

MINUTES
Maynard School Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 3, 2020, 7:00 pm
Remote Meeting

MGL 30A, Sec.20:(f) After notifying the chair of the public body, any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of a public body or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement, and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, the chair shall inform other attendees of any recordings.

Meeting Called to Order at 7:12 pm. An attendance roll call was taken

Mary Brannelly - Present
Bethlyn Houlihan - Present
Natasha Rivera - Present
Jessica Clark - Present
Lydia Clancy - Present

Also present were Brian Haas, Superintendent; Wayne White, Business Manager; Jeff Ferranti, Director of Student Services; Colleen Andrade, Administrative Assistant.

Anticipated speaker: DPW Director, Justin DeMarco; Athletic Director, Brian Beaulieu

Approval of Minutes - Ms. Clancy asked that without objection, the minutes for 11/5/20 be approved. There were no objections. **Minutes for 11/5/20 approved.**

Acceptance of Warrant(s) - Ms. Clancy asked, without objection, that warrants 21-028 and 21-029 be approved. There were no objections. **Warrants 21-028 and 21-029 approved.**

Urgent Business (within last 48 hours, if required) - there was none.

Citizens' Comments - Ms. Clancy read the comments which pertained to winter sports and the school remote/in-person model, that were submitted to be read which will become part of the meeting record.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Haas acknowledged all the different perspectives regarding winter sports and Maynard learning model.

He thanked the custodians. Numbers in Maynard have gone up, but numbers in Schools have stayed relatively low. Schools are being cleaned and safety protocols are being enforced. Continuously evaluating the situation and will continue hybrid model at this time.

SRO, Officer Rugiero is working on relationships with GM students, her goal is to read in every classroom this year.

A virtual winter chorus concert will be held on 12/16.

MHS presentation for parents and students in grades 4, 5, and 8 will take place to show what MHS has to offer, academically, extra curricular, etc.

There is PD next week with the Leadership team on diversity, equity, inclusion and antiracism. Next steps will be to offer PD to teacher leaders, then all staff.

Chairperson's Report

Ms. Clancy noted the Select Board meeting discussed complaints and misinformation about enforcement of mask wearing and what BOH is doing. She encouraged people to check sources and talk to people enforcing these things instead of turning to social media. Maynard's public health nurse did follow up on compliance complaints about business in Town. Chief Noble talked about how difficult mask enforcement was. They did stop and talk to groups of people seen not wearing masks, but do not stop everyone. She encouraged the public to be responsible and wear masks.

Other Business:

Solar Project, Justin DeMarco DPW Director

Maynard was awarded a grant from the Department of Energy Resources for technical assistance. A RFQ was submitted which allowed Maynard to hire a consultant, Beth Greenblat, who helps communities with the solar power process. A RFP to collect proposals went out and 5 vendors responded. A 5 person RFQ evaluation team was created to interview vendors and review proposals. Only 2 vendors filled the requirements, Kearsarge and Sunpower. Conducted a further in depth evaluation of the 2 vendors which looked at infrastructure, curriculum involvement with the schools, potential operational cost and impact and more. The evaluation team recommended Sunpower. The Select Board is now in initial negotiations with Sunpower for a 20 year lease, but is a long process. Will need to go to the Zoning, Planning and Conservation boards as well as get utility company approval. Mr. DeMarco hopes to have this project completed over the summer of 2021.

The plan is to have car-port style solar panels installed at the Fowler, MHS Student and athletic entrance parking lots, as well as Solar Panels on the MHS roof and in the field behind Green Meadow. The projected revenue will be 40-50,000 annually. Ms. Rivera expressed concern with expanded scope to include Green Meadow field and possible impact to MSBA feasibility study. Any slight change to the proposal could drastically reduce the revenue.

This project will need a School Committee endorsement

There will be a full presentation in the future to School Committee by Mr. DeMarco, Town Administrator Greg Johnson and the solar company.

