

Our mission is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that challenge and engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. (2007)



LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

B. Bourque, Chair

C. Harrison, Vice Chair

Approved Minutes for July 30, 2020

Location: CHS Gymnasium

In Attendance:

B Bourque, Chair
C Harrison, Vice Chair
E MacDonald, Board Member
R Meyers, Board Member
T Hershberger, Board Member
Dr. Michael Jette, Superintendent
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator
Michele E. Flynn, Administrative Assistant

I. PUBLIC SESSION

3:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order

Mr. Bourque called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Review & Revision of Agenda

There were no revisions to the agenda.

D. School Reopening Task Force Presentation

Dr. Jette and the School Reopening Task Force presented the final Reopening Report to the School Board. Principal Lonergan, Lecklider and Mitchell will speak to school specific planning at CHS, LMS and GMS.

Dr. Jette announced that the oversight committee was divided in a recommendation for reopening. There were several involved in working on the subcommittees and development of the report. He went over the foundational beliefs:

- safety, disruption
- student growth
- keeping the focus simple, and
- personal responsibility.

Dr. Jette reviewed the Critical strategies:

- in-person services
- remote learning and support
- mask wearing
- reframing time (delay start of school - September 9)
 - to allow professional development for staff to start the year, not only in person, but remote
 - families who chose remote will need to understand expectations
 - remote learning has been built into the proposed calendar around vacations in order to have a cooling off period and for a deep cleaning of the buildings
 - professional development (more training in technology).

Guidelines, Recommendations, Expectations

- Instruction
 - in-person or remote
 - priority for teachers to build relationships with students/parents
 - acknowledge that remote learning will occur at some point during the year
 - need for professional development for staff and time for teams to plan/prepare
 - training/support for parents in remote setting
 - communication between students and teachers.

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- Student and Staff Wellness
 - change to start of the new school year
 - phased-in approach
 - parents need to sign-off that they will monitor child(ren)'s health daily
 - staff members will monitor their health daily
 - follow recommendations of CDC, NH DHHS, NH DOE
 - touchless paper towel holders, soap dispensers
 - bathrooms cleaned more regularly
 - mask required for staff when 6 ft. of physical distancing cannot be maintained
 - masks required for students when riding school buses, entering/exiting buildings, transitioning hallways, when 6 ft. of physical distancing cannot be maintained
 - desks will be at least 4-6 ft apart (students must wear masks if less than 6 ft distance)
 - building access limited to authorized personnel and approved visitors
 - students will use hand sanitizer or soap/water when entering/exiting buildings
 - safer to group students by cohorts and have teachers rotate to cohorts (if feasible)
 - classroom/bus windows will be open, weather permitting
 - essential items only will be brought to school
 - staff and students must adhere to current travel quarantines
 - based on travel method and COVID-19 rate in the travel destination
 - water fountains will not be in use in the buildings
 - Mental Health/Social-Emotional
 - provide professional development for staff
 - school wellness teams
 - screening for social-emotional needs of students; support for parents
 - social-emotional connection among students

- Technology
 - use a standardized, integrated platform
 - provide synchronous instruction
 - foster student/teacher engagement
 - encourage effective communication between teachers, students, parents
 - structure/coordination for completing assigned tasks
 - promote digital citizenship - "netiquette"
 - expand 1:1 Chromebook model to include grades 1-4
 - explore BYOD model at higher levels (long term planning)
 - explore expanding 1:1 to Kindergarten
 - specific internet resources (online learning, help desk site) available to students/families
 - professional development around effective use of technology, tools and standard set of skills
 - update more content around tools for technology driven instruction
 - need for additional technology staff with increased technology growth.

- Operations
 - travel guidance for staff and families
 - cloth face coverings and the use of personal protective equipment
 - masks required for students to enter/exit buildings
 - arriving to or leaving from a classroom
 - boarding/exiting/seated on school buses
 - traveling in hallways
 - while using restrooms
 - while engaged in classroom/group activities where may be less than 6 ft apart
 - mask breaks will be scheduled throughout the day
 - face coverings for staff when on school grounds and unable to maintain 6 ft physical distance
 - encouraged to bring own face coverings for extended use
 - visitors will be limited to access by appointment only and pre-approved by school principals
 - visitors without an appointment will not be admitted beyond the front secured vestibule

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- all visitors must complete a health screening and temperature check before admittance.
- proper hygiene will be required of students/staff in all buildings
- school cleaning/disinfection practices will follow CDC guidance
- all cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting will follow a strict schedule
- if a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs, isolation protocols will be in place and additional cleaning, sanitizing, disinfection protocols will be implemented
- school buildings will be closed for non-school functions for the duration of the 2020-2021 year
- ventilation systems are currently being audited in all buildings to identify areas in need of repair/replacement
- common areas may be repurposed to maintain physical distancing
- examining the Unified Arts schedule to minimize the number of contacts students have at any given time
- classroom configurations will have desks 6 ft apart and plexiglass shields on workstations
- furnishings will be removed to maximize room in classrooms

- Staffing
 - Additional technology personnel are needed to manage the growing needs of students/staff
 - Additional custodial staff are needed to keep up with increasing cleaning/sanitizing demands while students/staff are in the schools
 - Additional substitute teachers will be needed in the event of teacher absences
 - Additional monitors for buses to enforce mask wearing
 - Additional nursing staff to accommodate the expansion of the role/duties of school nurses in all three buildings.

- Food Service
 - breakfast and lunch will be served in the classroom
 - develop non-contact ordering system
 - follows National Restaurant Associations' ServSafe Sanitation guidelines
 - staff members will be screened prior to working
 - staff who prepare or serve food will wear a face mask and shield, as well as gloves, using proper hand hygiene prior to serving
 - GMS/LMS will eat in classrooms
 - CHS will increase lunches to accommodate physical distancing
 - lunches served in closed containers
 - tables and all surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized between lunch periods.

- Transportation
 - bus routes will be streamlined to accommodate physical distancing
 - families will be asked to commit to riding or not riding the buses
 - masks will be required while entering/exiting and seated on the buses
 - hand sanitizer will be available for use on the buses
 - seating will be assigned according to route placement
 - one student per seat (members of same household or neighbors with permission may sit together)
 - windows will remain open for airflow while weather allows
 - dropping off/picking up procedures will be changed
 - safe drop off and pick up zones will be determined.

- Athletics/Co-Curricular
 - NHIAA announced moving start date from to September 8
 - options to play local games with an agreement are being evaluated
 - recommendations for contact sports will be limited to practices and skills/drills
 - sports in which physical distancing can be maintained will be permitted
 - co-curricular activities will be limited to virtual meetings or small groups with physical distancing.

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Dr. Jette reported that the Oversight Committee could not reach a consensus on the model of reopening. He indicated that they considered remote learning, a hybrid model and a full reopening, as well as the capacity to run buildings with over 300 students in each building. He commented both the schools and administrators are recommending the hybrid option. He noted that district administration is aware of daycare, scheduling and work issues, but feel that the hybrid option is safest to maintain staffing at the current level.

- CHS - Principal Lonergan
 - focus on keeping students safe, maintaining physical distancing, social-emotional learning and following CDC guidelines
 - recommending a hybrid model of in-person and remote learning
 - 2 days in-person and 3 days remote
 - students would be split alphabetically
 - A-K group attends Monday/Tuesday; L-Z group attends Thursday/Friday; Wednesday remote for all students
 - implement a 4 x 4 block model to decrease number of classes for students
 - A, B, C, D blocks run first semester
 - E, F, G, H blocks run second semester
 - students with study hall in A or D block may request delayed arrival or early release with parent permission
 - no end of semester exams
 - end of course summative assessments may be administered by teachers and applied to course competencies
 - competency recovery can be scheduled for late January and late June
 - implement procedures for parking, parent drop-off / pick-up, busing
 - students required to wear masks in hallways and on stairwells
 - special permission to use lockers
 - lunch periods will increase to four per day with masks and physical distancing protocols.
- LMS - Principal Lecklider
 - recommending hybrid model of in-person and remote instruction
 - 2 days in-person and 3 days remote
 - students would be split alphabetically
 - A-K group attends Monday/Tuesday; L-Z group attends Thursday/Friday; Wednesday remote for all students
 - plan to offer rigorous academic program following CDC guidelines
 - fair and balanced plan when considering social-emotional needs, health and well-being of students
 - decreased numbers of students helps ventilation
 - Unified Arts will rotate per semester or quarter
 - students will be clustered in grade levels
 - support services will be in place
 - students will wear masks when passing in halls and physical distancing will be monitored
 - implement procedures for parent drop-off / pick up and buses
 - in hybrid model, lunches can be held in cafeteria with reduced students to accommodate physical distancing.

Mr. Lecklider indicated that we learned what we did well and what we did not do well with remote learning in the spring this year. He noted that there is a better plan for remote learning.

- GMS - Principal Mitchell
 - recommending hybrid model of in-person and remote instruction
 - 2 days in-person and 3 days remote
 - students would be split alphabetically
 - A-K group attends Monday/Tuesday; L-Z group attends Thursday/Friday; Wednesday remote for all students

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- remote learning will be provided as a synchronous experience
- students will receive their appropriate level of support services
- Unified Arts will be run in 18 day blocks to provide an opportunity for every class to have a single Unified Arts period
- implement new procedures for parent drop-off / pick-up and buses
- lunches will be served in the classrooms
- the cafeteria will be repurposed.

Dr. Jette commented that he has received an inordinate amount of emails from parents and students. He indicated that he is not able to respond to all of them, but they are read.

Ms. Widman reported that the results from the parent input submitted on the district website was virtually the same at 33% for each option: remote, hybrid and in-person. She indicated that remote instruction will be improved and provided as synchronous remote instruction. She noted we have minimal guidelines for remote learning to increase rigor and student engagement.

Budgetary

Dr. Jette indicated that the costs associated with each model are as follows:

- In-school option: \$746,441;
- Hybrid option: \$739,241;
- Remote option: \$55,400;
- Costs for special education will be determined.

Mr. Bourque thanked Dr. Jette and the Oversight Committee for their work on the reopening recommendations. He opened the meeting for community input.

E. Community Forum

Notice is hereby made that public comments shall be made without expectation of a response by any School Board Members to matters raised by such commentary. The Board respects the right of the public to communicate its stance on matters of interest, but meetings are scheduled in advance to conduct business put forth on its publicly proposed agenda only. Individuals or groups wishing to speak before the Board, with the exception of the "Community Forum" segments must inform the Superintendent of the topic to be discussed within seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Comments and statements may be made on matters of public concern directly related to the district's policies, programs and operations. In the interest of preserving individual privacy and due process rights, comments regarding individual employees, other than the Superintendent, or individual students shall be directed to the Superintendent in accordance with Policy KE. The Board reserves the right to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A should such comments or subject matter regarding individual employees and/or students be presented.

