

Regular Board Meeting - Public Comments

ID	Name2	Public Comment(s)	Represe nting	Comment
1	Jennifer Keiser	<p>Dear Board Members and Dr. Baranski,</p> <p>My name is Jennifer Keiser. I have been a teacher in Santee School District for 22 years. I have never, in all these years, written to or spoken to the board. I have stayed silent for 22 years. So, the fact that I am writing to you today means something.</p> <p>I was shocked and disappointed about the board’s decision to offer no online learning options for our teachers and students. Your “homeschool” option is a slap in the face to our community. Homeschool is not online learning. Our families are not ignorant. They know the difference. Will students even stay registered at their home school? Will they have an actual teacher? Will they have opportunities to interact with classmates online? Of course only 2% chose this option! At my local High School in the San Diego Unified District, where my children attend and my husband is a teacher, 36% chose the online option. Not only are most districts in San Diego County offering a remote learning option, Sweetwater is going remote-only, and Chula Vista is pushing back their start date to August 31st, in order to be prepared for a remote and hybrid option which most of the parents polled opted for.</p> <p>This decision; to not offer any remote learning option; is short-sighted and dangerous. You are forcing children and teachers into unsafe, crowded conditions.</p> <p>I feel I must also disclose another motive for my letter. While from all appearances I look like a perfectly healthy 47-year-old, I am not. I had a lung removed due to cancer 15 years ago. I am considered high risk. My doctor said, in no uncertain terms, that teaching a class of 24 nine-year olds is absolutely off the table. What is in store for me? Am I supposed to stand at the front of the room behind a plexiglass partition and scream through a mask? I feel like I am going to be asked to just take my chances since I am an essential employee. I have zero confidence in my classroom space being a safe place to be. If you do, you’ve never been in a room with 24 moist nine-year olds.</p> <p>Please, plan for and offer online options; both for students and staff. Don’t give in to politics. This virus will be with us for a long time and will change our way of life for a while. But ignoring it is not going to make it go away.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Jennifer Keiser Teacher, Pepper Drive School</p>		<p>Dear Board Members and Dr. Baranski,</p> <p>My name is Jennifer Keiser. I have been a teacher in Santee School District for 22 years. I have never, in all these years, written to or spoken to the board. I have stayed silent for 22 years. So, the fact that I am writing to you today means something.</p> <p>I was shocked and disappointed about the board’s decision to offer no online learning options for our teachers and students. Your “homeschool” option is a slap in the face to our community. Homeschool is not online learning. Our families are not ignorant. They know the difference. Will students even stay registered at their home school? Will they have an actual teacher? Will they have opportunities to interact with classmates online? Of course only 2% chose this option! At my local High School in the San Diego Unified District, where my children attend and my husband is a teacher, 36% chose the online option. Not only are most districts in San Diego County offering a remote learning option, Sweetwater is going remote-only, and Chula Vista is pushing back their start date to August 31st, in order to be prepared for a remote and hybrid option which most of the parents polled opted for.</p> <p>This decision; to not offer any remote learning option; is short-sighted and dangerous. You are forcing children and teachers into unsafe, crowded conditions.</p> <p>I feel I must also disclose another motive for my letter. While from all appearances I look like a perfectly healthy 47-year-old, I am not. I had a lung removed due to cancer 15 years ago. I am considered high risk. My doctor said, in no uncertain terms, that teaching a class of 24 nine-year olds is absolutely off the table. What is in store for me? Am I supposed to stand at the front of the room behind a plexiglass partition and scream through a mask? I feel like I am going to be asked to just take my chances since I am an essential employee. I have zero confidence in my classroom space being a safe place to be. If you do, you’ve never been in a room with 24 moist nine-year olds.</p> <p>Please, plan for and offer online options; both for students and staff. Don’t give in to politics. This virus will be with us for a long time and will change our way of life for a while. But ignoring it is not going to make it go away.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Jennifer Keiser Teacher, Pepper Drive School</p>