Winter Athletics, Brian Beaulieu, Athletic Director

Mr. Beaulieu presented the plan for Winter sports (Basketball). Both the MIAA and the Midwatch league have come out with amended game rules and safety protocols. The season would start on Dec. 14th, first game Jan 8, season would end Feb. 21st. Teams would play within their pod of neighboring Towns. Maynard's pod Towns all belong to the Midwatch League and would be all following the same rules and safety protocols. There will be no Middle School basketball, no spectators in the stands, teams limited to 12 players, JV and Varsity teams will remain separate using different gyms and separate buses. Everyone must wear masks. A COVID Captain will be assigned to ensure all protocols are followed.

The Superintendents and Athletic Directors will be in constant communication with each other and their respective Boards of Health.

Schools within the pod will be notified if any player tests positive. Maynard would be able to make the determination to cancel a game based on any information about positive cases within the school.

Players and Coaches will only use the building entrance closest to the gyms.

Mr. Beaulieu noted they would probably have a separate senior night where each senior player would be allowed to have 2 people

It was suggested to have parents sign a safety protocol which will state the rules and the reasons a student may not be able to play.

Mr. Haas recommended that Maynard move forward with the basketball season as described in the presentation. If something changed, he would inform the School Committee.

Mr. Beaulieu stated that there would be no postseason. Some pods may have a pod championship, but he didn't think they would have any playoffs in Maynard.

Review of Superintendent's Annual Goals

School Committee members thought this was well thought out and detailed

Goal 1: Successful Participation and Completion of the New Superintendent Induction Program (Professional Practice) - all new superintendents were involved in this. Mr. Haas felt it was a very helpful process and noted that his mentor would be attending a future School Committee meeting,

Goal 2: Effective Entry Plan and Action Plan (Professional Practice) - this was a typical goal for new superintendents.

Goal 3: Collaboratively build a strong administrative team (Professional Practice) - Mr. Haas noted that there were some new Administrators this year, and others who have been around a while. Getting to know each other, learning to work together and support one another and support the students.

Goal 4: Support Effective Practices focusing on diversity, anti-racism, equity and inclusion (Student Learning) - This would be from an administrative, teacher and student level.

Committee members liked the measurement and monitoring tools that Mr. Haas included.

Ms. Rivera suggested to add "engage with mentor" as one of the measurements.

Ms. Rivera made a motion to accept Superintendent Haas' goals for the FY21 with the inclusion of measurement on goal 1 that School Committee would be meeting with his mentor as he indicated.

Ms. Brannelly 2nd the motion.

Roll call Vote

Ms. Brannelly - Yae

Ms. Clark - Yae

Ms. Houlihan - Yae

Ms. Rivera - Yae

Ms. Clancy - Yae

Motion passed 5-0

Members Reports & Comment

Jessica Clark noted that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee was working with the Admin team on a calendar of presentations for updates from schools. They have also started to review their short and long term goals and the action plans attached to them.

Mary Brannelly had a discussion with Representative Hogan about different funding for fy21. She will put together her notes to send to School Committee. She will send a resolution about MCAS out to School Committee members, this would be added to the next School Committee meeting.

Natasha Rivera attended the Town Budget Subcommittee meeting, the next meeting would be Dec. 21. She noted that Town Accountant Mike Guzzo's last day was Jan. 8th and thought the School Committee should recognize him for his efforts.

The Joint Budget Review would be Feb. 13, Mr. Haas would be presenting on behalf of the School Committee. Some standing agenda items have been added to the SC Budget Subcommittee for going forward. There would be a budget presentation at the next School Committee meeting. Negotiation subcommittee discussions are continuing, meeting with the Teachers Union Friday. All meetings will be in executive session.

Bethlyn Houlihan noted that the Strategic Planning & Curriculum subcommittee may discuss changing the committee title in the future. They will be sending the outline of the presentation calendar to SC Members for feedback.

She noted an editorial in the paper from Melinda Gates about caregiving and gender gap which has increased during the pandemic.

She suggested adding to the meeting calendar a presentation from the SRO, and possibly others to have official recognition of those community partnerships and what they bring.

Ms. Rivera made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Houlihan 2nd the motion.

Roll call Vote

Ms. Brannelly - Yae

Ms. Clark - Yae

Ms. Houlihan - Yae

Ms. Rivera - Yae

Ms. Clancy - Yae

Motion passed 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Colleen Andrade

Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools

Approved 1/7/21

Citizens Comments emailed read at 12/3/20 meeting

Dear School Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of our son Ethan (senior and one of the captains) and daughter Jordan (junior) to ask for support of the basketball season, as approved by the MIAA.