Claire Chew asked about AP scheduling at CHS and how a student in the first semester proposed block schedule will be prepared to take the AP exam in May.

Chris Gandia, 3 Chamberlin Drive, commented that one of our missions in the development of children is sports. He expressed disappointment in the suspension of sports in Litchfield schools. He indicated some call it caution and some call it fear. He believes that sports is necessary for building character and leadership. Mr. Gandia asked the School Board to consider permitting sports as a personal choice. He believes the choice should be up to the parents and students and those families who do not want to participate do not have to participate.

Hannah Cuvellier, CHS student, commented she is taking four AP classes next year and could be starting those classes in February with an exam in May or starting them in the fall and taking the exam in May. She indicated during the time she is waiting to take the exam she will not have access to them. She noted that she did not agree with the hybrid alphabetical model and suggested splitting the in-person option by grade level because some levels take more rigorous classes and class sizes are decreased.

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John MacDonald, 18 Rookery Way, suggested the district focus on direct live instruction. He indicated that remote instruction from this spring was unacceptable and was not structured. He commented that his child did not see 7 of her teachers at LMS during remote instruction and pre-recorded videos were not acceptable. Mr. MacDonald suggested placing webcams in each classroom and require teachers to teach everyday. He commented the best thing teachers do is engage with our children.

Jeff Hidalgo, 25 Brent Street, commented his son graduated with no ceremony and his daughter is in middle school. He agreed the safety of our children comes first, but it takes all of us to raise these children. He indicated that children cannot make life changing decisions; we need to make the decisions to make sure they are safe. He asked if band will continue and how it would work. He asked about sports and safety. He commented it is a difficult time during which we need to work together. He expressed appreciation for the work of the district.

Amy Ashe, teacher at GMS, asked about the plan for recess.

Mr. Mitchell, GMS Principal, indicated there will be recess.

Amy Ashe asked about the plan for remote instruction and what it would look like.

Mr. Mitchell indicated that the plan is to be determined.

Richard Rafferty, 33 Century Lane, commented he is a previous school board member and a Special Education teacher. He indicated that the decision in front of the School Board is a difficult one. He expressed support for remote learning, which will guarantee the health and safety of the community.

Laura Gandia, 3 Chamberlin Drive, commented she is not in favor of the hybrid option because it fails to provide adequate education. She mentioned that the foundation beliefs struck her and that the number one goal should be providing an adequate, quality education. She indicated that a hybrid model will have a negative effect socially and emotionally on children. Mrs. Gandia commented that every student needs a quality, adequate education. She expressed support for in-school instruction and for sports to continue in the district.

Glen Costello, CHS Head Football Coach and Special Education Administrator in Massachusetts, commented that playing sports contributes to social-emotional learning, character foundation and an increased sense of belonging that must be put into practice. He indicated there is a strong correlation in school pride during football season. Mr. Costello noted that students with IEPs do not fall through cracks and asked what about students whose only motivation is in sports? How does the district identify students that do not have a sense of belonging? He indicated there is no substitution for competitive football. He commented the character education provided through athletics is more valuable than in the classroom.

Tom Adamakos, 11 Century Lane, commented as a school administrator in another district he knows it is not easy to put together a plan like this and that you may not please everybody. He mentioned that surrounding districts are still maintaining sports. He asked if the district is submitting to fear. He noted that coaches and athletes volunteer to participate and reducing sports will drive them to other organizations that provide sports. Mr. Adamakos indicated that there is also a social-emotional element to athletics, which keeps children motivated and focused. He commented athletics teaches children a far greater lesson than in the classroom. He asked the Board to reconsider maintaining sports in the district.

Rich Lascelles, 236 Charles Bancroft Highway, State Representative, commented he put four children through the district schools, had one grandchild graduate, one is in grade 8 and one is in grade 6. He mentioned that he has been a substitute teacher for 10 years and misses CHS. He indicated that he heard some aspects of the reopening plan that he likes, some he has misgivings about and much that cannot be predicted. He commented the plan is not going to please everyone and people will have to make their own decisions. He noted that we hope for the best and plan for the worst, which equates to starting at the beginning assuming we will have to implement remote learning. He indicated if all students are in the schools it would be hard to comply with the guidelines.

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Mr. Lascelles acknowledged that some students have to be in the classroom; some have to be home; and some need the live instruction. He commented we did well with remote, but missed the interaction with peers. He mentioned that the model in Europe is opening schools with students that need to be in the classrooms and broadcasting remotely to those who need to be home. He indicated that he liked the idea to use outside air. He pointed out that bus drop-off will be problematic at GMS. Mr. Lascelles indicated that the hybrid model is our responsibility as a society to those children. He urged everyone to think about it. He noted that he respects what has been said with regard to sports, but we have to keep others in mind as well.

Emma Flindt, 123 Hillcrest Road, thanked the Taskforce for their work. She commented that if the decision is the remote option, her family does not need to have additional Chromebooks. She asked the School Board to make sure the plan includes the mental health component and ensure that special education students with IEPs are addressed.

Kate Stevens, 9 Evergreen Circle, commented if a remote option is being offered ensure that there are several times throughout the year students can transfer between virtual and remote learning. She indicated the situation changes very quickly and makes it difficult to commit to a full school year one way or another. She suggested that task force members should do a dry run on the buses as well.

Susan Rafferty, 33 Century Lane, commented that education is so important, as are sports and everyone would like to get back to normal. She asked the Board to consider starting remotely and working into the in-person option slowly.

Karina Carten, 3 Century Lane, commented SEL skills are important, but a 2 day in school / 3 days out will not be adequate. She noted there are other hybrid models out there. She indicated the skills of communicating and collaborating with each other is important and we should not be satisfied giving our students anything less than rigorous. She commented it is important to understand the minimal standards are creating gaps. She mentioned she was concerned AP classes will not be there for the students and will impact their changes for college. She asked how PK-K students would access remote classes, commenting they should be progressing, connecting with peers, and learning from teachers. She asked the Board to truly consider what a hybrid model will look like and consider the mental welfare of our students in Litchfield.

Liz Vaillancourt, 3 Crowell Court, commented that she feels confident about going back to the school where she works. She mentioned that she heard the district is concerned about spacing in the buildings. She indicated if spacing is the issue that is stopping us from implementing the in-person school option, we should be asking ourselves how creatively we planned, what we have considered, how it was determined and then reinvestigate it.

Jenny Goodman, 17 Snowdrop Lane, commented she did not hear any discussion or consideration for music classes. She would like to know if music classes will continue and how middle school students will be grouped. With reference to remote learning, she asked who would be teaching remotely and if students can utilize the remote option when they are absent from an illness.

Keri Douglas, 9 Pheasant Lane, commented she is not a fan of the hybrid option. She asked if it has been considered that children in the A-K group will be impacted by more holidays than the L-Z group. She indicated she wants her children in school. She noted she sends her children to school for socialization and not to wear face masks at their desks to make others feel comfortable. She commented she wants her children to return to their normal rather than teaching them to accept a new one. Mrs. Douglas commented that if hybrid is going to be the only option to reopen, she encouraged the district to remove children like hers and allow them to participate in an "offline" version of remote learning at home with other parents and children.

Jessica Bergeron, 69 Charles Bancroft Highway, commented she has a student in each school in the district. She mentioned that she works in a school where she has to deliver remote services and is also a parent with remote learners. She indicated remote learning was stressful for her children. She was concerned that the proposed plan consists of 60% of the year at home. She noted not enough details were provided for the hybrid plan. She

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asked how remote instruction will be improved, about assessments and what will happen when there is a vaccine.

Trixie Gardner, 66 Naticook Avenue, thanked the Taskforce for their work. She asked if there will be a full remote model for those who want and need one. She commented that she has compassion for teachers who were asked to do something they have never done before and now they may be asked to teach in person and remotely. She asked the Board to think about the students who have to stay home. Mrs. Gardner commented that there are many unanswered questions with this plan and not enough data. She suggested the Taskforce spend some time in the classrooms to determine spacing and on the buses, and show parents what a school day would look like. She asked the Taskforce to share with parents what remote learning will look like. She indicated if people do not know what it looks like they will find other ways to get their children schooling.

Jill Ozmore, 34 Page Road, expressed support with the hybrid option. She believes that the schools are not safe enough yet. She expressed concern with remote instruction from the spring and that the teaching was not good. She commented that she could not imagine how to help her child with special education work as she works full time. She asked where her child with disabilities would go to get her services. Mrs. Ozmore further commented that she does not agree that having older children in the classrooms clean desks is appropriate. She indicated School Board members should be patient with teachers and families, as well as be appropriate and professional.

Brooke Roman, 153 Page Road, expressed support for in-person learning five days per week. She also asked for a plan for band and chorus.

Karen Roman, 153 Page Road, thanked the Taskforce for their work and mentioned that she listened to all the taskforce meetings. She indicated that the members spoke about spacing in the classrooms. She commented we have a large population in town that did not get COVID-19. She was in support of in-person learning with remote options vs the hybrid option. She believes that the hybrid option would consist of more than one teacher, which would not be conducive to learning.

Amy Brenton, 101 Talent Road, expressed support for continuing full time sports. She commented one of her sons did not like school and football was his motivation. She indicated that the sports program should be continued. Mrs. Brenton mentioned one of her sons, in grade 1, is a special education student and cannot participate in remote learning, and her other child did not like remote learning. She indicated that her children need to go back to school full time.

Liz Vaillancourt, 3 Crowell Court, commented that she was disappointed that a decision on the plan was not reached by the Oversight Committee. She indicated remote learning is not what is best for children and it was very difficult for the teachers. She noted that the majority of children are not getting full benefits remotely. She mentioned that social-emotional statistics show 25% of children are depressed and 20% experience anxiety. She indicated parents deserve the opportunity to send their children to school five days a week.

Melissa Minah, Volleyball Coach, commented that she supports all decisions made in accordance with what is best for children. She indicated children thrive when they play sports and compete against other teams. She noted we were granted permission to work outside with our children, starting out in small groups and allowed two weeks later to increase the number. She commented that much time was spent spraying every ball after every practice. She indicated most of the children missed their spring sport and now you are taking away fall sports, which they need. She noted children have been socializing all summer long.

April Webber, 38 Charles Bancroft Highway, asked the Board to consider the working and single families. She mentioned that there are foster families in other districts that will struggle with remote learning and it is overwhelming for them and they find they will not keep those children. She encouraged the Board to consider the full time in-person option.

