

**SANTEE SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

July 14, 2020
MINUTES

Douglas E. Giles
Educational Resource Center
9619 Cuyamaca Street
Santee, California

A. OPENING PROCEDURES

1. Call to Order and Welcome

President Burns called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members present:

Dustin Burns, President
Barbara Ryan, Vice President
Dianne El-Hajj, Member
Ken Fox, Member

Administration present:

Dr. Kristin Baranski, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board

B. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

President Burns explained that given the current circumstances with COVID-19, the public was given the opportunity so submit comments online or by phone prior to the meeting. There were five comments from the public. Copies of the comments were provided to the Board and Superintendent prior the meeting; and posted on the School Board Meetings website. President Burns acknowledged the receipt of the following comments during the meeting.

Board of Education Meeting - Public Comments

July 7, 2020

ID	Name2	Last Name	Representing	Public Comment(s)
1	Amber	Agent-Martinez		Dear Santee School Board, Given the recent spike in cases and outbreaks in San Diego county the data does not support the plan for a full return to campus for all students is a safe decision for our teachers and children. The previously circulated poll failed to provide distance learning as one of the options for the upcoming school year. Distance learning led by a credentialed teacher is an option that many other districts are utilizing including Grossmont Union High School District, Poway Unified School District, and Lakeside Union School District. Please make note of the plan adopted by San Diego Unified School District to go to a full distance learning option for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Given the fact that on July 8th California had the highest single day number of deaths reported since the pandemic began now more than ever is the time to make decisions that protect our students and faculty.
2	Kimberly	Hill		My simple comment is to please consider working parents. Consider parents that are essential workers and cannot homeschool. Consider parents who have careers hanging on by a thread due to layoffs. Consider children that struggle socially.

3 Kristina H

Please answer all of the following questions for parents concerned about not only their own families, but the families of teachers and other school staff:

- If a teacher tests positive for COVID-19 are they required to quarantine for 2-3 weeks? Is the teacher's sick leave covered, paid? (Not deducted from any accrued paid leave.)
- If a teacher has 25 students, do all 25 of those students need to then stay home and quarantine for 14 days?
- Do all 25 of those students now have to get tested? Who pays for those tests? Are they happening at school? How are the parents being notified? Does everyone in each of those kids' families need to get tested? Who pays for that?
- What if someone who lives in the same house as a teacher tests positive? Does that teacher now need to take 14 days off of work to quarantine? Is that time off covered? Paid? (Not deducted from any accrued paid leave.)
- Where is the district going to find a substitute teacher who will work in a classroom full of exposed, possibly infected students for substitute pay?
- Substitutes teach in multiple schools. What if they are diagnosed with COVID-19? Do all the kids in each school now have to quarantine and get tested? Who is going to pay for that?
- What if a student in your kid's class tests positive? What if your kid tests positive? Does every other student and teacher they have been around quarantine? Do we all get notified who is infected and when? Or because of HIPAA regulations are parents and teachers just going to get mysterious "may have been in contact" emails all year long?
- What is this stress going to do to our teachers and staff? How does it affect their health and well-being? How does it affect their ability to teach? How does it affect the quality of education they are able to provide? What is it going to do to our kids? What are the long-term effects of consistently being stressed out?
- How will it affect students and faculty when the first teacher in their school dies from this? The first parent of a student who brought it home? The first kid?

Please also consider providing the results to your survey, that you claim indicated most respondents want students back in school full-time with no masks. This data should, and could, be made public after scrubbing any personal identifying information.

Lastly, please stop using the words "opinions", "heart", and "feelings" instead of facts. These words were said by a specific board member in the last open session meeting, more than once, and it was very unprofessional. It reflected a lack of understanding of the seriousness of this issue.

4 Candace Schmitthenner Carlton Hills

I understand the need to have a campus option. I support the Board's decision and steps you have taken to make that happen for the parents that need or want that option. I need to keep my children away from the virus as much as possible. My children also need the support only a credential teacher can provide. I am not able to make that happen with the choices you are currently offering. I feel as though you are having me choose between my children's health or their education. By only offering a return to campus or homeschool option you are doing a great disservice to your families. Will any of the teachers be returning? I know so many teachers concerned about their own exposure or exposing a loved one. What are your plans if a student or teacher tests positive? How quickly will parents be notified? How will you know someone living with a student has tested positive? Will you be testing classmates of students who test positive?