2 Mindy Albright	Will children be required to wear masks during school? Will they be allowed to play outside? If split days or half days are required, is the goal to divide the kids into two or more groups to decrease exposure?	Carlton Oaks	Will children be required to wear masks during school? Will they be allowed to play outside? If split days or half days are required, is the goal to divide the kids into two or more groups to decrease exposure? Thank you for your work throughout this unprecedented time.
3 Kim	I am concerned with the possibility of distance learning in the fall. These kids suffered greatly with distance learning at the end of the school year. They did not learn anything and fell behind. Additionally if the school moves to some kind of distance learning, whether that is some days at school and some home or even half days that is going to be very difficult on working families. It should be up to the parents if they want their kids to go to school (provided there are teachers that want to be at school as well).		See above
4 Christie Miller	Students need to go back to school this Fall. It is imperative that our kids get the opportunity to be back in a traditional classroom setting. If the students aren't physically present in the classroom, with their amazing teachers, how are they going to learn anything? Distance learning is not learning. It is simply assigning previously learned concepts to the students in order to keep them busy. This type of "busy work" is not beneficial to our students now, and it will most certainly be a detriment to their future successes in school. As a full-time working mother, I am also concerned on how I am supposed to ensure my child is focusing on their studies, while participating in a six (6) hour distance learning day. I urge the District to let students get back into the classroom as soon as possible.		Thank you for your time and consideration. Best, Christie Miller

<p>5 Eri Nall</p>	<p>First I would like to acknowledge that you have a hard job of making the decision based on EVERYONE that is affected by this pandemic; students, families, and educational staff members, and that I am speaking only for my children. I would also like to publicly acknowledge that my children's teachers, Mrs. Boen and Mrs. Schmidt, from Cajon Park have done an amazing job during the online learning. With that said, I am here to ask you to allow the students to go back to school physically on site. (and offer online options for those who need to stay home for health reasons). On June 29th, American Academic of Pediatric came out with a statement "The academic, physical and mental upsides associated with returning children to schools outweigh the risks, the American Academy of Pediatrics concludes." I have seen this with my own children where their mental and emotional well-being are being affected. I will also admit that I cannot offer what the teachers can offer to my children's academic growth. In the same way, my household cannot replace the important soft skills that they learn as they interact with peers and other adults in their lives. Humans are meant to connect with each other, not to live in isolation. They are being taken away the opportunities that physical school can offer if online learning is the only option for next school year. Thank you for your time in reading this comment.</p>	<p>Asher and n/a Corban Nall (incoming 3rd and 6th graders at Cajon Park School)</p>
<p>6 Kristen Padden</p>	<p>In planning return to school options, please consider medically high risk children due to pre-existing conditions and address options / plans through IEPs or specific communucations. Social and educational resources will be so important for this group of children, and defining this group specifically will help us have conversations with our medical providers, for us our pediatric cardiologist.Thank you very much.</p>	<p>Parents of medically high risk students In planning return to school options, please consider medically high risk children due to pre-existing conditions and address options / plans through IEPs or specific communucations. Social and educational resources will be so important for this group of children, and defining this group specifically will help us have conversations with our medical providers, for us our pediatric cardiologist.Thank you very much.</p>

<p>7 Candace Schmitthenner</p>	<p>It is egregious that the District has decided to provide no meaningful distance learning option this fall. The "distance learning" option is, in fact, nothing more than a homeschool option where the parents become the teachers and the students are stripped of benefits like their IEP services. Hundreds of universities will be providing their instruction via video this fall. How has that option not been meaningfully explored and developed at the K-8 level? Private business have all easily moved to Zoom or similar platforms for presentations, training, meetings, and everything else that was traditionally done in person. Why is it that the District can't likewise use the same technology for the same thing?</p> <p>It's also quite troubling that the District has not announced any restrictions, limitations, or protections related to social distancing, face coverings, or the like. Private businesses in San Diego have not been permitted to re-open without a plan in place that requires face coverings, temperature checks, and six feet of minimal distance between people working, among other things. How is it, then, that the District plans to put over 6,500 kids back in school in close proximity to one another with no measures whatsoever? The reason seems to clearly be because the District doesn't have the facilities to be able to ensure such minimal distance with all of the kids on campus at once, or the staff to implement such restrictions. Yet the District is refusing to implement alternatives to address this issue, such as split schedules that would keep only a portion of the student body on campus at any given time.</p> <p>The medical impact of this pandemic on children themselves is debatable. But what's not debatable is the fact that these kids don't live alone. They come home to parents and grandparents, with any number of medical vulnerabilities. Nor do they teach themselves. The District will be subjecting its teachers to exposure every day. For the District to not have a meaningful plan to address these issues less than 45 days from the slated start of the school year is a failure to every teacher, child, and parent in the District.</p>	<p>Carlton Hills Elementary</p>	<p>Please see public comment.</p>
<p>8 Paola Zambrano</p>	<p>It seems that given the current situation, the best and safest option would be to pursue a 2 week in school and 1-2 weeks of distances learning schedule, or something similar. This would reduce everyone's risk by limiting the total amount of kids in school at a given time. It would also allow time to find out if any kids have been exposed to covid, and allow proper social distancing guidelines to be adhered to.</p>	<p>Parent</p>	<p>none</p>