Patrick Keefe, LEA President, commented this is a serious situation and none of us signed up for this. Teachers were asked to switch gears and instruct in a model we were not used to doing. He indicated that he understands the frustration, but we did our best and worked hard, giving it our all. He noted it was a challenge. He commented as we look to reopen schools there is no one size fits all remedy. There are competing interests in

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the LEA, the parents, students, administrators, and the School Board. He asked that everyone work together on the solution and not fight with one another.

Mr. Keefe indicated that teachers love the students and working in the district. He agreed parents and students should have a choice, but teachers should have a choice as well. He commented that there are teachers that have medical conditions and need to work remotely. There are those that do not feel comfortable returning to the classrooms and deserve options, choices and respect. The NEA released a reopening plan that says teachers should not be returning to school if certain conditions are not met, such as HVAC systems that are not adequate for the COVID situation. He indicated the district is working on getting documentation that systems are working properly, but there are a number of safety concerns for teachers and there are contract issues that may be violations or legal issues. He commented that teachers want to be here, but want to make sure it is safe to do so. He thanked the School Board members and SAU for their work. He indicated the students in Litchfield are the best in the State.

Mrs. Harrison, School Board Vice Chair, commented that many people have taken the time to share their input via email and felt it was appropriate to read all correspondence from community members:

In support of Fall Sports:

Samuel Caliri
William Caliri
Kate Kirby
Kari Scopelites
Jennifer Biron
Courtney Landry
Thomas Adamakos
Amy Daigle
Jennifer Abdinoor
JD Abdinoor
Kristen Adamakos
Alexandra Kirby
Nicole Wilson

In support of Hybrid Reopening Option:

Erica Ruggles
Sherry Fay

In support of Remote Reopening Option:

Debra Kovisars
Susan Rafferty
Joycelin Raho
Katie Cameron

In support of In-Person Reopening Option:

Keri Douglas
Amy Steiniger
Sally Alwan
Jennifer Bourque
Cynthia Caliri
Josh Bremberg
Cheryl Lavoie
Nicole Wilson
Derek Barka
Heather Portillo

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Justin Somers, 16 Hamel Circle, commented that he was concerned that the meeting this afternoon was one in which the public attended physically. He believes that since we are fashioning remote learning in the reopening plan, it makes sense to use the technology to deliver this meeting to the community.

Kate Stevens, 9 Evergreen Circle, commented if a full remote option is offered, the district should ensure opportunities for transferring students between virtual and in-person classes at least 2 to 4 times during the year. She suggested the Taskforce do some dry runs with volunteers to work out the “kinks” in the plan before implementing the plan.

Hearing no further public input, Mr. Bourque thanked the community members for attending the meeting and sharing their input with the Board.

II. ADJOURN

Mr. Bourque made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m. Mrs. Harrison seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
Administrative Assistant to the School Board

July 27, 2020

Dear School Board,

My name is Sherry Fay and I am a parent of two high school students registered at Campbell High School.

In making your decision to reopen Litchfield schools, I recommend that that you base it on statistics, science, and recommendations from the medical community. I don't believe this decision should be personal political views. A decision that weighs so heavily on human lives deserves educated, informative, non-biased attention. If our SAU or administration has conducted any research or have made any recommendations on the reopening, please consider that as information, too.

I recommend school reopening in a hybrid model, at least for a short term, with safety precautions put in place and most importantly, reinforced, such as wearing masks, social distancing, and limiting large groups to less than 25. We could utilize preliminary data from other school communities that reopen in mid-August to compare what models are successful and if they are, we could transition into a full-time in person setting. "It is critical that all administrators implement multiple SARS-CoV-2 mitigation strategies (e.g., social distancing, cloth face coverings, hand hygiene, and use of cohorting) and staggering when students return to a school facility" (CDC, July 2020). This article is referenced below.

Finally, when making your decision, please consider our staff including teachers, administrators, school nurses, receptionists, classroom assistants, special education staff, specialists, lunch and recess monitors and our bus drivers. If we consider recommendations for seating in classroom settings and buses of three feet apart, please consider this fact from an MIT professor: "a fine mist of mucus and saliva can burst from a person's mouth at nearly a hundred miles an hour and travel as far as 27 feet. When the sternutation is over, a turbulent cloud of droplet-containing gas can remain suspended for several minutes, depending on the size of the droplet" (Bourouiba, April 2020). Though our students' risks of long-term illness or death from covid are low, our staff's risks are not, and a three-foot distance may not be enough to ensure their safety.

Thank you for the time and efforts in making your decision.

Here are the links I referenced in my correspondence:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/prepare-safe-return.html#cohorting>
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/coronavirus-covid-sneeze-fluid-dynamics-in-photos/>

Sherry Fay

On Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 1:19 PM Nicole Wilson <nicolewilson19@comcast.net> wrote:

Hello,

As a parent of 3 children in the Litchfield school, I wanted to voice my thoughts on remote learning and sports.

Remote Learning:

I have two children on IEP's, March - June was very difficult for them. GMS did an amazing job working with my son, CHS.... well that was another story. These kids can not emotionally or educationally have remote learning again. My tow high school kids felt overwhelmed all the time, they were more worried about missing something than they were learning. The kids did assignments...but did they learn anything? For our family the answer was NO.

Sports:

This is a must have for high school athletes. It's not just about playing a sport, it's a way to get frustration out, it's a mental break and a great way to do what they love. Most of these kids get through the school day looking forward to playing at the end of the day. They keep their grades up and are more engaged because of sports. Soccer is a sport that can be preformed while socially distancing. Even our own town leagues are playing this fall - with practices starting already, maintaining social distance guidelines.

At such an odd time in the world right now, these kids need normalcy, they need something to feel proud about, something to look forward to and mostly they need a good education.

Thank you for your time,
Nicole Wilson
23 Cranberry Lane

Thu, Jul 30, 2:28 PM

Derek Barka <derek@derekbarka.com>

First off, I appreciate the difficult situation you are in and the complexity of the decisions that need to be made. I understand there are no right answers and not everyone is going to be happy with whatever decisions are made.

That said, since everyone else is expressing their opinions, I'd like to express mine. I personally believe the kids should be in the classroom. I don't feel the education they received from March through June was anywhere near the education they would have received in the classroom. I do understand that we had to react quickly and we did the best we can given the time and circumstances. If we do implement a hybrid option moving forward, I expect that the students would be required to be online and viewing the live class. I would expect the teacher to be on video so remote students can see their teacher, their gestures, facial expressions, and any materials being used to supplement the verbal instruction. I expect the teachers would be interacting with the remote students the same way they would interact with an in-person student. These details were not clear in the plan and concerned me.

Finally, I believe cancelling sports is extremely short sighted. My family is as careful as they come in regards to limiting exposure to Covid-19. We limit activities, limit interactions, wear masks around other people, wear masks indoors, and only eat outdoors. However, sports and activities are an essential part of our student's lives. It builds camaraderie, it builds confidence, it builds self-esteem, teaches teamwork, and provides valuable exercise and health benefits - which are crucial to immune support and battling viruses like Covid-19. A sport like soccer occurs outside and has limited contact. The benefits far outweigh the risks. If some parents aren't comfortable with their family engaging in sports or activities, that's fine. I respect everyone's own choices, but don't take the opportunity away from others who feel the risks can be mitigated.

Thank you for your time and, again, I don't envy the position you are all in.

Thanks
Derek Barka

Thu, Jul 30, 10:49 PM

Paula Giacoumis <pgiacoumis@gmail.com>

Good Evening Dr. Jette and School Board,

I am having to write an email late at night for input on the hybrid model because I had to leave the meeting for my own board meeting for reopening. I didn't have time to speak.

First of all, I want to thank the committee's efforts to bring a plan to the community. It's not an easy task, it's uncharted waters, and there are so many aspects to think of, which I am sure you have discussed time and time again. I, in no way, doubt the positive intentions of all committee members. And I do thank them for their time.

With that said, leadership was clearly lacking. I am disappointed in what was brought forth today. As a parent in Litchfield for some time now, the inability to gain consensus seems to be a problem deeply embedded beyond this pandemic. I do not envy Dr. Jette's efforts to undo what has been here beyond his tenure.

Your plan may have been better received by the community had the team been strong about the recommendation for the hybrid plan. I don't understand how an oversight committee, who is supposed to represent our community members, would think a community would agree to a plan they didn't even agree to. To come to the table and say we couldn't agree is unacceptable to me.

After watching the comments from the community it's clear that people want a choice. And a choice is what you should present.

I hope that for once this school board will set a clear goal for their leader. This is not acceptable, come back with something better. The constant blame on money and space is getting old. If it's space, think outside the box. Many districts have done so. Reach out to them. Gain insight from teachers to want to fix a problem, not complain about it. If money is an issue, reprioritize. We are in an unexpected time, so yes maybe some things need to be on hold. It's about time to make tough decisions, follow through with them, and make it happen. Instead of saying, "we can't," how about trying, "what do we need to get it done?" Work with and seek out those who are problem solvers, not problems. It's not against the rules to seek out those whose opinions you value.

I expected better. Ideally I want my kids back in school 5 days a week. I could have lived with the hybrid model had it been presented in a way where a team was backing up the decision, instead I left the meeting feeling frustrated and disappointed.

School board, direct your leadership to give parents a choice. I have confidence they will figure it out.

Thank you.

Paula Izbicki

3 Kokokehas Dr.

From: **Terri DeCarli** <terridecarli@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 8:29 PM
Subject: Reopening plan
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

> Good afternoon,

> I am writing to express my disappointment with the potential cancelling of Football, Soccer and volleyball. After watching the live streamed meeting I echo the thoughts of Tom Adamakos, Chris Gandia and Coach Costello. Sports are a huge part of kids social development and mental well being, you have kids who have played their sport since they were 4 and 5 years of age, waiting for their chance to play for their high school, you have seniors who are trying to play in college and they need this fall season to cement their chances of attending and playing at the schools they want to go to. For some students sports is what gets them through the day, the week, the month, and quite frankly the year.

>

> Personally for my family I have a senior who is captain of this years two time championship soccer team. This season is what he has been waiting for since he was 4. A chance to play one more time for his team, a team that he has given hours and hours of his life to.

>

> The NHIAA has made a decision to move forward with all sports. Towns that surround us are still maintaining their athletic programs. Most of our teams have been getting together for trainings multiple times a week this whole summer.

>

> These young men and women have been through a lot since this all started in March and honesty I feel like they have done it with grace and understanding. I think to do this to them now is going to do more harm then good.

