take this job knowing I would have to work closely with people who are potentially going to pass a life threatening illness on to me. My job is to educate. I can do that from home through distance learning. No, it won't be perfect. No, it won't be the exact education students receive in person. It is, however, the best alternative. I can safely educate my students. I can spend the next three weeks working with my colleagues to test and get better at the available apps and programs to improve distance learning. I can focus my energy instead of dividing it. And let's be honest, any type of in person learning at this time will NOT look like it did before this pandemic. School will not bring joy to children who can't share books or toys or materials. School will not bring joy to students who are reminded to stay in their seat, not touch their friends, and keep their mask on all day.

In closing, please do not set us up for failure by approving the hybrid model. Instead, allow us to begin this year with distance learning, and when it is appropriate, to slowly integrate in person learning again.

Sincerely, Danielle La Pan

• Name * J Lopez

Email * joanna.lopez@new-haven.k12.ct.us

Comments *

Although many of the repetitive questions asked in previous meetings have been answered, and being that I am an educator who suffers from asthma; I am still from a scale from 1-10 at a 3 in comfort that not as a district but as each individual school the protocols and support will follow. There is no guarantee how this will all end. Will we be notified if a student or teacher tests positive? Will we close the school if this happens or are we going to be oblivious of the mentioned so we continue in person teaching? How long will the district be able to provide the needed supplies before it runs out of money? There are so many questions of insecurities not just from me but many in which we don't have a solid answer to: I know that the district is trying and I commend every one of you, but the best would be to start remotely with 100% of teachers. We should wait at least until there are more solid answers about where we are with the virus and avoid another flared up in New Haven/CT.

Name * Karen Robinson

Email * karenb519@hotmail.com



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Comments *

Good afternoon. I realize that you may feel like you are in a no-win situation by having to choose whether our school buildings will open; however, only one of the options could potentially result in someone's death. By opening school buildings, you are putting the following people at risk: our students, students' families, teachers, teachers' families, all other faculty and staff, their families, and any community members who may come in to contact with them. If I return to school, I can not take care of my ailing mother. I can't, in good conscience, increase her risk like that. Please have the faith in your teachers and students. Distance learning can be successful, especially when lives can, literally, depend on it. Please put our lives above money and any pressure put on you by a bully government who does not care about the safety and health of our community.

Name * Carl O'Leary

Email * carl.o'leary@new-haven.k12.ct.us

Comments *

To the New Haven Board of Ed:
I appreciate the attempts that have been made to prepare the schools, including Wilbur Cross where I teach, for the opening of the 20-21 school year. Sadly, I fear these great efforts will not be enough to safely open school. I know you are under a great deal of pressure from the State of CT to open, but I implore you to start the year with distance learning.
I have had concerns in normal years about the condition, lack of resources, and the enforcement of district policies in the building.
Also, I have two young children and a wife working in another district. None of our calendars will match and if my daughter starts the year with distance learning or a hybrid schedule, I will be forced to choose between her and my students. I have filled out multiple surveys and asked questions at meetings, but still have not heard direct answers about what accommodations will be made for teachers with families that have school-age children. Finally, the virus has wreaked havoc here and across the country. I have many family, friends, and neighbors who have had it. Some lived and some died. We have no testing requirements for returning to school. There is no vaccine. Social distancing will not be possible. Phrases I've heard recently like "Nothing is perfect" and "...when possible" are not acceptable in this environment. "Nothing is perfect" implies that what we are doing is satisfactory.
Do the right thing and choose distance learning. Our teachers have received training. Our students have Chromebooks. We want to teach them without risking our lives, their lives, and our family's lives.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely, Carl O'Leary

Name * Ryan Boroski

Email * rboro2@unh.newhaven.edu

Comments *

Thanks for having this meeting. I'm concerned about my health and the health of my students as a teacher. Even in a hybrid model, students and staff would still be put at risk. I am asthmatic and my father has stage 4 lung cancer. I have serious concerns about going back to in person teaching for myself, students and my family members. Are scenarios like mine being taken into consideration when making the decision to hold any in person classes? If so, what thoughts does the BOE have on students/faculty members in my position? I would not feel safe teaching in person, it puts myself, my family, colleagues, students and their families at risk. Thank you.

