

Call to Order

Board Chair Pam Glenn called the special meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and welcomed guests. Sign in sheets were available and guests were requested to sign in and indicate if they were interested in addressing the Board.

Agenda Items

Public Input was moved to the top of the agenda to allow patrons the opportunity to express their concerns regarding the recent mask mandate announced by Governor Brown.

Public Input

Superintendent Hislop informed those present that, at the regular July meeting, the District had announced that students would not be required to wear masks. However, he noted that the Governor recently announced an updated mandate that would require students and staff to wear masks while inside of buildings. They would not be required to wear masks while participating in physical activity or while outside.

Kenneth Venutolo addressed the Board and expressed his concern that this mandate is just a small part of the battle between good and evil. He encouraged the Board and parents to stand together and allow for personal and school decisions.

John Mola spoke of the ineffectiveness of masks and reviewed studies showing that masks do more harm to children than good. Jenny Phelps reminded the Board that they were elected to represent the community and asked that they do what is best for the children. She shared information she had gathered from a survey that garnered 89 responses representing 142 students. All of the respondents were in favor of making the wearing of masks optional.

Dr. Jason Kehr presented research he had compiled regarding masks. He provided copies for the Board. Parent, Ryan Browne, spoke of how the masks effected his children's desire to attend school and encouraged the Board to stand up to the hypocrisy of the government. Ian Gordon shared his concerns regarding the masks but also asked what the Board would do when they are asked to force vaccines. Blake Bars of the Union County Freedom Alliance spoke about how the schools should be bound to the law rather than the Executive Branch with Emergency Orders. He read a speech regarding the need to uphold the constitution. There were several other patrons that spoke in favor of local control over the mandate.

Superintendent Hislop informed those present that as much as the Board was hoping to have masks optional, the latest guidelines from the state require students and staff to wear masks while indoors. There will be penalties for districts that are non-compliant such as; loss of license for staff, personal liability for board members and fines for districts.

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One individual asked if districts had contacted legal counsel regarding implementation of the mandate. Jason Beck indicated he has been on some on-line meetings where a lawyer has indicated his willingness to represent districts and felt he could win against the mandate. Rob Beck noted that the community would need to support the board and district if it sought legal counsel.

Community members continued to urge the Board to make a stand for local control. Kaiger Braseth expressed concerns about placing staff members in a position of jeopardizing their license and livelihood. Ken Patterson agreed with parents and community concerns but also did not want to put staff in the position of losing their license.

Dustan Adams asked if the Board has considered reaching out to other districts to advocate for local control. Ken Patterson stated that he felt that would be a sound option.

Board Chair Pam Glenn thanked those present for coming and she stated that she understands their concerns. She did remind them that there are less restrictions this year and students will not have to wear them at recess or during athletic activities.

Action Items

Approve Staff Resignations

Superintendent Hislop reported that Becky Mullarkey and Audrey Cant had both tendered their resignations to accept other positions. Ken Patterson moved to approve the resignations. Kaiger Braseth seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Prior to adjournment, Nate Bingaman asked whether there will be social distancing required along with masks. Mr. Mills reported everything will be back to normal with the exception of masks.

With no further business to discuss, the Board adjourned the Special Meeting at 8:49 pm.

Board Members Present

Jason Beck, Kaiger Braseth, Joe Fisher, Pam Glenn and Ken Patterson.

Others Present

Doug Hislop, Superintendent; Mike Mills, Principal/A.D. and Teressa Dewey, Deputy Clerk.

Chairman

Deputy Clerk