9 Mark Roberts

I am a parent of two children attending Chet. Should a full return not be possible I would ask that the teachers be online providing instruction/lecture for a portion of the time followed by time to allow students to complete work. The assignment of tasks followed by a once a week 1 hour check in meeting have proved to be ineffective in my opinion and I have seen the negative impact to my children and I'm certain most would agree. We need the teachers to be online to teach students vs simply assigning work and checking in. Thank you, Mark Roberts

E, 1.1

I am a parent of two children attending Chet. Should a full return not be possible I would ask that the teachers be online providing instruction/lecture for a portion of the time followed by time to allow students to complete work. The assignment of tasks followed by a once a week 1 hour check in meeting have proved to be ineffective in my opinion and I have seen the negative impact to my children and I'm certain most would agree. We need the teachers to be online to teach students vs simply assigning work and checking in. Thank you, Mark Roberts

10 Cameron Williams

I am a teacher, and my story is not unique.

Teachers Just the public comment above.

I am being directed to make a choice for the fall. Will I choose to return to my school of 23 years to risk my life and the lives of my elderly parents and in-laws, or will I view my life and my family's life as my first priority, and lose my house because I cannot afford my mortgage payments? I am diabetic with a compromised immune system, and our family counts on grandparents to care for our young son while we work.

As I understand it from Dr. Baranski's email message, opinions are mixed on whether parents want their children returning to a school site. Home school is not the answer. Teachers want to teach, and students want to be taught by their teachers. It is my hope that Plan A will include distance learning options not only for students, but also for staff. On that topic, it would only be fair that staff choosing to participate in distance teaching for their own health will have the option to return to their site and position when it is safe to do so. Carlton Oaks is my home, and my colleagues are my second family.

Please support the diverse needs of students and staff by allowing them to make important life decisions without adverse action taken.

11 Brad Adorador

My wife and I would like to state our support for the excellent job the Santee School District has been doing with regards to keeping an outstanding information flow to the parents, staff, etc. on COVID-19 updates and the start of the 20/21 SY.

Carlton Oaks School Parent (Individual Comment)

We would also like to relay our full support for the children to be able to return to the classroom full time on or about 19 Aug 2020.

12 Stuart Rea

As a father of three children in the Santee school district, I have been very impressed with the quality of education my children have received over the years. I am a fan and supporter of the district.

I understand the board has to make tough decisions regarding health and safety of it's students and teachers. I hope that you will not overreact to some of the hype and paranoia regarding COVID 19.

The data from both the CDC and the New England Journal of Medicine conclude that children rarely contract COVID 19 nor do they transmit the virus. Medical doctors such as Dr Scott Atlas and Dr Simone Gold state that the chances of children contracting and transmitting the virus are practically zero.

Additionally, wearing of masks or face coverings has not been proven to provide any protection from the virus, inspite of the media, politicians and medical experts stating otherwise.

In an article from the New England Journal of Medicine titled 'Universal Masking in Hospitals in the Covid-19 Era', the five M.D. authors state, "We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection...The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal. In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic."

If the district decides that students must wear masks or face coverings while at school, I will most likely remove my children and homeschool them. I submit that children or staff who do have underlying health issues should wear a mask until a vaccine or other alternatives are provided.

Please consider factual data, not unsupported opinions to make these crucial decisions.

Thank you for your time.

My three children See above public comments.

13 Gretchen May

First and foremost, our kids need to return to school. Extend the school year, extend the school day. Do what is necessary to get the students back in class. They are missing out on learning, social interaction, and enrichment. There needs to be a set plan A so that parents can make the decisions that work best for them. If there are plans B and C, then we need to know them as well. We need to know these plans well in advance of the start of school and as soon as possible before they occur.

If there is a need to return to remote learning then the lessons MUST be made available through multiple means: books, workbooks, online resources.