Name * Christi Pidskalny

Email * Christisargent@gmail.com



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Comments *

Good Afternoon,

I have many concerns regarding the consideration of the hybrid model. As a teacher, I know that many students learn best while in the classroom. I understand that this is one of the reasons the hybrid model is being strongly considered. I also understand that our community relies on the school day for childcare. These sacrifices may seem too great to give up. However, these are unprecedented times. And there are far too many unknowns regarding COVID to risk the lives of teachers, staff, and students. Yes, most will recover from the virus in the short term. But what are the long-term effects of this virus? They are unknown. And how will we respond to the community when a life is lost to the virus when we reopen in the hybrid model? Opening schools is a threat to the health of teachers, staff, students, and our community. The virus will come into the buildings, spread, and then brought out to our communities.

I heard that we will follow social distancing measures in our school “when it is feasible”. This is simply not good enough. There isn’t even a guarantee that 6 feet is enough space to keep the community safe from the virus. We have scientists and medical professionals telling communities to stay home until COVID is contained. We have watched the MLB reopen and almost immediately closed, summer schools, and schools beginning fall term all following suit. Why are we convinced it will be any different here in New Haven? While it is a very difficult decision to make, I strongly urge the BOE to implement the distance learning plan. It is the ONLY plan that will ensure that we keep our community safe and contribute to the containment of COVID in Connecticut.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I know this is not an easy decision to make.

Name * Lindsey Bauer

Email * lindsey.bauer@new-haven.k12.ct.us

Comments *

Teachers are some of the most resourceful people in any profession. Let us, as teachers work together to provide our students with incredible remote instruction this fall. Let us creatively support the needs of students that require different resources or support (SPED, ELL). Let us focus on SEL in the fall so that we can ensure that our students are okay after a traumatic spring and summer. Let NHPS be a leader in innovative, creative, remote learning to save lives in our communities. Teachers WILL deliver if they are safe and well.

If safety is really the most important factor in how we approach the school year, then we need face the reality of our situation- remote learning is the only option that actually keeps our communities safe. If we are prudent now, we will safely return.

Thank you for your time.

Name * Nick Drabik

Email * nick.drabik@gmail.com

Comments *

At minimum, can we require all faculty, staff and students to be tested before we return to school? Perhaps one of the early days that teachers must return for professional development can be used as a testing day?

Teachers and students are starting school with COVID in other districts nationwide and not even knowing it. This to me is terrifying.

(Research the recent article on Georgia’s largest school district opening.)



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Name *	Leslie Blatteau
Email *	leslieharper75@gmail.com
Comments *	I support the clear, compelling, and compassionate statement from the New Haven Educators Collective. We need to protect our community and ensure a fully funded and equitable remote learning plan for all students and teachers. And we need to urge the state to provide childcare subsidies to families impacted by this plan.
• Name *	Marco Cenabre
Email *	marco.cenabre@gmail.com
Comments *	There is no evidence pointing to the success of a safe and healthy school opening. Every shred of evidence points to the notion that students , teacher, parents and all stakeholders will be infected in returning in person. We are risking lives by going back, and it's not OK
Name *	Chris Hekeler
Email *	chekeler@hotmail.com
Comments *	Members of The New Haven Board of Education I appreciate the difficult position that this pandemic has put you in to make effective decisions for the whole of our learning community, Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff and Administrators. I realize that no decision made will give solace to and be the right fit for 100% of this community, however, I fear that the desire for 'normalcy' and a 100% return to the classroom will create a perilous environment for the whole of us. As an Educator, I absolutely want to be back in the classroom, to see the spark in my student's eyes when I introduced a new concept and watch them support each other throughout the year. I just don't see how we can return to an effective in person environment without all of the proper controls in place to ensure the safety of our community. The recent survey that we were asked to fill out was skewed and not designed to allow for appropriate answers to all of the questions. The survey needed space for explanation in the very gray time we are living in. I do not feel safe returning to school when no-one can confidently say that all necessary safety precautions will be in place, that there will be clear disciplinary action for everyone when safety protocols are not followed, that we will ALL have continuous access to a supply chain of PPE and cleaning supplies at no cost to us. As a District and a State, we only have one shot to rise up above this and open effectively. My confidence level in our success is extremely low at this point as we seem to have more questions than answers and plans in place. Are we truly prepared? Are we truly ready to face the consequences and ramifications of opening too quickly? Given that my colleagues and I are being asked to do more, likely DOUBLE the workload, without raises or proper compensation, I can't imagine what support staff will be faced with. Are we properly staffed throughout the district to provide what is needed? I do not think we are. Imagine, if you will, a burning building. At what point would fire personnel say it is safe to go back in? In our situation, there is still smoke, hot spots and unknown and hidden hazards. Would you go back in? You all are in the room where it happens, where the decisions are made, but will you be in the buildings during school on the front lines, facing exposure like the rest of us. This pandemic has left us out-planned, out-numbered, out-gunned and out-manned, with no right-hand truly in sight. Please make the right decision to begin the year with distance learning. Keep all of us safe.