>

> Respectfully,

>

> Terri DeCarli

From: **Debi Leary** <dbly4@icloud.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 7:28 PM
Subject: This is for the whole board please
To: <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>

In response to the woman who said the oversight committee had "one job" and we/ they didn't do it, I feel like saying, "The Board and District did not put a firm plan in place because they felt it important to lay the foundation but take into consideration parent and staff input".

I'm upset that she thinks we didn't do the job assigned. We took all things very seriously and spent a great deal of time reviewing reports, recommendations and news articles.

Anyway, good luck. I do agree with the crowd about having sports though (if they add a clause to the permission form) as it is key to so many students. I remember playing sports and having to sign a liability waiver if I ever got hurt (which I did!) so perhaps it's similar. Sports does teach you how to be a team player, a leader, and gives you the endurance and grit you need to overcome. Anyway, I wanted you to know it was good that you held the meeting today, and I feel like we all have to continue to support each other throughout this very difficult time :-/

From: **Portillo, Heather** <heather.portillo@cmc-nh.org>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 4:22 PM
Subject: Reopening for schools
To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

I am watching the video now for the reopening and has the idea been discussed about letting parents decide that they want to do for their family.

There should be an option to either have your child go 5 days a week or do remote per quarter or semester. This could be a signed form that states what you would like to do.

I know for my family remote or hybrid will not work with my son and I may have to look at different options for his freshman year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you,
Heather Portillo

From: **Travis Tucker** <ttucker21@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 4:19 PM
Subject: Reopening Concerns
To: SchoolBoard <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>

Hello Members of the Litchfield School Board,

I am extremely grateful for the extensive work and planning in regard to school reopenings in the next few weeks. I would like to raise concerns in regard to the reopening plan for schools. First, as a student enrolled in multiple AP courses, the modifications to the high school schedule (4 classes first semester, 4 classes second semester) defeat the entire purpose of an AP course. AP exams are administered in early May. Finishing AP courses in January- to take an exam 4 months later, is quite frankly, useless. Starting an AP course one week before February and giving students 2 and a half months to learn an entire year's worth of content before the exam is even less reasonable. With this schedule, I should opt out of every single AP exam I was planning on taking next year (4) because it is simply not possible for me to perform well on those assessments in that manner. However, not taking AP exams for the AP classes you are enrolled in is a major red flag to Colleges and puts me at major losses in terms of chances for college credit. Even for every other course, skills need to be built upon for an entire year. Is teaching English for a semester here and math for a semester there really going to bring student growth? Students in grades K-12 need sustained, high-level, and interactive education. We are not a college. Basic skills and competencies should be built upon all year. Perhaps a modified approach would be utilizing trimesters and courses last for 2 trimesters. I should not have to suffer because of poor logistical planning that doesn't account for rigorous education. We are a community with 400 students in the building and nearly 80 staff members. There is no reason why we cannot be a tad more flexible. It is already devastating to know I will never get a senior year where I can see all of my friends. It is already terrible enough that we will not get a homecoming, or football games, or pep rallies, and everything else that accompanies the high school experience. Let's not jeopardize rigorous academics with a "one-size fits all" solution that really doesn't take into account the needs of all students when so much has already been taken from us.

Respectfully submitted,
Travis Tucker, Campbell High School Student
[13 Garden Drive, Litchfield, NH](https://www.litchfieldsd.org)

From: **Alexander Kirby** <akirby24@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 2:59 PM
Subject: HS Fall Sports
To: Michael Jette <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>
CC: SchoolBoard <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>

Mr. Jette and School board members,

I am going into freshmen year of high school and I was last years Student Council President for LMS. I feel that it would be unfair for our season to be cancelled after the hard work and effort that all teams have put in. Speaking for the soccer team personally we have got together and played soccer with each other almost every day. Not only have we gotten together to play soccer we have also went on team runs. This will also effect some of the sports teams students grades. Most students use sports as motivation to keep there grades up. Thank you very much for your consideration.

-Alex Kirby

From: **Kristin Adamakos** <tkadamakos@icloud.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 2:07 PM
Subject: Football/sports
To: <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>, <rmeyers@litchfieldsd.org>, <bbourque@litchfieldsd.org>, <emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org>, <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>, <thershberger@litchfieldsd.org>, <jknight@litchfieldsd.org>

To whom this may concern

My name is Drew Adamakos and I play football for campbell. First off I would like to know who came up with the plan to cancel fall sports and why they thought this was a good idea. For me playing football was a great way for me to end my day it allowed me to go be with my friends and do something I love sometimes the only reason I would get out of bed was because of football. Football motivated me to get good grades just so I could keep playing it helped me get throu school because I thought only and hour left till football. If you take that away from the student athletes in my personal opinion I think you will see a huge drop in grades and attendance rate because some of these kids will say oh no football I'm not gonna try anymore. I strongly think you should reconsider your decision on trying to cancel fall sports

Thank you
Drew Adamakos

From: **PAUL** <pjbiron@comcast.net>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 2:02 PM
Subject: School Reopening Plan Questions/Concerns
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>, <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Good afternoon,

Please share this email with any parties that are currently involved in the reopening plan decisions.

As a parent of two high school students (as well as being a teacher in another local NH district) I understand the difficulty of the situation but I do have questions/concerns regarding the reopening plan.

My first question is in regards to course offerings, will students be able to complete all of the courses that they have signed up for in the spring? With the hybrid format, I am concerned that my daughter & son will not be able to follow the educational course track that they are looking to follow in order to prepare them for college as well as have the same rigor of courses as others they may be competing with for entrance to the desired colleges in their futures.

My second question is in regards to high school sports. I am wondering why & how the decision was made to eliminate some high school sports (but not others). I feel all sports should be occurring this fall as this is a major part of the social-emotional well being of students. As with the option for parents to choose whether their child participates in remote vs hybrid learning, this should have been an option for student athletes to choose whether or not they want to participate. There are many students (including my own) that use this as a way to thrive in the high school environment by developing leadership, socialization, perseverance, and other "soft skills". Many student athletes have already put in time for off-season training. The argument of limiting their interactions with each other or students from other schools is not valid as many have had social contact with outside club teams, part-time work, or other social interactions already.

Thank you for your efforts on this process, but I ask that you actively take these concerns of our family & others within town in order to make this the most beneficial and safe school year for all.

Paul Biron

From: **'Justin Somers' via SchoolBoard** <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>

Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 12:56 PM

Subject: Reopening meeting

To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

CC: mjette@litchfieldsd.org <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Good afternoon -

My name is Justin Somers and I reside at 16 Hamel Circle. I am emailing out of concern regarding the reopening meeting being held this afternoon at 3:00 PM. My main concern is that the meeting is held only in person. I do understand there is an option for parents to send in questions however a live streaming would be more appropriate or if not a recording to be viewed at some later time. Given that we are in some way fashioning remote learning three times weekly (I've read the proposal for reopening) it seems logical to provide technology use in delivering this all important meeting to the community; for how can we say we are using technology to provide instruction to our children three times weekly but we can't deliver a meeting in such a manner.

My wife nor I can attend nor would we in person given the pandemic. The proposal statement and email from Dr. Jette eludes that a large number of people are expected to attend and I would rather watch the meeting from the safety of my residence.

Warm regards,

Justin Somers

----- Original Message -----

From: BRYAN
To: mjette@litchfieldsd.org, schooboard@litchfieldsd.org
Sent: July 30, 2020 at 10:51 AM
Subject: Reopening

Dear Mr. Jette and Litchfield School Board,

I am writing to you as a parent of 3 students in the district. I may be unable to attend the 3pm school board meeting so I'm writing this letter in lieu. I have Two kids who will be attending LMS and one will be a senior at Campbell High School. It is my understanding that the hybrid school option may be one of the options being looked at for school this school year. As a parent of 3 students, I am very concerned about this possibility. I have kept up with watching the task force videos and minutes and it never seemed like hybrid was really

An option and the focus was More on in person with remote option. So I was very surprised to see this in the latest minutes, while I'm still waiting to watch the video. And have also heard some task force members were surprised as well. So who decided this. In the survey it said 85% of parents wanted in person school.

While my students grades remained mostly in tact, my children had a very difficult time staying motivated and engaged this past semester. To be honest I'm not even sure how much of what they learned was retained. I cannot picture my kids working remotely 3 days a week - sitting in different rooms of my house on a Chromebook for the length of a school day watching teachers teach class after class. My fear is their productivity and motivation will diminish with this method, as it did in the spring. And they won't really be learning effectively. In addition, there will be no consistency established. I also don't know how easy it will be to really split classes by last name. How do you know classes are spread across the alphabet. I feel this would be very difficult at the high school level especially with the variety of classes offered. Other towns of similar size are giving in Person a try with hybrid as a backup. Why can't we?

In addition, I am also writing to express concern about the possibility of sports not happening. The NHIAA approved it. Litchfield is not a hotspot. In fact we play many small towns in northern NH where numbers are low. We cannot assume towns won't play us. Throw our town in the hat - part of a season is better than none even if some towns bow out. I am really Hoping the district will have sports this year. I feel that My kids need this outlet for their emotional, social and physical well Being. I drive by the softball fields many times a week and it is packed with team practicing and playing games with kids from other towns and against other towns. There are also many club sports playing and have been playing all summer. We owe it to these kids . Sports help with their motivation for school itself but giving them an outlet after school. Taking this away from them could be detrimental. As a parent, I am willing to pay for additional buses or cleaning supplies etc. whatever is needed to help this happen. We owe it to these kids. While some may say that we shouldn't have sports with HVAC and air issues in school, it is not fair to say that the money used for sports should Go to that instead. If you don't have a child that plays sports, think about the one thing your child loves and what it would feel like to have that taken away. Their one outlet! What will all these kids be doing without it. It's disheartening to think our school board and administration will not at least make an attempt to have sports. Let's try it and see.

Please consider these items when making a final decision on how Litchfield will move toward this school year.

Regards,
Cheryl Lavoie

From: **Abdinoor, Jennifer** <Jennifer_Abdinoor@comcast.com>

Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 9:34 AM

Subject: School board decision AND School sports-please allow parents a choice

To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Good Morning.

I am writing to you as fulltime working parents.

Our son, Jaxon will be entering freshman year at the H.S. in the fall. He is currently active, playing sports for, Seacoast United Soccer club team, practicing with the H.S. Soccer team, & playing outdoor basketball with H.S. kids.

I realize the decisions the schoolboard and Athletic Administration have to make on whether kids should be allowed back in school and playing sports will be very challenging. I would like to share my thoughts as a Mom and Litchfield resident.

Unfortunately, I will be in meetings most of the day today and will not be able to attend the School meeting. I do have friends that are able to attend.