I spent at least 4 weeks in March-April reaching out to teachers, the principal, and even the Superintendent trying to obtain the actual curriculum for my 7th grader. I wanted to know what she should/would have been learning at that stage of her education if she was still in the classroom. You must make that curriculum available to the parents and students so that they can fill in the gaps if they are able. "Enrichment" packets are useless. Our children are falling behind in their learning.

Now let's talk special education and kids with IEPs. Those children are falling further behind and missing out on so much more; their goals are going un-met. I spent a good amount of time supporting my daughter with an IEP while working part time from home. I cannot continue to do this and I'm sure other parents are in a more difficult situation than mine. I have no doubt that she did not learn/advance as much as she could have if her proper supports were in place. I can't even begin to imagine what it was like having a child with special needs greater than my daughter's.

Parent of children at Carlton Oaks

First and foremost, our kids need to return to school. Extend the school year, extend the school day. Do what is necessary to get the students back in class. They are missing out on learning, social interaction, and enrichment. There needs to be a set plan A so that parents can make the decisions that work best for them. If there are plans B and C, then we need to know them as well. We need to know these plans well in advance of the start of school and as soon as possible before they occur.

If there is a need to return to remote learning then the lessons MUST be made available through multiple means: books, workbooks, online resources.

I spent at least 4 weeks in March-April reaching out to teachers, the principal, and even the Superintendent trying to obtain the actual curriculum for my 7th grader. I wanted to know what she should/would have been learning at that stage of her education if she was still in the classroom. You must make that curriculum available to the parents and students so that they can fill in the gaps if they are able. "Enrichment" packets are useless. Our children are falling behind in their learning.

Now let's talk special education and kids with IEPs. Those children are falling further behind and missing out on so much more; their goals are going un-met. I spent a good amount of time supporting my daughter with an IEP while working part time from home. I cannot continue to do this and I'm sure other parents are in a more difficult situation than mine. I have no doubt that she did not learn/advance as much as she could have if her proper supports were in place. I can't even begin to imagine what it was like having a child with special needs greater than my daughter's.

14 Todd Maddison

Hi, my name is Todd Maddison and I am a founding member of San Diego Schools.

Parents Please read aloud during meeting.

We are an advocacy group to help parents make their voices heard in improving education in our County.

Our goal is to improve transparency, accountability, and equity in the school districts throughout the County.

We're living in difficult times, all school districts face serious challenges ahead.

Santee School District's budget, like many, is likely to see deep cuts in the coming year. Parents need to have a voice in making sure those cuts do not hurt the education of their kids.

This summer there is nothing more important to parents than their district's plans for reopening in the fall. We see that is on the agenda later. Parents need to have a voice in that plan.

Our mission is to provide assistance and advocate on behalf of involved parents. The best interests of our kids need to come first in every decision made.

The volunteers at San Diego Schools can help parents to better understand how their school district operates, get involved with their district to make things better, and ultimately get the most value for their student's education.

Education is a complex thing. There are many aspects of public education that are a mystery to the community. We aim to provide relevant and timely information to help clarify that process and help parents see the impact in their schools.

We will also support parent-to-parent communication and discussion among all districts in San Diego County, so parents in one district can benefit from what has been learned by parents in others. What has worked, and what has not worked.

We have established a website at sandiegoschools.net and a related Facebook Group – San Diego Schools - intended to act as a central hub for information, giving parents and students the ability to find answers and resolve problems.

Everyone is encouraged to visit our site, sandiegoschools.net, sign up for our email list, and join our Facebook group to stay in the loop on upcoming events and activities.

15 Charlene
Alsbaugh

While face to face instruction is the ideal for 20-21 please be prepared with a plan that reflects fully online synchronous instruction in case students cannot return. Data shows that asynchronous/ independent learning online is detrimental for many of our vulnerable students.

Parent - See comment under 3
special
education

16 Joseph Kemery

As of today, we are still seeing the number of COVID cases rising rapidly. With around six weeks left before the return of teachers, we are still not seeing any flattening of the curve but an increase in cases. As a teacher, my biggest fear is the amount of spreading that can happen within a school before we are aware. I worry about my family, my students, and other staff who will be confined to a classroom without windows. I am concerned that we are not going to be able to meet the physiological and safety needs of both students and staff.