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Name * Steve Staysniak

Email * sstaysniak@gmail.com

Comments * As a teacher, parent, and member of the New Haven Educators Collective, I stand firmly in support of our group's statement calling for a remote return to school, fully funded distance learning that is more meaningful, equitable, trauma informed, and an extension of economic relief and support measures for families. We must call for the state to extend financial support in order for us to facilitate a restarting of the school year that puts the safety of all families and staff first.

Name * New Haven Educators' Collective

Email * newhaveducatorscollective@gmail.com

Comments *

Statement on a Remote Return to School, Equitable Distance Learning, & Relief for Families

To the New Haven Board of Education, New Haven Public Schools Administration, Superintendent Dr. Iline Tracey, Mayor Justin Elicker, the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Connecticut Board of Education, Education Commissioner Miguel Cardona, and Governor Ned Lamont:

After a resounding outcry from Connecticut educators, school employees, families, and communities, the Governor and State Department of Education have revised their mandate that all schools return to full-time, in-person instruction. With the ongoing crisis escalating and coronavirus rates rising across the country, we declare that in-person schooling - including hybrid in-person models, which some epidemiologists warn are “among the worst” options - must be delayed. In cities like New Haven, Bridgeport, and Hartford, we have already seen disproportionate coronavirus infection and death rates, and our schools do not have the funding, staffing, or space to carry out in-person schooling safely. We urge leaders in our cities and state to protect youth, families, and school communities by beginning the school year remotely, ensuring that distance learning is equitable and fully-funded, and providing families the relief and support that they need to survive this pandemic. In this appeal to our leaders, we are guided by these four principles:

Returning to in-person schooling at this time is not safe for students, families, or school staff. Although plans have been publicized that attempt to address safety requirements, too many questions remain unanswered about the implementation, maintenance, and effectiveness of the recommendations. The safety protocols recommended by health and government officials—including reduced class sizes, social distancing, cohorts, single-direction hallways and staircases, and protocols for daily monitoring of staff and student symptoms—are simply not feasible in many of our underfunded school districts. More importantly, current directives for school districts state that even when protocols and distancing are not possible, classes should still meet in-person. This clearly endangers our students and teachers. The CT Department of Health has publicly noted that our schools, many of whose windows do not open, lack proper ventilation and have poor air quality. We insist our school communities not be “experiments” during a deadly pandemic, as described by Dr. Anthony Fauci and other health experts.

Even with the utmost precaution, youth-based organizations that have reopened in person have not been successful in keeping their communities safe. National and international studies note that young people above ten years old contract and transmit the virus at similar rates as adults, and younger children contain higher viral loads in their noses than adults. As evidenced by the spread of the virus at summer camps in the US, and heeding the warning of one of the first schools in the country to open, the decision to open schools in-person is premature and reckless. Because we care deeply about our students and our school communities, we contend that even a small percentage of avoidable deaths is an unconscionable loss. None of our lives is disposable, not the significant



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portion of school staff that are over 50, nor particularly vulnerable populations of students such as those with respiratory conditions or intellectual disabilities, nor immunocompromised family members at home.