Basketball is an integral part of their school experience and critical during this time of Covid for their physical and mental health. As parents, we will reinforce the safety rules for the health of all the players. We believe they should be able to play within the parameters outlined by the MIAA and appreciate your support.

Thank you

Michele and Mike Mullen
20 Concord Street, Maynard

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Dear Maynard School Committee,

My name is Matthew Terrell and I live at 85 Brooks Street in Maynard and I am writing this email to show support for the winter sports program. I fully support the safety measures/protocols put in place by the MIAA and my children will continue to follow all the guidelines.

I am impressed with how the fall program was executed and it was very important to my son to be able to participate for multiple reasons. Having a daily sports activity while following all the safety measures has provided a valuable outlet for stress release, exercise and maintaining a sense of community.

I fear that if the season is cancelled, the disappointment of not being able to compete and continue to improve chemistry with his teammates and friends would have a devastating effect on his mental health and overall academic success!

Sincerely,

Matt Terrell  
Maynard Resident

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Hello,

I am writing to you regarding the upcoming basketball season. I am urging everyone on the school committee to make sure that this season moves forward with the protocols put forward by the MIAA. As a parent of a three sport athlete, these kids have lost enough. The benefits to these kids playing FAR outweigh the risks. It makes absolutely no sense that some towns play, and some don't. These kids are not receiving the proper education as it is. Remote learning is not working. You have teachers, letting kids out of "class" after 5 to 10 minutes. Compound that with the loss of athletics and these kids are lost. There is irreparable damage being done. With the proper protocols put in place for the student athletes and their parents, there is no reason why this season cannot go on. Mask them up, space them apart, limit fans to 2 parents per athlete. With 12 players on each team, there is no reason why you cannot 48 parents spread apart in a gym to watch their kids

play. You can go to a supermarket, church, Lowe's, Best Buy with no problem. You can sit in a restaurant with no mask on. There's no reason why you cannot have 12 kids on each bench and 48 parents spread apart throughout an entire gym's bleachers. For the sake of the kids, please vote this in and make this season go forward.

Chris DiTavi
1 Michael Road
Maynard, MA 01754

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Mark Stachowicz  
12 Rice Road  
Maynard, MA

I am writing in support of your voting in favor of a high school basketball season at Maynard High School this winter.

Upon reading the protocols that the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has published, along with the overall success of the fall seasons held under their guidance, I believe that the MIAA have done a good job of analyzing the risks and putting into place the needed responses for Covid 19 play.

When it comes to high school kids, their activities are as important to their development as young adults as are their academics. Activities are critical to their mental well being. Many athletes have been "locked up" since March with nothing with the move of football from Fall to Fall 2. I have experienced the effects of this forced hibernation on my son. These athletes need to get out and play! It is what they have done since they could first dribble and shoot a basketball.

This is, hopefully, a once in a lifetime pandemic that needs to be taken very seriously. It is also a once in a lifetime opportunity for these kids to be in high school. They don't get a "re-do", they will never get this time back and we should make every effort to make it as "normal" as we can.

If anything, allowing the boys and girls to play basketball this season will put them in a "Covid Protocol" protected environment for the season. They will be accountable to their teammates and coaches to "do the right thing" when it comes to deciding to go to a party or some other gathering. I think that most would choose playing basketball because it is what they do!

Athletic activities are happening all over the country and I am in support of allowing our student athletes to take part while following the Covid -19 protocols of both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Thank you for your consideration in light of the seriousness of the issue.

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I support this basketball season to ensure the students physical and mental health. I will support all the safety measures put in place by the MIAA.

Thank you,

Christine Kapopoulos
7 Glenhill Terrace
Maynard

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of winter sports, and more specifically, basketball. My daughter was able to play Field Hockey this fall, and she benefited greatly. The ability to engage with others in a safe manner was so good for her mental and physical health. The safety measures put in place enabled the girls to play safely and the protocols were enforced and adhered to. Having two lanyards per student and the rule of spectators only allowed for the home team at games made social distancing simple. At games people did check and enforce the limiting of people at the games and kept everyone safe. I believe this would be easy to continue to enforce at basketball games. The children have already had to miss out on so much. I believe it is important to give them the opportunity to try to make the season work.