During the last few months of LMS, my family and I struggled with the recorded remote learning. My son requires socialization and interactions in order to be at his best mentally. My job changed from being in the office 4xs a week to working at home every day for 9+hrs, while trying to ensure my son was on line doing his work, helping him with school work, and ensuring he got a little exercise each day. It was the hardest time in our lives so far.

The teachers did what they could do and we appreciated that, however the lack of socialization with his friends and not being able to interact during school or sports/ practices almost broke him. He is an only child and was lonely every day; as parents my husband and I struggled to find the time to support him as we are in work meetings most of the day. We started to see his behavior change and he became more addicted to his online games. Our son is extremely outgoing and a happy boy; we recognized that he truly needs some interaction and direction from teachers to succeed and grow as a teenager. Jaxon is back to his real self now seeing his friends, biking, playing sports and laughing. I would hate for all that to be ripped away from him!

I would like to put a positive word in for at least a hybrid school model AND the need to allow kids to play sports. We did complete the online surveys as well. Jaxon has been playing sports all summer as I mentioned above; each coach has set up certain guidelines to include: social distancing, Temperature checks before games, & completing a waiver before each game.

Please allow the option for the children to return to school and continue with the sports. Along with other parents, we are very concerned about their mental health and our own if we are forced back into our homes another year. I worry about the long term affects on the children without the socialization and direct instruction from his teachers.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and pray the right decisions are made.

Thank you,

Jenn and JD Abdinoor

Thu, Jul 30, 8:59 AM

Daigle 5 <amydaigle@gmail.com>

Good morning.

First, I want to say Thank YOU for the countless hours you have dedicated to planning and ensuring that our students are safe during this unprecedented time.

For what it is worth, I am compelled to write to you this morning to provide my perspective on sports at the high school level continuing. Many kids in town are currently playing sports. These kids will continue to play sports even if the SAU decides against it. With the governor and NHIAA giving the "green light", AAU and club sports are anxiously waiting on the sidelines to scoop up these kids. Sadly, if this happens, the school will never get many of those athletes back. The reality is that families will find a way to pay the thousands of dollars for those teams and many kids will continue to play at that higher level. The children of families who cannot afford those teams will be the ones impacted the most by a decision not to play.

The mental and physical wellbeing of many of these kids desperately depends on playing sports. My freshman is currently playing travel baseball, a summer high school hockey league, youth hockey, and attended the football conditioning that was held at Campbell. All his sports have operated within the guidelines and without issues. If AAU and Club sports can play, then why can't high school?

It is my opinion that high school sports would be the safest option as the SAU could ensure safety guidelines are followed. I understand that some families may not be comfortable playing sports and that is within their rights. But let the families make the decision on what is best for them. I also understand that there is concern regarding students encountering other areas and bringing the virus to the school. This risk will not go away by not playing HS sports. This risk will only increase due to the number of kids who will play on several different AAU and Club teams. Additionally, with the CDC guidelines busing will need to look different which will result in a higher cost. But why can't the expenses be transferred to the families who want their child to play? As a family we have spent over 8k this year alone for hockey and baseball. We are not the only ones who have spent thousands for their kids to be able to play a sport. I personally would be happy to pay for transportation or even sign a waiver saying that I will be responsible for transporting my child. I understand that locker rooms are another concern but honestly locker rooms are being used today by the hockey rinks just in a different manner. These are hurdles that we can overcome and find solutions for. Not reasons to not play.

Sports may not look and feel the same, but it is manageable to do. Many of you may have experienced the difference but for those that may not have seen it, here is my experience. Baseball is limited to who can attend, masks are required in the dugouts, and by players when social distancing cannot be adhered to. Gum, seeds, and spitting is not allowed. Everyone must have their own water bottle. Bags are placed in marked locations. Parents and coaches must always wear a mask. For my son's league there is only one ump who stands behind the pitcher and at the end of the game both teams stand in front of the dugout and waive their hats instead of handshakes. For hockey, the Cyclones Arena checks temps and masks are required upon entering. Only one parent is allowed in and a mask is always required. Locker rooms are open, but the team is split between a couple rooms to allow for spacing. Dressing is done at home or in the parking lot and only skates are put on inside the locker room. Parents and coaches must always wear masks including when they are on the ice with the kids. The rink also has the water bubbler and showers shut off. Tri-Town is operating in a similar manner except the locker rooms have been locked until this week. Handshakes at the end of the game are not allowed. My daughter's dance studio is also open. They are checking temps upon entering. Requiring masks upon entering. Families are requested to stay outside, and the studio has 8x8 boxes marked off for the dancers to dance in.

I provide this detail as I feel it is important to understand that sports can't and won't look the same, but they can be done safely. Students will continue to play sports and the safest place for them to do so is with their classmates who they are already interacting with. I wish I could attend today's meeting but ironically, I will be at Tri-town for

my son's Summer hockey game for a team that is made up of Campbell and Pembroke Academy students. I look forward to seeing the outcome of today's meeting.

Again, thank you for your time and dedication.

Sincerely,

Amy Daigle

From: **Thomas Adamakos** <AdamakosT@nashua.edu>

Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 8:40 AM

Subject: 2020-2021 School Year - Sports

To: mjette@litchfieldsd.org <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>, bbourque@litchfieldsd.org <bbourque@litchfieldsd.org>, emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org <emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org>, charrison@litchfieldsd.org <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>, rmeyers@litchfieldsd.org <rmeyers@litchfieldsd.org>, thershberger@litchfieldsd.org <thershberger@litchfieldsd.org>

Good Morning and Good Day,

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and fellow educator. I have been a teacher and administrator for nearly 25 years and I think we can all agree that we have never experienced a situation in education such as our current state. I truly understand the difficulty in rendering decisions such as the one facing the district today. My understanding is that with the school year still to be determined, athletics for students will be reduced, to include no football. This is where I wish to express my concern.

I wish to understand how this decision was made as I see surrounding and peripheral districts preparing to implement full athletic schedules. The NHIAA recently came out in support of athletics moving forward so I am wondering why the Litchfield School District wishes to deviate from their recommendations. Was data used to determine Fall sports be reduced and/or eliminated or are we submitting to fear and comparisons to more urban areas across the Nation. Coaches and athletes voluntarily commit to participation and understand the risks involved. I fear ending sports here in our community such as Football and Soccer, will only put our children further at risk as they will be pushed to outside organizations and clubs that have contact with many students/teams from other states. Exposure to this virus could multiply without precautions taken by professionals within our own state.

At the forefront in education in many districts including Litchfield, is the concern for the Social-Emotional health and wellbeing of our students. I hope you realize what this will do to the emotional well being of student-athletes without this outlet. Athletics generally build good citizens. Students learn in many different ways and some students "do not do school well" unless they have buy-in. Athletics keeps kids motivated, committed, and focused to keep their academics from faltering. Athletics teaches some students far greater lessons than they receive from teachers in a classroom or on a computer screen through Distance Learning. They learn collaboration, hard work, commitment, and focus, while making friendships with potential to last a lifetime. Another quality athletics instills is Loyalty. Coach Vince Lombardi once stated "Loyalty is the individual commitment to a group effort- That is what makes a team work, a civilization work". To eliminate sports would take these students' loyalty to their school and this community away. Some may think "What's the point" if athletics is not there for them.

I implore you to let sports continue this school year. The students and coaches understand what they are signing up for and the statistics (currently) state wide reveals far lower risk than what is portrayed nightly on the news. A decision such as eliminating sports has far-reaching consequences for our students and I do hope the decision is reconsidered to allow our student-athletes to flourish.

Thank You,

Thomas Adamakos
Principal-Amherst Street School
Nashua, NH
Resident of Litchfield, N

From: **Courtney** <landrybct@comcast.net>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 8:05 AM
Subject: Re-opening Input
To: <Schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

As a teacher and member of the task force in a neighboring town, I appreciate all who are involved in making these decisions to keep our children and staff safe. There is no right answer. Whether the board decides to offer an option for in-school/remote learning or chooses a hybrid model, masks should be required for all students and staff. Yes there may be some exceptions for students with sensory needs, etc, but our new "normal"

is wearing masks to protect everyone. This needs to be a requirement to ensure that this safety measure is followed by everyone.

Along with this request, I am asking the board to consider Fall sports. Practices have been taking place in town all summer and children have stayed safe. I understand that if we begin to have more cases in town, this may need to change, but for the time being we are in a good place. No decision being made at this time is concrete. Every day, we are all making decisions based on the facts and knowledge we currently have (understanding that it could all change tomorrow). While we are making these "in the moment" decisions, we should consider that we could have sports by following safety guidelines.

Again, thank you for all the time and dedication that goes into making these decisions. It is an impossible task, but we are grateful to have members in our community who are willing to take it on.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Courtney Landry

From: **'Jennifer Biron' via SchoolBoard** <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 7:52 AM
Subject: Litchfield School Reopening
To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>, mjette@litchfieldsd.org <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Dear School Board members and members of the Litchfield school community -

Please consider the NHIAA decision to give fall sports the green light to proceed at their own discretion at Litchfield schools this fall. With proper safety precautions, it would be extremely beneficial if the students can have some sort of athletic season this fall, especially at the high school level. I have a sophomore playing volleyball and a freshman who's been practicing with the soccer team all summer in scrimmage sessions with the hope of making the team. My daughter was the captain of the JV volleyball team last year and the confidence she gained from her fall season at CHS was immeasurable. My son has been playing club soccer and training with his teammates over the summer months; following safety protocols and guidelines during that time and no cases have been reported in that small group. Continuing to train with the high school soccer team and having a fall season would be extremely beneficial as he starts his freshman year at Campbell.

I am looking forward to reviewing the reopening plan today ahead of this afternoon's meeting, and again ask you to please consider keeping fall sports for Litchfield in some way, shape or form for our students.

Thank you,
Jennifer Biron

From: **'Kari Scopelites' via SchoolBoard** <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 7:41 AM
Subject: Fall Sports
To: <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>
CC: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Good morning,

Unfortunately I will be unable to attend the meeting today, we are out of town until Saturday.

I would like you to consider having fall sports. I believe that parents should be able to decide whether or not they allow their child to participate. I have 3 sons who have graduated From Campbell and my 4th will be entering 9th grade this fall. My freshman is playing on a summer basketball league and attending football workouts this summer. It gives him purpose and allows him to be surrounded by his peers and this is important.

My twin boys graduated in June and missed out on many many important milestones. I didn't speak up and I should have. Other than graduation they had nothing else. No prom, no senior activities and most importantly no academic awards banquet. They worked so hard and didn't receive any of the events they deserved. Please don't make the same mistakes this Fall. Kids need to be in school, play sports and be surrounded by their peers. It is vital for their mental and physical well being.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion.