In line with the demands of the national Refuse to Return movement, we call for in-person schooling to be delayed until our state has gone 14 days without any new cases of COVID-19. Even in Connecticut, where our rates are lower than many other states, over the past 14 days we have seen 1,096 new positive cases. In addition to acknowledging expert predictions that cases will likely surge in the fall, we must recognize that the closing of indoor gathering spaces is a key reason for our state's containment of the virus—and that if we return to in-person schooling, infection and death will rise across the state. Once we have reached the milestone of 14 days without new cases, ongoing reassessment of schools and communities, in line with the most up-to-date scientific evidence, will be necessary to facilitate a gradual, phased return to in-person schooling. This must be accompanied by clear safety protocols and training, full-time nurses in every school, updated ventilation systems, access to regular testing for students and staff, contingency plans for positive cases, and access to vaccination once a safe and effective vaccine is widely available.

We must plan for and fully fund more equitable, meaningful, and trauma-informed distance learning.

Although distance learning is by no means ideal, it is a necessary alternative to infection and death. We must shift our efforts towards strengthening remote learning now so as not to replicate the haphazard emergency transition to online learning in the spring. With clarity that school reopening in the fall will be remote, educators and communities can focus on creative and collaborative preparations for teaching remotely. More meaningful and equitable distance learning is possible, but it requires time, support, and resources to develop and implement.

To make distance learning more equitable, high-speed Internet access and computers for all students are critical, but we must go beyond this bare minimum. In particular, considerations need to be made to support students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). Special education and ELL teachers' caseloads must be reduced so that they can more effectively personalize IEPs and learning plans, offer accommodations and modifications, collaborate with general educators, and be responsive to students' unique needs in this unprecedented time.

Given the ways this pandemic is compounding pre-existing traumas while also causing more suffering, distance learning must be trauma-informed. Students need consistent access to counselors and social workers, and while this need existed before the pandemic, it is now exponentially greater, and will require more staff who specialize in students' mental health. Teachers will also need to work closely with a small group of students (for example, in advisories) to consistently assess students' needs and offer supports, while helping students manage school work and maintain mental and physical well-being. Smaller teacher-to-student ratios would reduce the possibility of students slipping through the cracks.

In order for distance learning to be more meaningful and creative, teachers need time, professional development, opportunities for collaboration, and access to high-quality resources. Furthermore, to develop curriculum and pedagogy that meets students' needs and does not rely solely on screens, teachers need access to books, art supplies, science kits, and other tangible resources that can be delivered to students' homes. All of this is vital for students' learning and well-being, and it requires additional funding and swift action by local and state officials.

Distance learning must be accompanied by economic relief and support for families.

While many countries have managed to curb the outbreak of coronavirus and have provided substantial relief for their residents, in the United States Covid-19 rates are higher than they were in March when we first closed schools, hundreds of thousands of families are homeless and more facing eviction, and millions of Americans are unemployed, without health insurance, and unable to provide food for their families. On top of these crises, we know that distance learning is not an easy circumstance for families, and we are committed to fighting for the rights and needs of families in the absence of in-person schooling. To that end, the state must provide subsidies to families for childcare and/or financial support that affords guardians the option to stay home with their children. Additionally, the eviction moratorium, along with other rent and mortgage relief measures, must be extended. Food distribution must continue and families' food security assured. Caregivers need employment protection and additional unemployment supports. This economic relief is vital as it will support families in surviving the pandemic and engaging in distance learning, the safest schooling option.



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Schools cannot be the solution to all of society’s problems, not during a pandemic and not ever. The current pressure on schools to reopen reveals how severe the reliance on schools has become, and the extent to which our government has abdicated its responsibility. In a society that continues to chip away at the social safety net, schools are expected to provide much more than an education. Schools are not capable of being the solution to all the issues we are facing in this pandemic and beyond it, and we must stop placing this impossible burden on schools. To that end, we call for full and equal funding of our public schools, as well as investment in safe and affordable housing, health care and mental health services, living wage jobs, and other services to address poverty and racism in our communities. This must begin now by putting the safety and well-being of our communities above economic growth. We urge you to begin the school year remotely, invest in equitable distance learning, and offer families relief.

