

Dear K-12 Budget Chair and Committee,

My daughter is a 6th grader who is currently attending a learning pod with one other 6th grader and three kindergarteners. We had originally enrolled her in public school, but quickly pulled her when we learned that she would be forced remote. She told us she could not learn by being on a computer all day. While the learning pod is not ideal, it's the best choice for now. We chose to provide a higher quality education for her, even though it puts our family into a very different financial position. I am so thankful for that decision. We have not experienced the stress and frustration other families have had. Watching the parents, kids and even teachers struggle through this school year has been heartbreaking. Since I am looking at it from a difference perspective and not directly involved, I can see the lack of communication from the superintendent & board has contributed to this frustration. Maybe it isn't even the lack of communication, but lack of compassion and respect for others. The last-minute communications on what the school plans are. Meeting once a month and formatting the meetings in a way that is more of a dictatorship. Picking and choosing of guidelines to follow with what appears to be no consistency. When there is little to no explanation on why decisions are made, people are left to make their own assumptions. I would not want to be in their position right now, I am certain it is difficult and I wish the circumstances were different. But I cannot help but to think of how much differently this would feel to parents if we would have felt the board was FOR our kids. The extra stress this has put on parents & kids is uncalled for and is unacceptable, in my opinion.

My greatest concern at this point is how this board will lead our school community moving forward. As with many parents, I have lost confidence that future decisions will be made with our children's best interest in mind. I do not I trust this superintendent and I have anxiety over what the 2021-22 school year will look like. Honestly, I would prefer to send her to a private school but I don't know if it's a wise financial move for my family (note: the current learning pod will no longer be an option next year).

I spoke at the BOE meeting in December and requested honest communication to this community and a solid timeline. A timeline with goals – to work towards getting kids back in school. I'm not sure that is the board's goal – to get kids back in school. I also do not believe they have been using data that supports what is happening in our community.

Thank you for listening and I will cling to hope---that the words you hear today will prompt action for our school district moving forward.

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