Sincerely,
Karen Primiano
6 Pomciticut Ave.
Maynard, MA 01754

Dear School Committee Members,

I understand that at your meeting on Thursday night you will be discussing and making a decision on the upcoming winter sports seasons and whether or not the student athletes of Maynard High School will get the opportunity to play.

I am the parent of a boys basketball player and I am really hoping that the kids are given a chance to compete this winter. The MIAA has come up with a plan and set of guidelines that I think are responsible and will give the kids a chance to compete safely..

Now, more than ever, the kids need a physical and emotional outlet and I think team sports will provide it.

I intend to hold my child accountable and will strongly encourage him to follow the safety guidelines should the season take place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Monahan
12 Allan Dr, Maynard, MA 01754

I am writing in support of the Winter Sports season. I feel that it is beneficial to our children/student athletes both mentally and physically. We will follow all of the MIAA/school guidelines in order to maintain the safest environment for all involved in the winter sports season.

Thank you,

Jacquelyn Capone
24A Dartmouth Street
Maynard

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Dear School Committee Members,

(Kevin Fowler, 8 Balcom Lane)

I'm writing to you as I know you will be discussing and making a decision on Winter Athletics.

If we look at this through the perspective of children, of course they want to play. The reasoning for wanting this would be- I love playing, it's fun, I enjoy the competition, I get to be with my friends, etc. All fundamentally great reasons, but we know as adults, during Covid-19, these reasons may not be enough. However, I believe as adults, it's our responsibility to take a deeper look and remind ourselves why we want our children to play a sport or join a club. It could be on the basketball team or the chess club, either way through this they get to learn all the intangible characteristics that without question, increase the probability of a child leading a mentally and emotionally balanced and successful life. Whether it's struggling through a practice or game and learning about adversity and perseverance, going to practice even when they don't want to and learning discipline, contributing as an individual to a collective common goal and learning about teamwork. There's also the joy of winning, but equally as important the lessons learned through losing. The physical, mental and emotional benefits are endless. These intangible characteristics that lead to healthy and well balanced children can all be nurtured through sports or a club.

The risk of Covid is real, but we also must weigh the risk of continuously taking away these opportunities to learn these life lessons and nurture these characteristics. I would argue, that the children with all their current life restrictions, need this season more than ever. I would suggest placing all the responsibility on the children participating to adhere 100% to the guidelines set in place.

My ask is that the school committee fall in line with what the Governor of Massachusetts and the MIAA has already approved and support a basketball season for these deserving student athletes.

I truly appreciate your efforts surrounding this matter.

Kevin Fowler

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To the School Committee and the administration,

First, I thank you all for your very hard work during these unprecedented and difficult times.

It has come to my attention that many members of our community are pushing for schools to reopen and to run full day, in-person classes.

I cannot overstate how dangerous and irresponsible this idea is. I understand that things are hard right now and that kids, parents, and teachers are struggling to get by with online classes, but the solution to these problems is not to place the burden of responsibility for the lives of our families and our teachers on the shoulders of little kids; **especially** when we already know that the pandemic disproportionately affects BIPOC and other vulnerable neighbors in our community. These folks are **already** bearing a greater load, making up a majority of essential workers and having less resources to see them through the pandemic. Putting kids back in schools adds a burden that is short-sighted, cruel, and unnecessarily exploits our vulnerable neighbors for our own benefit.

I applaud the School Committee's efforts at keeping our children and teachers safe, and encourage you to continue to do so by holding online classes until a vaccine is widely available.

Thank you again for your crucial work during this very difficult time.

- Eliot Prisby

1 Elmhurst Road, Maynard, MA 01754

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Good morning,

My name is Rachel Tryba and I live at 3 Dartmouth Court in Maynard. It is deeply concerning to hear that there is even a thought to discuss the possibility of reopening schools in the middle of the second surge of the pandemic. While I can understand that there is public pressure to get the students back in the building, I have no doubt that we would immediately have to close down again due to an outbreak of the virus which could have deadly consequences.