Sincerely,
Kari Scopelites

From: **Kate Kirby** <katekirby109@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 6:49 AM
Subject: HS Fall Sports
To: <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>
CC: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Mr. Jette,

I will not be able to attend the meeting today but I wanted to express my opinion regarding HS Fall Sports. Since NHIAA has agreed fall sports would occur, I had thought until very recently that it would be automatic that Litchfield would play. For my son and his friends, they have participated in club and summer sports leagues throughout the summer. We have done it carefully by monitoring their health prior to any interaction with others. Additionally NH is doing very well against the fight of the virus. I know that my son will be miserable without sports to keep him busy. Even if he is not playing soccer, he will still be interacting with kids outside of Litchfield, if that goes to part of the decision. The rules for his soccer club is that he cannot participate on the team while high school soccer is ongoing. If there is no high school soccer that he is a part of, he is able to being practices (similar to what he has been doing all summer) in the fall. Sports are important for all the kids mental and physical health. I beg you to allow the families decide whether or not to allow their kids to participate.

Kate Kirby

From: **William Caliri** <wcaliri24@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 11:06 PM
Subject: Fall Sports
To: SchoolBoard <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>, Michael Jette <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Hello,

I hope you will consider running the Fall Sports programs.
I am looking forward to trying out for the Boy's Soccer team at Campbell.
I think sports are an important part of the school experience.
Please consider making sports a priority.

Thank you,
William Caliri
Campbell High School

From: **Samuel Caliri** <scaliri23@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 10:26 PM
Subject: Fall Sports
To: SchoolBoard <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>, Michael Jette <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Good evening,

I am writing to ask that the students have the opportunity to play Fall Sports for the 2020-2021 school year.
I know that the NHIAA has approved Fall Sports and left participation decisions up to individual towns.
I know that Litchfield can find a way to have the Fall Sports run successfully.

Sports are an important part of my school experience. I am really looking forward to being able to be a part of a team. I know that all of the students will be sure to adhere to all of the safety recommendations that will be needed. We all know that the Coronavirus is a serious concern. However, I believe that we can have a Fall Sports season that does not jeopardize everyone's safety.

Thank you for your time,
Sam Caliri
Campbell High School

From: **Josh Bremberg** <jmbremberg11@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 9:48 PM
Subject: Litchfield School Reopening

Dear Dr. Jette and School Board Members,

I am writing to you to share my view of the reopening options for the Litchfield School District. I am a 20-year veteran teacher, and have one child currently at the Litchfield Middle School.

My hope is that the "hybrid" model is NOT being considered for the Litchfield School District for the elementary and middle school levels. Litchfield is a small community that consists of many two parent working families, who are returning to work, if they haven't already. This option may work for other towns, but I can see it as a major problem for families in Litchfield.

A hybrid model for education will not work without the full-time supervision at home necessary for students of these ages. Adolescents are still trying to figure out time management and executive function skills. Without adult supervision at home, they will struggle. The social-emotional well-being for students of this age is crucial! They need to be in school, interacting with teachers, and their peers.

I understand the challenges and the amount of effort being put into the opening plan. I have seen it firsthand. I appreciate the time and effort put in by all of the individuals, but I do not think the hybrid model will be beneficial to the students of Litchfield.

Thank you for your consideration.

Josh Bremberg

From: **CYNTHIA CALIRI** <ccaliri@comcast.net>

Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 8:41 PM

Subject: School Reopening 2020

To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>, mjette@litchfieldsd.org <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Hello,

I wanted to express my thoughts about the reopening of schools for the 2020 - 2021 school year. While I appreciate all of the effort the Litchfield Schools put into transitioning to remote learning in the Spring of 2020, I found the experience not an effective means of academic instruction for my children.

Moving forward in looking to the 2020 - 2021 school year, I would like the District to consider the needs of all families. I know there are families that feel strongly about their need to continue remote learning. I feel strongly that remote learning was detrimental to my children's development and I believe that my children need to be back to school for in-person learning on a consistent 5 day weekly schedule. I believe that the science supports a return to in school learning.

Providing an option for families to continue remote learning, would then reduce class size for in-person learning. Requiring staff and students to wear masks when moving around the building, seating 6 feet apart, hand sanitation, and washing of frequently touched surfaces - should provide a safe environment for in person learning in each school.

We have been very fortunate in Litchfield as the number of cases of Covid-19 have been steady at 1 - 4 for weeks. I am realistic that there may come a time that these numbers may increase and the need for all students to resume remote learning may be necessary, however there is no indication that in person learning would be detrimental to the community at this time.

I also hope that the School District will find away to support the student's participation in Fall sports. As the NHIAA has left the decision to individual towns, I know that we are in a position to make this opportunity available to students who choose to participate.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html>

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Mike and Cindy Caliri
[93 Pinecrest Road](#)

From: **Jennifer Bourque** <jjutras@msn.com>

Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 3:38 PM

Subject: School Reopening

To: SchoolBoard <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>

CC: MJette@litchfieldsd.org <MJette@litchfieldsd.org>, Cory Izbicki <coryizbicki@gmail.com>, dbandurski@litchfieldsd.org <dbandurski@litchfieldsd.org>, jpelletier@litchfieldsd.org <jpelletier@litchfieldsd.org>, mwidman@litchfieldsd.org <mwidman@litchfieldsd.org>

Good afternoon everyone,

I wanted to take some time to share my experiences with COVID 19 and also my opinions on the reopening of schools. Much of my opinion is based on my own personal experience since early March. For those who are unaware, I work for The Home Depot. My role is a district human resource manager supporting 2300 hourly associates and 65 salaried leaders across two states. My district is 5 stores in NH (Rochester, Somersworth, Portsmouth, North Hampton and Seabrook) and 6 stores in MA (Danvers, Danvers East, Salem, Saugus, Tewksbury and Methuen). Needless to say, the differences in these markets can vary greatly. Since Saturday March 7th, my job has been almost exclusively dedicated to helping our associates through the COVID 19 pandemic, often 7 days a week. I believe that much of my experience mirrors several aspects of school reopening and many of the process, policies, benefits and safety measures that THD instituted are relevant and could be of assistance to the district as well.

The Home Depot was early on deemed an essential retailer. What would you do if you lost your water heater in mid March and couldn't replace it? So the decision was made to keep all of our stores opened through the pandemic. Obviously this was of great concern to our associates at all levels. Additionally, our customer were shopping for everything that was not nailed down and many non essential things. In the early days, when our cases were the worst, neither our associates nor our customers were wearing masks. THD took the stance early on that the safety and security of our associates was our top priority followed by the safety of our customers.

Here are some facts based on my experience to date:

- We have had 18 cases across the district all based in MA stores.
- None of my associates who tested positive were hospitalized or died.
- Most cases were asymptomatic
- There have been no documented cases of COVID 19 in any of my NH stores.
- There have been no "community spread" cases where an associate has "given" COVID 19 to another associate.

What are the steps we took to keep our associates safe:

- Masks are required for all associates and now all customers. Note that since the institution of masks for all associates, we have had only one positive case. (*that

individual was tested because he was going to vacation in Maine. He was asymptomatic).

- Plexiglass barriers in all close contact areas.
- Physical distancing where possible of 6'. (Note there are many places where this is not possible for our associates so we advise them to be sure to practice proper hygiene when placed in these situations).
- We secured TONS of PPE for our associates including masks, gloves (although no longer recommended) and more hand sanitizer than you can imagine.
- Frequent sanitization of all common areas (break rooms, training rooms, rest rooms) and equipment (phones, computers, registers and hand held phones).
- Educational campaign for all associates that includes frequent reminders to not touch your face, physical distancing and washing your hands.
- By mid August all of my stores will have temperature scans at the time clock. Associates will be required to complete a home health check and fill out a google form confirming their temperature. Their temperature will be taken again before they clock in to work and back in from lunch. If your temperature is greater than 100.4, we insist that you stay home.
- We added early on an additional 80 hours of sick time (2 weeks) for all FT and salaried store leader associates and 40 hours for all PT. Should this time not be utilized, it will be paid out in December or the associate can carry over into May 2021. For high risk associates, we provided them an ADDITIONAL 160 hours sick for FT and 80 for PT. This time will not be paid out if unused for salaried associates only. Hourly associates will have this time paid out.
- We conduct contact tracing after each positive case which involves review of the associates schedule and who they came in contact with in the 48 hours prior to becoming symptomatic (if asymptomatic we still track 48 hours before). Any associate who was in close contact with the positive associate (close contact as defined by the CDC is less than 6 feet apart for 10 consecutive minutes or more) is quarantined for two weeks and paid in full. (Note they actually don't need to utilize their sick time for this, we pay them above and beyond).
- If an associate tests positive, they are sent a wellness kit to their home, paid in full and receive regular check ins from the SM and DHRM and cannot return to work until 2 negative tests or 15 days has passed (and at least 72 hours of no fever and no cough).

I fully understand the concerns our teachers face around returning to the classroom. I worked remotely until Memorial Day when I was allowed to return to stores. Quite frankly, I too was scared as to what would happen. Additionally, I have two daughters that work for THD in South Nashua at the service desk (Jamie) and as a cashier (Bailey). I am in stores 3-4 days a week. I wear a mask and I wash my hands frequently. I interact with associates and customers daily. Physical distancing is not always possible and when it isn't, I be sure to take a moment to wash my hands or utilize hand sanitizer. I advise associates daily that are returning to work after an extended leave to allow themselves some time to adjust and by and large they are adjusting fabulously. I have first hand experience of wearing a mask for hours on end in the hot sun. There is no air conditioning in outside garden. I believe that schools are also essential and I

know that there is fear but we need to take every step possible to ensure safety and then we need to let go of the edge of the pool. I've heard so many references that people don't want to be a part of the "experiment". I would argue we are all part of this experiment right now and we can't continue to operate as a society without basic needs which include access to food and shelter as well as education.

I believe that if the district takes a similar approach with the associates safety and security as their top priority (teachers/support staff) and the safety and security of their customer (the students), we can make a safe return to school.

I'd also like to share that while I know the task force is already formed, I have a tremendous amount of first hand experience as to how to truly operate a business in the midst of a pandemic that could be very helpful and worthwhile. I am willing to help in whatever way I can, specifically as it relates to operations. I know and can advise on so many aspects of this including contact tracing, education on proper mask use, protocols on who to quarantine and when and so much more. If I can be of any assistance, I am beyond more than happy to provide support and information based on my experiences.

