

Special Board Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2021

The Brimfield Board of Education held its special meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Gymnasium. Board President Updyke called the meeting to order with the following members present: Meyer, Snyder, Bell, Graham, and Johnson. Jay Greening from Miller, Hall, & Triggs was seated nearby.

The board recognized and thanked all visitors.

Board President Updyke reminded the attendees that, for those who wish to speak, they are given 5 minutes. Be respectful to those who have differing views. Lastly, this is not a question and answer session.

Dan Troglio, Michael Weston, Amy Winkelmann, and Molly Richeson voiced their opinions on why we should be following the mask mandate. Adrienne Schachtrup spoke next, Lori Johnson opined against the mandate and Polly Greenway wishes to have the current decision reversed, in favor of the mask mandate. Terri Kirkland spoke next and wonders why the Board voted to not follow the mask mandate.

Board President Updyke mentioned that we have concluded the public comment session and encouraged a motion to extend the time. Johnson moved and Bell seconded to extend the public comment session time for an additional 30 minutes. Motion carried

Carrie Mulligan, Cathryn Hill, and Sonya Beecher expressed their concerns on the Board's current decision to not follow the mandate and urged the Board to reverse course. Alaina Hamilton spoke in favor of parental choice-against the mask mandate. Cheryl VanFarowe spoke on the disappointment of the current decision- we should be following the mask mandate. Josh Murdock addressed the Board, favoring the current decision, and shared his belief why risks still exist. A member of the public yielded their time so Josh could finish speaking. Jessica Higgs was next and opined for the mask mandate. Clint Drury spoke next and explained why he does not understand the mask mandate defiance.

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James Joyner shared his opinion on why masks are efficient. Ana Couri briefed the Board and urged the Board to listen to the students when they say masks are ok. Brianna Murdock shared her opinion on why the Board should stick with its current decision. Ronald Williams yielded his time so Brianna could finish speaking. Rachel Kuhn-Siegel shared her belief on why masks work. Julie Hoerr was next and urged the Board to keep fighting for local control. Jarrod Schlipf urged the Board to stay the course and shared his understanding of the 60-day window. Marilyn Eberle shared why she was discouraged by the Board's defiance of the mask mandate.

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Maren Thompson wants an end to the divisiveness and hopes the Board is not making this political. Isabella Couri wants the Board to not risk waiting for 60 days. Taylor Wiewel urged the Board to not wait 60 days; too risky. Matt Gillespie praised the students for speaking but urged the Board to not follow the mandate. Tim Richeson wants the Board to listen to the science and not children. Courtney Strahm voiced her opinion on why the mandate should not be followed. Courtney Cooper yielded her time so Courtney Strahm could finish speaking. Dave Hicke was glad to see/hear the differing of opinions and provided his opinion, on what he believes to be, two options; does not believe Brimfield will let its recognition go. Jason Strahm yielded his time so he could finish speaking. Anna Heinz supports the Board and its decisions but believes masks wearing should be a parental decision. Annie Bell respects the differing of opinions and voiced why the Board should make the best choice to keep students in the classroom.

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Natalie Zieman shared her view on why we should follow the mandate. Erin Schatsiek supports the Board's current decision and shared her legal understanding of the mask mandate. Sarah Ziembra is disheartened by the divide and provided her opinion for mask and no mask, but, ultimately believes we should follow the mandate. Mya Strahm believes masks should be optional. Katie Hersemann shared her opinions on why we should follow the mandate and how the classroom is effected. Lynae and Peter Huang shared their views on why they believe mask-wearing should be a parental choice.

Meyer moved and Johnson seconded for a 10-minute recess.

Motion carried

Upon return from the 10-minute recess, there was no further public comment.

Bell moved and Johnson seconded to leave open session and enter closed session *5 ILCS 120/2(c) (11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.* Roll Call: Bell – yes, Johnson – yes, Graham - yes, Snyder - yes, Meyer - yes, Updyke - yes.

Motion carried

The Board returned from Closed Session at 11:08 pm.

Snyder moved and Johnson seconded to approve the Revised Back to School Plan, contingent on following the mask mandate and the change of calculation and positivity rates.

Snyder explained the ramifications including Elmwood potentially “opting out” of the co-op agreement. Updyke added we will also be forfeiting games while we wait 45-60 days; quarantines would happen on a larger scale; goal of keeping students in front of Teachers; financial loss, and; 60 days from Monday to respond with a corrective action plan. Meyer agrees that we do not want to spend taxpayer money on litigation; we have to weigh everything. Bell added that, in the 45-60 days we have to respond with a plan, teacher licensing, outdoor sports, and school recognition are not at risk; we could potentially lose grant funding. Bell wants parental choice and local control. Updyke also added that we will not be taking any legal action on this, and, in 45 days we would be voting to follow the mandate. Johnson added that there is a lot at risk in the 45 days that we wait this out; it is great to see the community out and we need to

respect one another regardless of the vote. Superintendent Shinall mentioned that he would be remiss if he did not mention that it has been his professional recommendation to follow the Executive Order.

Following the mask mandate: Snyder moved and Johnson seconded to follow the Governor's Executive Order in all mitigation tiers. Roll call: Meyer – no, Bell – no, Johnson – yes, Snyder – yes, Graham – yes, Updyke – yes. Motion carried

Change of calculation and positivity rates: Bell moved and Meyer moved to change the calculation of positive cases to the rolling seven-day average. And in Mitigation Level One, metrics will be based on a positivity rate of 10%; Mitigation Level Two – 20% and; Mitigation Level Three – 40%. Roll Call: Meyer – yes, Bell – yes, Johnson – yes, Snyder – yes, Graham – yes, Updyke – yes. Motion carried


Roll call (for the plan, with changes): Meyer – no, Bell – no, Johnson – yes, Snyder – yes, Graham – yes, Updyke – yes.

Motion carried

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 pm.

Motion carried


Board President


Board Secretary