Personally, my 5th grader simply cannot attend in-person classes. We have family members with chronic health conditions who would be high-risk if exposed to COVID-19. Sadly, other members of our community struggle to understand that in pushing the schools to reopen, families like mine will be in a position of literally having to choose life or death scenarios to keep everyone safe. Would I have to unenroll my student and home school them? What solutions exist to keep everyone safe in the event that we have to send our students back into the buildings? Everyone agrees that keeping our students home is not ideal. But can we also agree that a death of a family member would have a farther reaching impact?

This is a stressful time for all of us. Please use sound logic and clear communication in any decisions going forward. Your time and energy would be best spent problem solving accommodations for those who require their children to be in person for school rather than subjecting the entire community to a dangerous and deadly situation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Tryba

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I would like to voice my support for the 2020 Basketball season approval! Student -Athletes are used to the physical and mental rigor of participating in sports. It keeps them both physically and mentally well. When my daughter has a 2 hour practice, she comes home with endorphins in full force and can tackle all the school work and stresses the world throws her way. It is a built in defense mechanism that keeps her strong. For my part, I will adhere to any and all safety measures put in place by MHS and the MIAA and be certain that my athlete does as well. A body in motion stays in motion ... both physically and mentally. Let's keep our kids in motion!

Sincerely,
Amy Gilligan
and Brian Gilligan
617-259-4770
195 Great Rd
Maynard MA

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Dear School Committee Members,

We are writing to share our strong support in favor for basketball to be played this season. We understand the risks of covid, but feel confident that if we all adhere to MIAA guidelines this can be done safely. Our son is a senior and basketball provides a consistency of structure and camaraderie that is much needed during these times. With the world in the midst of the pandemic, kids feeling more isolated than ever and winter looming, the students need this. It provides the physical and social activity they so desperately need. More importantly, we cannot underestimate the value playing will have to their mental health. For many, including our son, it promotes academic success and allows and allows them to feel part of something. The benefits far outweigh the risks for these students. We will support and adhere to all MIA safety measures. We will do whatever it takes to ensure these kids have an opportunity to play. These kids need this now more than ever, with proper precautions this can be done. I hope you all will vote in favor of supporting basketball.

As Nelson Mandela once said: "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does."

Sincerely,  
  
Jen and Mike Brogna  
4 Little Rd Maynard  
Parents of Brendan Brogna, Senior MHS

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Marianne Roche
9 Rice Rd
Maynard

To the school committee members,

I am writing in support of allowing the high school basketball season to be played within the guidelines set by the state and the MIAA.

Physical activity is so important to all of us, both for our physical and mental health. Teenagers require physical activity and socialization, and the more we can engage them in structured, safe activities, the less they will find other (perhaps not as safe) outlets for their endless energy.

Of course, following the rules set forth by the state and the MIAA is of utmost importance. I think we learned during the fall sports season that we are able to safely implement sports, follow the guidelines set forth by the state, and allow our children these important developmentally appropriate activities.

Thank you,
Marianne Roche

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From: Brian J. Smith, 10 Second Street, Maynard, MA

Dear Maynard SC,

I am writing in support of approving a 2020-21 basketball season for both teams at MHS and FMS.

My support is based upon recent experience with my kids participating in various forms of athletic competition this past fall. I have had a daughter participate in MHS soccer, as well as, 2 college athletes who participated in team activities on their respective campuses without contracting Covid-19 (as evidenced by many negative test results). I believe it is possible for the students to participate in a way that is safe, healthy, enjoyable and fulfilling while under the supervision of coaches who ensure safety guidelines and protocols are adhered to. My wife and I were also strong advocates of adhering to the guidelines put in place by the MIAA and/or the particular university.

I also have personal experience that shows me the students in my house are much more disciplined, organized and focused on their school responsibilities and commitments when they are participating in organized school sports.

Please vote to approve a winter season for the students at MHS, especially the basketball programs. It is my opinion that the kids deserve this approval after all the sacrifices they have made over the past 10 months or so.