I have heard you refer to the fact that 98% of parents indicated they wanted to return. While I understand that is technically accurate, that was based on a flawed survey from two months ago that effectively gave parents only two options: return to campus or homeschool. And on top of that, parents were under the impression that if you selected the latter, their student would be unenrolled from their campus. A valid survey cannot have implied consequences like that. Nor can you expect accurate feedback by only providing those two options. Do you actually think if the Board had given the option of a valid, teacher-based distance learning program that 98% of students would still be returning in person?

I am requesting you seriously consider offering a blended distance learning option for the 2020-2021 school year. Distance learning does not have to be what happened in the Spring (that was crisis learning). We have had practice; we have had a chance to see what works and what does not. Much like parents in a homeschool program are held accountable, parents that choose a distance learning program would also be accountable. So many children thrive on routine and consistency. In a year that we can expect campuses to be fluctuating between open and close, why are we not considering providing an option to parents that provides consistent quality education?

I have heard the Board talk about the mental health of children (i.e. that their own children and grandchildren need to go back because they miss their friends). My children want to go back to normal too, but unfortunately normal is not possible. A return to school means the play structures are off limits. Hugs from teachers or any sort of close interaction are impossible when you need to keep distance for your own safety. They miss their friends, but they would only get any chance of seeing them if they were placed in the same class. Returning is not going to be normal. Wouldn't it help save money from expenses of masks, shields, individual desks, and individual classroom supplies if a distance learning option were offered? A blended distance learning program should be given your sincere consideration.

5	Haley	Shumaker	Parent of a 3rd grade and TK/YALE students	<p>In voting on whether to open schools this fall, and in finalizing logistic and plans, please consider some of the most recent studies, CDC guidelines, and American Association of Pediatrics recommendations.</p> <p>With masks, and spacing of students: The results showed that “the dynamics of virus spreading have been overestimated,” the universities said, adding that the study suggested that schools did not become the coronavirus “hotspot” after reopening, as had been feared. https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/14/schools-coronavirus-infection-rate-low-german-study-finds.html</p> <p>The AAP has recognized the deleterious effects of stay-home orders and distance learning on children of all ages. Distance learning is particularly challenging for children in primary grades. Masks are a reasonable preventative measure that many children can and will adapt to. https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/</p> <p>UCSD has also released studies regarding the efficacy of masks. While they are not comfortable for anyone, many children can adapt to this requirement. My own child has been wearing one during an outdoor camp through the Park and Rec department. Counselors have reviewed mask wearing, hand sanitizing, and hand washing with the kids and it's been a wonderful experience for socialization. It's possible, and it's a reasonable way to help schools stay open and our kids can handle it. If the alternative is to close schools again, we most definitely pick sending our children to school with masks.</p> <p>Please consider that for working parents, especially essential worker families, our children will still have to go somewhere during the day, whether that is to school or Project Safe. We appreciate that Project Safe has been providing care throughout the pandemic and hope it will continue to be an option for all families who need in the event of a continued school closure. In my own family, we've seen the negative impact of distance learning and stay-home orders on my children's learning, social/emotional development, and mental health.</p> <p>We know you have a difficult job reviewing the ever-changing information. We hope you can announce a plan for reopening, with specifics on the logistics very soon so that families can plan for alternatives should Santee schools remain closed. Thank you for your careful consideration.</p>
---	-------	----------	--	---

C. CLOSED SESSION

President Burns announced that the Board would meet in closed session for:

1. California State of Emergency and Impact of COVID-19 Virus (Gov't. Code § 54957)

The Board entered closed session at 6:00 p.m.

D. RECONVENE TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board reconvened to public session at 6:52 p.m., and reported no action was taken.

E. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the special meeting of July 14, 2020 was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.


Elana Levens-Craig, Clerk


Dr. Kristin Baranski, Secretary