Statement Signatories
New Haven Educators’ Collective
Citywide Youth Coalition
Connecticut Students for a Dream
Local 3429 ASFCME: Paraprofessionals
City Wide Parent Team
New Haven Public School Advocates
CT BAT’s
United to Save Our Schools - Connecticut Chapter
SCSU Educational Justice Collective

Name * Jill Kelly

Email * jill_kelly@fas.harvard.edu

Comments *

My full comment contains maps and is posted at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vmMIYOHpqHffkuzs4WJcRNd0ASaHazrn/view?usp=sharing>.

I will share the text here, but I strongly encourage you to view the full document.

Comment on Dr. Fauci’s discussion of school reopening in CT

Dr. Fauci is of course a trusted national expert on the coronavirus pandemic. He is charged with the national emergency and has a national perspective. From that perspective, CT looks like a small patch of success in a nation in serious, serious trouble.

Dr. Fauci mentioned in his statement that CT is in such good shape, that we have the potential for containment of the virus rather than mitigation as the rest of the country is struggling with. It would be tragic to lose or fail to take full advantage of that privileged situation. We can’t let that happen.

Here, we do not have a national focus. We are interested in the welfare of Connecticut as a whole, New Haven as a city, and our own families and communities. Our map of the pandemic looks more like this:

What this map shows is the metric given by the state for school decision making: 7-day average of new cases per 100,000 residents, broken down by town for the week of July 28 – August 4. According to the cutoffs given by the governor, below 10 would be the standard for full in-person school, and above 25 would be the standard for full remote.

Hey! New Haven looks pretty good! In fact, the full statewide rate for that particular Tuesday-to-Tuesday week is about 4, so for last week, we out-performed the state! Sadly, these numbers are extremely volatile. Shift the date range even a day, and the snapshot looks different. Shift by a week, and it would show a completely different pattern. One week ago, New Haven’s new-infection rate was more than double this – and that volatility makes



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decision making about school reopening really hard.

I share this map with you for a different reason: I want to remind you how many people in our school community come from other towns in CT. My children have had friends from Ansonia, North Branford, Wallingford, West Haven, and even Naugatuck. They have had teachers from as far away as Terryville and Windsor. Connecticut is a highly connected place, and what happens in New Haven doesn't always stay – or start -- in New Haven. It's really not enough to look at New Haven, or even New Haven County, in isolation.

I also did some work comparing Connecticut's reopening statistics with those of other countries that have reopened on the date of their reopening. The countries had a variety of reopening plans – from Kindergarten or high school seniors only to full-but-well-spaced capacity.

As a state, CT ranked sixth-highest in the world for the infection rate at which opening was attempted. Only Singapore, Denmark, Belarus, Belgium and Portugal exceeded CT. It is my opinion that CT schools should be reopened when our numbers resemble those of countries further down the list, for example Greece, Japan, and Australia. The index I computed is not the state's metric. The numbers in the list below show cases added in the prior 14 days per 100,000. It could be converted to a daily average by dividing by 14.

And finally, I would like to share an image of how CT is doing over time. We have seen a very gradual increase in cases over the summer, and that should also worry us.

I hope that this has been interesting or useful to you. My advice – which may not even be a choice available to us – would be to start the school year remote, let teachers and students get their online classes, technology and remote methods set up solidly, and then – if the metric stays very low, start phasing in the youngest grades and maybe some categories of students who need extra support at extremely low densities. In evaluating "how it goes," look at trends within the schools and within New Haven, but don't forget to pay attention to the surrounding context.

Name * Julia Miller

Email * jwalk.miller@gmail.com

Comments * I am writing in support of the New Haven Educators' Collective statement on reopening. As an NHPS teacher and parent I believe that we must begin the school year remotely, invest in distance learning that is equitable and fully-funded, and provide families the relief and support that they need to survive this pandemic.

Thank you, Julia Miller

Name * Mindi Englart

Email * mindi.englart@new-haven.k12.ct.us

Comments *

Dear Board of Education members:

This will be my 20th year as a NHPS teacher. One thing that has always been stressed to me is that if a student or teacher doesn't feel safe at school, their concern must be reported and addressed. I'm writing because I don't feel safe going back into my school building at this time.