Respectfully,

Brian J. Smith

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This is a comment in support of the prudent decision by the Maynard Superintendent and the School Committee to start slowly in the phased reopening of the schools rather than jumping on the bandwagon to rush and throw the doors open when Covid numbers are higher than they were back in March when the world closed down. We are all "Covid weary". I am sick of having to stay away from family and friends, but part of why

this has been so prolonged is precisely because of the rush to open so much without the science not changing since March. If we can hang on just a bit longer, the science is about to catch up. Now is NOT the time to throw caution to the wind. Thank you.

Alex Waldron
128 Harvard Rd.
Stow, MA

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Dear Superintendent Hass and Maynard School Committee:

I would like to ask you to allow our students to play basketball and other sports recommended by the MIAA this winter. The MIAA has established a Covid-19 Task Force Sub Committee whose members were appointed and charged with determining appropriate measures for MIAA sports to be played safely in alignment with guidelines set forth by Governor Baker, the Mass Department of Health, and DESE. On November 20<sup>th</sup>, the MIAA Sports Medicine Committee and the MIAAA Covid-10 Task force approved modifications to winter sports. Please see the attached file for information regarding the basketball modifications. Playing organized sports promotes healthy living and improves mental and physical health. With the rule modifications and guidelines, I believe we can safely play basketball this winter. Sports are an extracurricular activity, and no one is required to play. Please give the parents the option of letting their athlete participate.

Thank you,

Stacey Briggs  
14 Roosevelt St  
(attached the MIAA Basketball Modification Winter 2020 document)

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From: Elizabeth Swayze
131 Summer St, Maynard

I am writing to encourage the board and the schools to figure out ways for our kids to return to school full time or as close to full time as possible. Cases are rising and emotions are running high. This does not change the fact that schools--especially elementary schools--have had extremely low rates of transmission all over the world. States with few restrictions and higher rates of infection have managed to keep schools open. Private and charter schools all over MA are open and have not been overwhelmed with cases. Public schools need to step up and do what is needed to get kids back into the classroom.

I am not suggesting that we do this in a vacuum. The state needs to be doing more to provide testing at school sites. The state and our community may also need to make some difficult trade-offs in high risk areas to ensure that kids can attend school in person. High risk areas include gyms, indoor dining, bars, contact sports, parties and social gatherings. There is clear evidence of transmission and super spreading in these areas. Again, this is NOT the case with schools where student interaction is strictly regimented. Our town has yet to mandate mask wearing. Perhaps if the schools made their reopening contingent on this kind of policy, we would see more action on this. All of these things are interconnected.

Our family is among the most fortunate. Both parents are working full time from home. Our kids will not fall too far behind with a year of minimal schooling, but they are not thriving, growing intellectually or being challenged with remote learning. Getting by should not be a comfortable base line for our district and our community.

I realize that bringing kids back to schools entails risk. However, it has been demonstrated to be a relatively low risk, and the rewards are very great indeed.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth P. Swayze
131 Summer St
Maynard, MA

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Dear Maynard School Committee Members,

We are writing to you to express our concern with the current push to get students back into school full time. While we see the benefits of in person learning, the risks outweigh the positives at this time. In addition, with the numbers in Massachusetts and Maynard at a higher daily rate than ever, we would say it would be most wise to push the complete opposite, a full remote model. While it is easy to lead with emotion, we ask you to follow the facts. The numbers are too high, there are no testing protocols in place to actually tell how much transmission is happening within the schools and it is just too risky and unsafe. We have come this far and put in a tremendous amount effort together over the last 9 months to ensure the health and safety of our children. With the vaccine on the horizon, this is not the time to put our town at an even bigger risk. Maynard Public Schools need to lead by example and think about our entire community, especially our children and educators.

Thank you,

Amy and Bill Shew  
115 Summer Street

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Dear Members of the School Committee.

I am writing to urge you to act with the utmost and caution and prudence when making decisions about reopening schools fully for all students. This is not a decision to be made based on pressure from parents who are understandably frustrated and fatigued by the ongoing disruptions and trauma of this pandemic.

Instead, please turn to the best available scientific findings and data to guide your decisions. Schools should not reopen full-time, at full capacity until the safety of the students, teachers, custodians, paras, aides, cafeteria workers and other essential and deeply valued workers is ensured. Until that can happen in a transparent way, this community must find creative solutions to assist families and students who are struggling.