My final thoughts I have to share as a community member heavily involved with youth sports and also as the assistant coach for the Girls Lacrosse program at Campbell. Before making a universal decision on cancelling all sports, please consider the guidelines set forth by the state (and other local states) as well as the information set forth by NHIAA. Club sports have been in full swing for upwards of two months including numerous HS, Middle School and even Elementary school students attending practices, scrimmages and tournaments across state lines without incident. Sports currently being played throughout the state include baseball, softball, girls lacrosse, girls and boys soccer and basketball to name only a few. I believe strongly that the health and well being of our students include their ability to participate in extra curricular activities inclusive of sports and other clubs.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Best regards,

Jenn

From: **Sally Alwan** <sally.alwan7@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 10:26 AM
Subject: school re-opening
To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Dear School Board

I am delighted to hear that you have made progress in the re-opening plans for the schools. I am unsure if I am able to attend tomorrow's meeting, however I do have some thoughts and ideas.

As a primary care physician in the community who treats COVID patients, I feel the safety of the students and teachers is invaluable. COVID is a serious illness with disastrous consequences for both children and adults.

I feel that the re-opening plan should definitely allow each child to be separated 6 feet apart from any other child. The importance of that is to prevent child to child transmission. This distance separation is very important.

Also, for middle school and high school, limiting the number of children in the hallways and in the building itself is important, as spread can easily happen at the lockers, the bathrooms, and the communal spaces.

I am in full support of a hybrid model that would allow smaller numbers of children inside the building at a given time. (a one day on, one day at home model). As long as there is adequate separation by children, I think it would be reasonable.

A parent mentioned something along the lines of "plexiglass" barriers; however new evidence provided by NEJM shows that the COVID virus easily goes above and over any such barrier. If such barriers are implemented, the children still need to be 6 feet apart regardless, due to the scientific evidence of lack of efficacy.

Again, physical/social distancing is key to keeping the children and staff safe while they are in the building.

If you have any questions from me or would like to have Dartmouth-Hitchcock's official recommendations for pediatrics, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at any time. I am available via my cell phone at 603-731-0475

thank you again for all your hard work!

sincerely

Sally A. Alwan

From: **Joycelin Raho** <joycelin.raho@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Jul 29, 2020 at 8:41 AM

Subject: Resources for remote/homeschooling

To: <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Dear School Board Members,

I am capable of keeping my 7 year old daughter home next year and will likely choose to do so. Will the school be able to provide any resources like lending out textbooks or sharing the class curriculum so I can keep my daughter on track to re enter school when it feels safer?

Thank you

Joycelin Raho

Mother of Sophie, 2nd grade

From: **Amy Steiniger** <stein6898@comcast.net>

Date: Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 6:51 PM

Subject: Comment for Upcoming School Board Meeting - If too long please advise

To: schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org <schoolboard@litchfieldsd.org>

Hello,

My name is Amy Steiniger, 22 Burgess Drive.

I felt the need to share today. It is my belief that we need to move forward. We, as partners, can help this community do that. We need to get our kids back to school. I have experienced first hand, this spring, that the remote learning we participated in for my younger child at GMS was not learning and there was no teaching. Please do not be blind to what occurred in the spring. There may have been some positives, but remote can never replace in school learning. Please do not let fear and the politics driving the fear rule you. Yes, the disease is real, but if we all follow protocols, we can do this. We all have one responsibility together and that is to provide a safe and meaningful education to the young children of this town.

If you MUST do any remote learning, DO NOT eliminate school days, work through it. Be creative. Allow families to make the choice, but use the tools and technology to allow for remote learning that is inclusive and meaningful. Do not allow teachers to be absent from the solution. If they want to teach, we need to help them do this with tools and resources, but this spring cannot be a repeat. That is not teaching or learning. Let those who want to be in school be there physically because they learn better and need the interaction and socialization. In addition, the isolation is creating mental health issues previously absent by not moving forward safely.

Please get our kids back to school 5 days a week with the option of remote learning for whomever thinks its best for their family. In my opinion, remote learning at this age is not good for anyone, but appreciate other perspectives.

I ask again, be creative and be thoughtful in your planning. If teachers want to go back to what they love, then they need to be teaching 5 days a week regardless of how unconventional the methods. We have time to figure it out, keep the communication open and be cautious with any decisions that reduce or eliminate physically attending school.



Sincerely,
Amy Steiniger
From: **Debra Kovisars** <dkovisars@comcast.net>
Date: Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 9:41 PM
Subject: Parent input school board meeting
To: <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>

To Whom It May Concern,

I also sent a message via google doc. Then I saw that concerns should be sent to this email. (You may receive it in two places) I did make se detailed changes to this. See below.

I have two students attending Campbell. (Senior and a freshman) I have multiple concerns and suggestions about the hybrid "rumor" of alternating freshmen and sophomore (Mon/Wed) and junior and seniors (Tues/Thurs) with Friday being remote for all. I have concerns and suggestions.

My concern is mostly for my freshman who will not experience socializing with ALL grades making new friends/role models. He had a rough time all his years in middle school being treated bad by his classmates (his class has a lot of rude kids) my senior daughter, myself amd the guidance counselors have been reassuring him that high school will be different because he will be able to mingle with 9-12 grade kids (more fish in the sea) and will make new friends and won't be "stuck" with his 2024 classmates. I'm very concerned if the school is segregated by grades that he will experience what he did in middle school.

As far as remote learning, I have no worries about my senior, she did great. My son on the other hand did not, I spent 2-3 hours daily with him and he still had a hard time. I am back to work with no adult home to help/guide him. My suggestion is, if the kids "have" to learn remote, that they be taught as if they were in a classroom setting. Instead of sitting in the class listening to the teacher do the lesson they have to "attend" the online classroom "LIVE with the teacher" teaching her lesson from home (Zoom?) following a class schedule as if they were at school (maybe shortened classes) starting at 8am?? - 1:00pm ?? With Friday being a "catch up day" I think it's important kids are held accountable for "attending" online/zoom classes, this will also allow them to interact with teacher and students online. (and not sleep all day)

It was really overwhelming and hard for my son to comprehend assignments and watch videos remotely and he was not comfortable reaching out to teachers if he didn't understand an assignment, even after getting additional instruction it was still too hard to figure it out. (For me too)

To sum it up, my concerns are: segregating the classes and not having structured remote days It is very easy for them to get behind and overwhelmed and now that he is starting high school, grades do count! I want this to be a positive experience for him. I want to build his confidence with friendships and schoolwork. I hope my thoughts were helpful and thank you for taking the time to read my concerns and suggestions.

Deb Kovisars

From: **smraff via SchoolBoard** <SchoolBoard@litchfieldsd.org>
Date: Tue, Jul 28, 2020 at 2:25 PM

Subject: As a member of the Operational Committee, I have concerns about returning to school blindly

Dear Dr. Jette and School Board members -

As a member of the Operational team that has been working on the return to school plan, I am deeply concerned that this is not the right time for students and teachers to return to school, either hybrid or in person. The Operational team has worked very hard and has put some good information together but for almost every step we took forward, there were several obstacles that had no solution. So because of this, I believe that the only way for our district to go is to start off with remote learning (with a lot of time spent tweaking it quite a bit) and then re-looking at where we are around some benchmark, Thanksgiving or whatever works best. Yes, parents are not going to be happy and will threaten this or that, but remote learning guarantees that no one will get sick or die while getting an education. And the learning is going to have to be different. Everyone is going to have to think outside the box. Maybe there aren't any sports for now and no after school activities. Maybe just focus on the basics since one of the past issues with remote learning was that parents were overwhelmed. Use para's as teachers aides as well as using them as class room paras and 1 on 1's. I know going remote this Fall isn't going to be a popular decision because of day care issues and parents' need to work but everyone is going to need to compromise in order to keep our whole community safe.

In doing research while on the Operations Committee, I read several local return to school plans and most of them are very similar. But the Merrimack NH plan stood out because they had some very thought provoking comments in their opening statement as well as some very informative survey results from parents and teachers. I am sure you all saw this but some of this really stood out:

Merrimack Research Support Advisory Board

Their research offers mixed results:

- Researchers agree that children are not contracting novel coronavirus at the same rate as adults BUT Research has yet to show whether children transmit novel coronavirus at a similar rate as adults
- Widespread school closures and a low rate of testing among school age children could be contributing to the lower number of reported COVID-19 cases among children
- Since most other respiratory virus can and do transmit between adults and children, it would be *odd* if the novel coronavirus didn't have some similar likelihood of transmission
- Insufficient American data due to near universal school closures since March

Per an article in the World Economic Forum, symptom-less spread of covid is common.

(<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/people-with-mild-or-no-symptoms-could-be-spreading-covid-19/>)

On top of this, there are several reports out now that opening schools and camps has not been successful. A summer camp in Missouri took all the right precautions and still had 42 cases and had to shut down. When the campers went home, they then took that contamination home to their families. (<https://campenings.wordpress.com/2020/07/15/this-summer-camp-took-extraordinary-covid-19-precautions-it-still-failed/>)

Schools in South Africa tried reopening on June 8th, implementing the same safety measures we are

talking about using (masks, distancing, temperature checks, hand sanitizer) and they are now closing school because of a resurgence of infections in the schools.

(<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/covid-19-spreads-to-schools-in-south-africa/1887226>)

Also, child hospitalizations for covid-19 are surging in Florida. New cases among children under 17 have increased by 34% in just 8 days. Cases of children 17 and under needing hospitalization has increased by 23% in the same amount of time. And there have been 5 child deaths in the state of Florida because of covid-19. All of this is before school even starts.

(<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/27/health/florida-covid-children-hospitalizations/index.html>)

So we may feel that we are not "those districts". But now, there are predictions that Nebraska and New Hampshire are on the list of states that will see blossoming cases of infection. The NY times published an article on July 2 about a Harvard researcher and his team who developed a model that predicts covid-19 outbreaks two to three weeks in advance.

(<http://indepthnh.org/2020/07/26/new-hampshires-covid-19-cases-could-be-headed-in-wrong-direction/>)

The professors were asked to predict where the next increase in cases might be and they noted "Nebraska and New Hampshire are likely to see cases increase in the coming weeks if no further measures are taken, despite case counts being currently flat."

So all of this is leading a lot of districts to rethink their plans and instead start off the school year with remote learning which, as I said, I believe is the only way to go. There is a lot of good information in these two articles as to why districts are turning to remote learning only this Fall.

(<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/22/politics/what-matters-july-22/index.html>),

(<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/13/us/school-reopening-plans-major-cities/index.htm>)

The major reason districts are doing this is that there are too many unknowns and the country is still dealing with the growing crisis of covid-19. *Education Week* also has a good article/snapshot of the reopening plans of districts around the country.