I hope that our plan A will be one that has a continuum for students and staff, with fully distanced learning on one end of the continuum and 5-day in-school instruction on the other end. We should be able to flexibly move back and forth on this continuum based on county health information. Each phase of this continuum should have reasonable indicators for measuring student attendance and academic growth, as well as guidelines for movement along that continuum. What is our plan going to be in for monitoring community health? We need to prepare for the possibility of someone becoming infected, and should have a clear plan in place. We want to be sure that students, parents, and staff have a clear understanding of each benchmark in the event that we need to change our model of instruction throughout the year. At this moment, I believe our full efforts should be put into developing Phase 1 of this continuum (fully distanced learning), as this is clearly where our needs are at as a community, and they may be there for quite some time. We also want to ensure that we are prepared for the upcoming flu season as well, in case things do not improve. This would allow our students to remain enrolled in their home schools (a huge social-emotional need) while also being safe.

I understand that this is a challenging time for everyone involved, and I hope that our plan moving forward shows the flexibility needed to truly meet the safety needs of all students and staff.

No additional comment

17 Angela Taylor

How would it work logistically if someone in a classroom is positive or exposed and needs to quarantine? Many classrooms have the potential to be affected due to siblings, adult staff being in contact with more than one class, even possibly substitute teachers being in contact with multiple schools.

The potential for a lot of back and forth with quarantine periods would be far more disruptive to students than planning for remote learning from the start.

Will there be any flexibility for families to change from remote learning to in person instruction, or vice versa as things change and their comfort levels and/or personal circumstances change their needs?

If it's unsafe for you to meet in person now, how could it be safe for schools to open in only 6 weeks? The virus is more widespread now in our community than it was when the schools closed in March!

Special Meeting Comments - 6:00 pm

ID	Name2	Last Name	Representing	Public Comment(s)
1	Rosemary	Crescitelli	Corban & Salem Crescitelli	I am very concerned about reading/writing instruction in particular (no matter what option is presented) if my children are in class it sounds like there will be no small groups pulled for reading, and if learning is online then I would like to know how my second graders (who just lost half of a year of writing instruction) will not only make up that time, but get practice putting pencil to paper this upcoming school year.
2	Kimberly	Thornton		As a middle class family with two parents employed outside of the home , along with having four school age children I can not even begin to express the need for a traditional 2020/2021 school year. While I can understand some families may not be comfortable with their child returning to the classroom, we should be given the option of what we believe is best for our family. From What we experienced this spring distance learning was nothing more then busy work and undo stress on families. Our kids need to be around their peers and teachers, we as parents are not qualified to teach, especially when most families have children in multiple grade levels. Teacher miss the kids, the kids miss the teachers and friends and at this point the mental wear on these young minds is far worse then the health risk.
3	Annette	Saul		Please make sure that kids return to school. The schools can utilize more outdoor space for teaching. Masks can be worn while walking to class, and can be removed while in the classroom if they are 6ft apart, just like in a restaurant. Online learning is not adequate. Kids need the social connections and interactions with their teacher. They need the routine and schedule. They need PE and time on the playground. Many parents both work and are not able to effectively teach or help with online teaching. Many parents have multiple children in different school districts that have different programs. It is an impossible task to work full time and effectively teach all of my children. Two are in santee school district and one is starting high school. Let parents sign waivers agreeing not to hold the school liable for covid.
4	Alicia	Escutia		Hello
5	Mark	Roberts		I am a parent of two children attending Chet. Should a full return not be possible I would ask that the teachers be online providing instruction/lecture for a portion of the time followed by time to allow students to complete work. The assignment of tasks followed by a once a week 1 hour check in meeting have proved to be ineffective in my opinion and I have seen the negative impact to my children and I'm certain most would agree. We need the teachers to be online to teach students vs simply assigning work and checking in. Thank you, Mark Roberts

6 Mary

Barker

Our family moved to Santee in Aug 2019 and have been pleased with our experience and choice of districts. Our daughter Evelyn (an only child) is going into 2nd grade at Carlton Oaks. She needs the social aspect just as much as the education! We want her to be in the class as much as possible. We transferred from a school in Chico, Ca. that had a bright, cheerfully painted concrete playground areas. The labor and funds were donated from businesses, families and community members similar to what Santee has for their baseball teams. Thinking about kids going to school wearing masks with limited recess, it would be a nice mood booster for everyone on campus to see something similar!