As you surely know, the decision to reopen schools impacts the health and wellness of not only our school community but the wider community, as well.

Respectfully,

Kathleen FitzGerald
94 Great Road

The children of Maynard Public Schools should be the priority of the school committee and superintendent. Our kids are falling behind. There is an increase in depression, anxiety, sleep disorders and weight gain. Experts have been saying for many months that kids are safer in school and should be in school full time. While the teachers have been doing an amazing job they kids cannot adequately learn remotely. Families are losing all faith in Maynard Public Schools and if no action is taken soon, to get kids back into school full time, that did not chose remote, then that faith will be forever lost.

Thank you

Jessica Noble, Powder Mill Road

Dear committee members

I've encountered rumors floating around the last few days about Maynard schools reopening in person full-time.

Today there were over 6,000 new cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in the commonwealth, a more than 30% increase over the records set earlier this week for daily new confirmed cases.

Re-opening schools for full-time in person learning is a reckless and dangerous course for our community with potential deadly consequences for our children, for education workers and especially for our elder, immunocompromised and other more vulnerable neighbors in town.

I strongly advocate for and hope that there will be a loud chorus of voices from the community in support of continuing hybrid or fully remote learning until the current surge has definitively passed, in order to be preventative, proactive and protective of the lives of residents in Maynard and people who work in this community.

Respectfully

Gery Armsby, medical educator
47 Butler Ave,
Maynard MA 01754

Dear School Committee Members, and Superintendent Haas,

I am stunned and horrified to learn that there is an initiative underway to open the schools for full-time in-person schooling. Why now? We are entering the WORST PART of this pandemic, even in Maynard 22 new cases over the past week, which does not include the expected post-Thanksgiving surge - this winter is likely going to be devastating to the United States, Massachusetts, Maynard, and our friends and families.

People have pressed and pressed to loosen restrictions, to avoid restrictions, to ignore public health and medical advice, and we are all paying the price. Hospitals nationwide are nearing the breaking point. While we in Massachusetts are blessed with perhaps the strongest health care system in the country, it too may be overwhelmed this winter. Lack of beds, sick clinicians, and fear of obtaining care for non-covid, but critical, health issues will take a heavy toll.

Everywhere people have moved to go back to pre-pandemic life, the virus has exploded, causing immense human and economic damage.

As I understood it at the beginning of the school year, the premise was that if cases began to rise, even hybrid schooling would be reevaluated - which seems to have been ignored. Recently it is clear the state government simply moved the bar regarding classification of towns' risk levels - what was only a few weeks ago a serious problem is now nothing to be concerned about. 12 cases made Maynard red at one point, and that number has simply been moved far higher, as the number of cases increases.

We are close to weathering this storm - effective vaccines are coming - why on earth would you choose to take steps which risk drastically increasing the damage when the light at the end of the tunnel is in sight?

Be leaders, not followers of state guidelines which change with political whims. The risks to children may be smaller, though there is plenty of data to suggest that is not the case, but you will be putting every teacher and member of the staff at risk, along with all of their families in communities across the Commonwealth, and all of the families of Maynard. I remind you of the wedding in Maine, which led to the deaths of 7, none of whom had attended the wedding.

A return to full in-person schooling, while the pandemic reaches its peak over the coming weeks and months, is an illogical decision, and nothing short of insane.

We must at least hold fast, and even consider rolling back hybrid learning as cases, hospitalizations, and deaths soar.

There is only one ethical choice - keep our children and community safe and healthy.