(<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/school-districts-reopening-plans-a-snapshot.html>)

Per this article, more and more districts are going to remote learning. From the CNN report referenced above "The bottom line is most people will need to buckle in for more distance learning, alongside their own work and other responsibilities".

I know going back remotely will not be a popular decision for some. But with so many unknowns and the fact for every step the Organizational Committee was looking at to re-open Litchfield schools, there were many reasons why those steps would not work. I could list a bunch more but the bottom line is that by starting off with remote learning, all the problems and concerns we discussed would be null and void (how to deal with a teachers exposure, a students exposure, a students who gets symptoms while in school, bus routes, enough drivers for bus routes, teachers and paras not being willing to come back, Covid hasn't gone away since we shut down right away in March, what if a teacher is exposed, quarantines for two weeks and then comes back and is exposed again and needs to quarantine again, what if substitutes are needed, will the district have them, are desks six feet apart enough, do we have enough space for that, etc, etc)? Social distancing is for short term. Grocery shopping, doctors appointments, etc. According to medical doctors, this virus is highly contagious. So this puts schools are in a very unique situation. They are untested. And all the recommendations are just that - recommendations.

There is too little data on what actually, truly will keep everyone safe if we try to start up in person this Fall.

And one last concern I have is that our teachers have not been surveyed. There was a very short survey sent out by the NEA (I think) but that did not ask the questions that truly need to be asked. Don't we want to know what our teachers and school personnel are concerned about? Who may not come back? I asked HR if that was going to be done but I was told that a survey would only go out after a decision has been made as to how schooling is going to resume in the Fall. That doesn't make sense to me. Again, as reference, the Merrimack district sent a very extensive survey to their teachers. It was very thorough and asked a lot of very specific questions.

And speaking of teachers, I find it very interesting that a lot of parents want to make the choice themselves as to whether they will decide to send their child to in-person learning or remote learning in the Fall. And they are very vocal that it should be their decision.

(<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/24/us/gwinnett-county-parents-protest-reopen-schools/index.html>).

But very few of these parents take the time to factor in how dangerous this could be to school personnel. Keeping in mind that this change should not be permanent and that students will still be taught, there should be no concerns about "teachers not doing their jobs", especially since businesses are still not bringing their workers back into the office. And restaurants are not at capacity. Meetings are still held through Zoom. Courts are not open. I think it would be a big mistake to be the district that opens without enough solid information and then be the one to have disastrous results. Some people are suggesting that the kids go back to school and then when it gets "bad", we can pull back. But I don't know what defines "bad". One death is beyond bad, if you ask me. Why take that chance?

Anyway, just a little background information. I have subbed in Litchfield and Nashua for many years and have been a para several years as well, this year in the Litchfield district. Over the years, I was on the Budget Committee and my husband was on the School Board (for 6 years). He brought football to CHS. I was also a town trustee and a library trustee. I have been on numerous other committees, including the committee that worked on bringing CHS to Litchfield.

I also taught at Elm St Middle School and I have coached middle school volleyball for 10 years. So I have been very involved in community activities. But I asked to be on the Operational Committee because I feel this is one of the biggest decisions our district has to make. I love working with the kids and miss them so much but I can't imagine anyone losing their life or that of a family member over this. Let's take it slowly and learn as we go and pray that there is a vaccination very soon. Thanks so much.

Sue Rafferty
[33 Century Lane](#)

From: **Keri Douglas** <keridouglas@comcast.net>

Date: Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 3:13 PM

Subject: Feedback on Ideas for Reopening

To: charrison@litchfieldsd.org <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>

CC: Robert Meyers <rmeyers@litchfieldsd.org>, bbourque@litchfieldsd.org <bbourque@litchfieldsd.org>, emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org <emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org>, thershberger@litchfieldsd.org <thershberger@litchfieldsd.org>

Good afternoon , Chairman Bourque and members of the Litchfield School Board:

Thank you for creating the task forces to help determine what Fall 2020 will likely look like for our students. Considering the variety of opinions and concerns that affect this decision, it was no small feat that was undertaken. I appreciate that you posted the Oversight Committee meetings; I also appreciated that you allowed for a free-flowing dialogue amongst the subcommittees by not recording those. That said, I am writing today to express my concerns regarding the reopening plans that have been discussed. Although I serve as a member of the Litchfield Budget Committee, this message does not reflect the views of any committee or organization on which I serve or for whom I volunteer; the views expressed in this message are my own and are simply those of a concerned parent.

I have been very open about my desire for my sons to return to school in person and about my expectations for the environment into which they will return. I expect an environment that promotes healing rather than fear, that encourages social interaction rather than discourages it, and that allows a return to their normal rather than teaching them to accept a new one.

Based on my watching of the Task Force Oversight Committee, I could go on at length about the many concerns that I have about reopening in person, from parameters that I deem objectionable to the concern that the school will be forced into remote for the winter months, but none of my concerns are related to the concept of sending my sons to school in person – rather my concerns are about the requirements that will be imposed upon them to make other people comfortable. For example, requiring facemasks at desks in classrooms is a non-starter for my family.

We will not participate in a hybrid model. Our experience this past spring with remote learning was not favorable, so I am not interested in continuing that method, even if only for a few days a week. I would also expect that the in-person days would be subject to the same requirements as those outlined for an in-person return – since masks in a classroom are a non-starter, reducing exposure to that requirement to only twice a week does not change the acceptability of the proposal.

We will not participate in a remote setting if it has any resemblance to what we experienced last spring. While my boys excelled on paper, the tears and the fights are not recorded in any of the documentation. The struggles that we faced on a daily basis and their constant complaints of “too much screen learning!” and “I have no motivation because I miss my friends!” are not shown in any of the homework. We had some teachers who absolutely knocked it out of the park; there were others who did not. I have heard stories from parents whose students went from As to Fs. We are fortunate that my son “only” went from an A+ to a B- in “only” one class but his confidence still took a beating. If remote is to be an option, it needs to be completely reworked. There also need to be opportunities for students to socialize online – one local school had book clubs and social activities planned throughout the week on Google Meet so students could engage with their peers without the school expecting them to be the ones to schedule the activities themselves.

Since many of the options being discussed are objectionable to me, that leaves me considering alternate educational opportunities. I do not want to homeschool. Let me repeat that very clearly: I do **NOT** want to homeschool....but I will if that is the decision that makes the most sense to meet the social, emotional, mental, and educational needs of my children. My boys need social interaction so if they will be socially distanced and masked in our district, then we will choose an alternate route.

As it stands, I see my options for this coming school year as being:

- 1) Attend school in person with requirements TBD and subject to possible shutdown
- 2) Attend school remotely using online tools only
- 3) Advocate for a hybrid model that combines the concerns associated with both 1 & 2

4) Homeschool independently with peers, widening our social circle and eliminating the need for screens, for facemasks, and for social distancing while also preventing any schedule disruption when schools are closed.

...but what if there was another option? What if the school provided an “offline” version as an option for remote learning? What if parents could be provided with the textbooks, the workbooks, and a weekly syllabus? Parents who choose this option would commit to delivering finished packets of work on a regular basis. If help is needed, the student could log into the class with the rest of the students who opt for online only. Parents could coordinate with other parents of students in the classes to set up homework sessions with a limited number of kids – and this would be possible because they would be using the same material. By providing parents with an opportunity to establish small study groups, our district would be incorporating the benefits that parents are seeking from homeschooling or from local private schools while still allowing their students to remain a part of the Litchfield School District.

I have been very open about the fact that I am leaning towards homeschooling because I do not feel like I have any good options right now...but if another option became available, one that allowed my students to continue learning without being so heavily reliant on computer screens and to do so while meeting with a small group of students that they already know who are working on the same material while being in an environment that does not require face masks, social distancing, or disruptive quarantines, well, that option is likely to receive some very serious consideration. Granted, opening the schools and returning to normal is my first choice...but homeschooling through the school would be my second.

I hope that the options for this coming year could be similar to:

- 1) Full time in person
- 2) Remote: online version
- 3) Remote: offline version

Thank you for your time,

Keri Douglas
9 Pheasant Street

From: **Kate Stevens** <katemkstevens@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Jul 27, 2020 at 11:30 AM
Subject: Full Remote Option for GMS
To: <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>, <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>

Dear Dr. Jette and School Board Members,

If a full remote option is being offered please ensure that there are 2-4 times times throughout the year to transfer students between virtual and in-school learning and vice versa. The situation changes too quickly to commit to a full school year one way or the other.

As a process designer I'd suggest doing some dry runs at each school with the task force members and/or additional volunteers to work out some of the kinks before starting with students if you haven't already.

Thank you,

- Kate Stevens
9 Evergreen Circle

From: **Erica (Eagan) Ruggles** <ericaeagan@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 2:59 PM

Subject: Thought on a potential hybrid model

To: <mjette@litchfieldsd.org>, <bbourque@litchfieldsd.org>, <charrison@litchfieldsd.org>, <emacdonald@litchfieldsd.org>, <rmeyers@litchfieldsd.org>, <thershberger@litchfieldsd.org>

Dr. Jette and Members of the School Board,

I wanted to send a note expressing my opinion on the potential of offering a hybrid model. I'm not sure that I'm comfortable sending my two children (pre-k and 1st grade) back to school full-time given the challenges with social distancing, etc. My children have not been inside a public place since March 13th so I'm struggling with the thought of sending them back to school and at the same time, struggling with the thought of full-time remote learning.

That said, I think a hybrid option is a good alternative only if siblings are part of the same cohort and if the structuring is well thought out. I've seen other districts proposing an A, B, A, B schedule which I find to be challenging on many levels. If a hybrid model is going to be offered, I would suggest structuring it in the following way:

Monday: Group A

Tuesday: Group A

Wednesdays Everyone home - WILD Wednesday (deep cleaning)

Thursday: Group B

Friday: Group B

By clumping A, A, B, B, it allows a 5 day block of time if someone tests positive for COVID and would prevent them from coming back to school. It also allows Wednesdays to be used as a deep cleaning day in between both cohorts. I realize you are likely getting inundated with thoughts and suggestions but felt strongly that I'd like to share mine.

It is not lost on me that you have been given an enormous task and that no matter what is decided, there will be people who are unhappy as there truly is no "one size fits all" in this situation. Please know that my husband and I appreciate everything that's being done; the countless hours of work, meetings, thought, and organization that is going into planning what the upcoming school year will look like. I trust that keeping the safety and well-being of all students, teachers, and staff is being critically looked at.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to seeing the final plan so we can decide how best to move forward for our family.

Best,

Erica Ruggles