

LESLIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Minutes
Special Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 17, 2020
6:00 p.m. - High School Library/Remote

CALL MEETING

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Leslie Public Schools, Ingham and Jackson Counties, Michigan, was called to order by President Dave Cowing at 6:01 p.m.

Members present: Dave Cowing
 Shauna Howe
 Eric Isham
 Deann Maynard
 Mary Crowl
 Bud Fifield
 John Wayne Stewart

Members absent: none

Administrator(s)
present: Jeff Manthei, Superintendent
 Scott Powers
 Todd Gonser
 Connie Gonzalez
 Rob DeSmith
 Andrea Roach
 Travis McComb
 Anita Strong
 Dave Medcoff
 Greg Pscodna
 Kara Mowers
 Kristen Hawkins

Others: Allison Morrison
 Sara Coffman
 Leslie staff and community members (remote) A complete
 list of remote attendees is available at the
 Superintendent's Office.

Pledge of Allegiance given.

COMMENTS AND/CONCERNS OF CITIZENS PRESENT:

Molly Turner, Coventry Lane, Mason shared that the Governor's directive only addressed High School students going virtual for three weeks. She shared to expand this recommendation to all the schools in the district. She also stated that teachers would much rather be face-to-face but during this time, we need to keep their health and safety as well of those in our families and community safe.

Theresa Brown, Kinneville Road, Leslie stated her concerns with the current Governor's mandate and the recent jump in the number of COVID cases. She shared concerns regarding social distancing, shortage of substitute teachers and supplies.

Melissa Hanson, Meekers Street, Leslie shared although she can see both sides of the discussion, that she would like to see continuation of the current plan as long as possible.

Reed Ebmeyer shared his thoughts on the current MDHHS order and outlined a plan he thought might have value.

Hattie Dornbush, Berry Road, Pleasant Lake thanked the LPS board, teachers, administration and staff for all they are doing to keep our children safe. She shared that although she understands the COVID numbers are rising that virtual learning is not working and parents are frustrated.

Elise Harper, Doty Street, Leslie strongly encouraged the board to move all students PreK-12 to virtual learning. She shared that this is a difficult situation asking teachers to teach both face-to-face and virtual and that the health and safety of teachers and students needs to be remembered in decisions.

Chelsea Cox, Race Street, Leslie stated that it is necessary for quarantine purposes that all grades should be moved to virtual learning November 23 - January 6. She suggested a firm time when school would return.

Wendy Bedell, Pennsylvania Street, Leslie shared that LPS has had no major outbreaks and that they are obviously doing everything that needs to be done to ensure the safety of students. She stated that parents were given the choice for face-to-face or virtual for their children. She also shared that those that need the face-to-face should be able to continue with that choice.

Tanya Willard, Bellevue Road, Onondaga thanked the teachers for allowing face-to-face instruction and was grateful that her preschool child was able to attend school. She shared that young children learn socially and need that interaction.

Danielle Okley, Resort Road, Pleasant Lake stated that as a staff member and parent of two elementary students that it is not safe to be face-to-face with COVID numbers being high. She recommended that all students transition to virtual for three weeks and be proactive instead of reactive.

Jessica Dexter, Eaton Rapids, has three boys in LPS, two in HS and one in MS who have been doing face-to-face and involved in sports. She would like her boys to be in school.

Marcy DeKlute, Palmer Street, Leslie shared her child is attending face-to-face and is doing tremendous. She believes that at such a young age virtual is not a good option. She ask that single parents, front line workers and nurses be consideration as numbers are rising.

Joann Isham, Race Street, Leslie appreciates all the people sharing their feelings and comments tonight. She shared her concerns for her co-workers and teachers who are reaching their breaking point having to teach online and face-to-face. She ask that the district be proactive instead of reactive and take care of staff.

Andrea Mays, Hunt Road, Onondaga shared she has three kids in the district and they love school. They have been able to transition to wearing masks, social distancing and are succeeding with face-to-face instruction. She prefers leaving instruction as it is.

Jamie Anderson, Race Road, Leslie shared that she is concerned with the numbers rising what is going to happen with the kids. She stated that LPS is doing a fabulous job. She shared that when her daughter was virtual she did not learn well and felt if we go to online learning she may be held back.

Amanda Caudill, Meridian Road, Leslie ask if the group was not focusing on the fact that the governor's order is only for three weeks. She shared that the staff members deserve a break and this is a short period of time that students would be learning virtually.

Melissa Culk, Sherman Street, Leslie shared that the board is going to do what they are going to do. She mentioned her child has an IEP and what was going to happen with those students?

Steve Shellhart mentioned what a great job everyone is doing and that as a guitar teacher himself teaching virtually has been difficult. He shared his wife is a front line worker on a COVID floor and there has been no deaths due to COVID.

The board and the administrators discussed the current LPS Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan and Governor Whitmer's and the Department of Health and Human Services' most recent orders. The board and the administrators decided to continue with the current LPS Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan and to continue to monitor COVID-19 cases in the area. The board decided

to make Monday, November 23 and Tuesday, November 24 distance learning days for the entire district. Woodworth Elementary and Leslie Middle School will return to school face-to-face on Monday, November 30 and Leslie High School will remain virtual, per the Governor's and DHHS's orders, returning on December 9 (10th for LPS as Wednesday is virtual learning day). The board and the administrators will continue to monitor the situation and will adjust the LPS Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan as needed.

Moved by E. Isham, supported by M. Crowl that the board of education move to approve November 23 and 24th to distance learning days. Vote: Ayes 7, nays 0, absent 0, abstention 0. Motion carried.

The board requested the Administration to advise parents as soon as possible of the board's decision.

In addition, to advise parents how close we are to shutting down and everyone needs to be diligent to keep their children safe and do their part and stay home.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by E. Isham, supported by D. Maynard to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Vote: ayes, 7, nays 0, absent 0, abstention 0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Isham, Secretary
Leslie Public Schools