I don't like to be in the unusual position of advocating not for my students, but for myself. But I am getting better at it. Last summer, as one of the 53 teachers who was told I'd be transferred involuntarily, I spend part of my summer feeling demoralized, anxious, and active at meetings like this to protest the loss of my position. This summer, I find myself having the same feelings, but to protest a lack of concern for my health and safety, potentially for my life.



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I shouldn't have to beg for a safe workplace during a global pandemic. I shouldn't have to publicly disclose personal details about my health, household, and family members in order to get your attention, as so many of my colleagues are now doing.

It is just not right that citizens have been told to stay home, meet outside, and not congregate in large groups with people we don't know, by the very authorities that are now enthusiastic about how safe it is to be going back into school buildings. Yes, there is data to support that, just as there is data to support that it is not safe. I'm not writing about data; I'm writing about the strong feelings of unsafety so many of us have at this time. How can we feel safe in a climate of disinformation and politicization regarding the virus, and lack of trust in our state and national leaders? We cannot even look to our trusted institutions, like the CDC, anymore as their guidelines have been made to adapt to the bias of politics rather than the objective science we depend on them for.

Students can choose to stay home to do their work during a pandemic. Board Members can choose to stay home to do their work during a pandemic. Why can't I?

If I have to go back before I feel safe, I will enter school every day in my mask and shield, with my sanitizer and gloves, afraid of my students, my colleagues, and my administrators. I will end up not only keeping a physical distance, but an emotional one too. How can I not?

Please remember that we are only having this meeting because so many people have died. And more people are still dying. And even more people are left with lifelong heart, lung and other organ damage. New York and Boston and many other cities and towns in the U.S. will go remote to start the school year. Why can't we? If not that, why can't we give NHPS teachers the option to do remote teaching if they feel they need to, as we have done with NHPS students and parents? That way, both adults and children who choose to return to the buildings at the start of school can do so, and you won't be forcing anyone that doesn't feel safe to risk their lives and health when they have implored you not to.

With respect, Mindi Englart

Name * Julie Reinshagen

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Comments *

PLEASE do not re-open the schools with any kind of in-person learning. It is dangerous -- the only reason we do not have higher COVID numbers right now is that we are following protocols that are absolutely not enforceable in schools, even on a hybrid model. We NEED to start with all-remote, monitor the pandemic, and then SLOWLY move toward a hybrid model for second semester or 21-22. Follow Chicago, LA, and San Francisco's lead! Make the decision to go all remote for classes, as the local college have all done, so that Dr. Tracey and her team can assist the teachers and staff as they train and prepare. Give parents time to get ready as well. SAFETY FIRST! KIDS FIRST!

The following speakers called in to participate in this session:

Ms. Sarah Miller, Clinton Ave. School, member NHPSAdvocates; Mr. Abdul Elrefaei, student; Ms. Laura Tortora, 1st grade teacher; Ms. Nijja Ife Waters, parent, President, Citywide Parent Team; Mr. Seven Cousin, parent; Mr. David Low, teacher, Sound School; Laytisha Collins-Smith, parent; Ms. Jas, parent; Mr. Ryan B., teacher; Ms. Paulina Alvarado, 1st grade parent; Mr. Steven Cousin, Newhallville parent; Ms. Alesia Ricks-Harris, parent; Ms. tiffanie Holmes, parent; Mr. Ownel; Ms. Lenora Whitaker, parent; Mr. Martin Evans, Davis Street, parent; Ms. Emma D., COOP student; Ms. Nicole Brown; Mr. Tony Rivera, parent; Ms. Barbara Crowley, high school teacher; Ms. Mindi Englart, parent, COOP teacher, member of Teacher Tiger Team; Ms. Jennifer Graves, Preschool Special Ed teacher; Ms. Tashia Boyd, parent; Ms. Nissa Soto, teacher; Ms. Maria Harris, parent



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Mr. Goldson again suggested that we consider changing public comment from two minutes to the original three minutes that we have had in the past.

360-20
Adjournment

On the motion by Mr. Wilcox, seconded by Mr. Goldson, it was voted by roll call, to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginger McHugh

BOE Recording Secretary

“A video of this meeting is available on the NHPS website, NHPS.net, Public Meetings”