Andrew D'Amour
Roosevelt St

~~~~~  
Heather Manero  
6 Marks Way, Maynard

Good evening Maynard School Committee, Superintendent Haas and fellow members of our community:

I am writing tonight because I am deeply concerned about the current threat and growing numbers of Covid-19 in our community and around the world. In recent days, the Covid numbers around us have been shocking and scary- as they rise to the highest numbers that we have seen since its start in the early spring. Despite the surging numbers, our schools and town are being pressured to open for more in-person learning.

Although I understand the inconvenience that remote learning poses, and some of the issues that can arise because of it, I am deeply concerned about the continuation of in-person learning and the pressure and thought of increasing the time that our schools are open during this time. This has the potential to have a huge devastating impact on our children, teachers and community as a whole if we have additional exposures and outbreaks in our schools and town.

Some may argue that schools are not contributing factors to the spread but this is impossible for me to comprehend. We are being told not to gather.. in groups..inside. Our schools don't have the best ventilation systems. Our children don't always follow mask wearing and social distancing- as proved by multiple reports every day within each school. Our teachers and staff are vulnerable. There is no doubt in my mind that schools are a factor in this silent spread. Some kids may be asymptomatic- so they are not being tested. But still are spreaders.

To continue in-person learning, let alone increasing it, is irresponsible and dangerous for our kids, schools, staff, teachers and community as a whole. Prior to the start of this school year, we were told by the Superintendent and school committee that return to school would only be considered by reviewing the number of cases in our town every 6 weeks and then carefully considering which grades to send back and when. But our town numbers continue to rise and the original plan and schedule has not been followed.

As a community member, with 2 school-aged children, one of which is at high risk, I urge you to remain vigilant and be proactive with our town, our children and our teachers. My objective is not to battle. It is to try to be a part of a **solution** to this horrific pandemic and protect those around us.

Stay well.

Heather Manero

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Mackenzie Manero
6 Marks Way, Maynard, MA

Good evening,

I am a full-remote senior from Maynard High School with deep concerns about the rapidly growing and fatal Covid-19 virus. Before the start of the school year, we were misled into thinking that grades would slowly return throughout the end of 2020 and into 2021. It seems as though just when the numbers spiked, the high schoolers were already going back. With being a senior and doing online meets, I am able to see my classmates both in school and at home. I have witnessed multiple times people pulling down their masks to talk, people wearing their masks below their nose, and simply not social distancing. This is concerning as this is protocol and I have heard from students that teachers do not always enforce it. If I am witnessing high schoolers do this, I can only imagine what the younger students in the Green Meadow and Fowler schools do.

It has been proven to be true that children are not completely safe at school, as we have already had multiple cases reported in Green Meadow and at Fowler. Covid-19 does not discriminate to age. I wrote to the superintendent a few weeks ago and voiced my concern. He replied that they will be watching numbers and other school districts around. This was right after Marlboro High School went fully remote due to multiple cases, and so did many other schools.

With the holidays and the winter upon us, this virus will spread more rapidly. This has been shown through the skyrocketing numbers in increasing cases. Many schools are transitioning to full remote, and I expect others will soon follow. We are told safety is our number one priority, yet we are sending our children out in a deadly pandemic that has taken hundreds of thousands of lives. Masks and social distancing simply will not protect everyone, especially when people are not even following the guidelines.

Our teachers are afraid for their lives and for their precious families who they go home to, and risk exposing. The numbers are only increasing, as the hospitals are reaching capacity limits. Indoor gatherings are limited to 10 people, yet we are putting hundreds into our schools. This does not demonstrate that safety is the number one priority. This is extremely concerning.

Many treat this virus as though it is nothing but an inconvenience, while people are fighting for their lives. We need to come together as a community, recognize the severity of this, support each other, and keep one another safe.

I urge you to reconsider the in-person learning and the safety of our students.

Thank you,

Mackenzie Manero

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We would like to express our appreciation for all the hard work by the teachers, staff, and administrators at Maynard High School, since the academic year began under the COVID pandemic this past fall. We have two daughters attending MHS and believe that the teachers, staff, and administrators have done an excellent job providing a safe and effective learning environment for our daughters' learning, initially the remote posture and continuing into the current hybrid posture. We also wanted to acknowledge the leadership of the Maynard Public Schools administration, playing a critical role to ensure that our schools get the state and federal funding that they need and that our children deserve.

We realize that there are many in the Maynard community who would like the schools to open up more quickly. However, in light of the recent increase of COVID infections and hospitalizations in eastern Massachusetts (and around the country), we feel that opening schools up too quickly puts at risk our teachers and, indeed, others in the community.

Thank you!

Ken Estabrook  
Linde Ghere  
28 McKinley St., Maynard