

## Special Board Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2021

Meeting was called to order at 7 pm by President Updyke.

Present: Meyer, Graham, Snyder, Johnson, Coyle, Bell, Grade School Principal Albritton, High School Principal Robison, Superintendent Shinall, and Board Clerk Petty. Jay Greening from Miller, Hall, & Triggs was seated nearby.

Superintendent Shinall began by addressing a possible Resolution for the Return to School. It's purpose was to address immediate guidance and degree of control. Shinall urged the Board to pass on approving the resolution as these points have been addressed by the recent CDC and state-approved guidance.

The next item up for discussion were the plans for returning to school. The CDC has recently passed new guidelines that the state has adopted. Jay Greening elaborated on a few points. The Board and Superintendent Shinall mentioned that the next step will be to draft a plan when the Board convenes for the July 21 regular Board of Education meeting. It will be based on the CDC guidance that was adopted by IDPH (ISBE clarified, via memo, of adoption; will be clear in the coming days). It will be a district-wide plan that will include tiers of mitigation; these tiers will fluctuate based on COVID-19 numbers. The plan will address safety precautions such as the mask recommendation, vaccinations, social distancing, one-way hallways, and locker usage.

Updyke welcomed comments from the community.

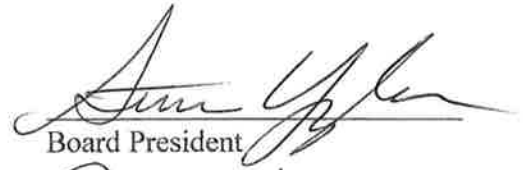
Community members who spoke included Cindy Sloan, Sam Hudson, Fawn Kieser, Brianna Murdock, Erin Schatsiek, Julie Hoerr, and Cathryn Hill. Their comments included the following: Medically speaking, masks should be a personal choice. Any variation of "recommend" needs clarity. Children do not want to be "walked on." There is hope that the Board will advocate for personal choice. Some scientific data was shared in opposition of masks. The importance of in-person instruction was shared as well as which CDC recommended guidelines make sense and which ones do not, in the opinion of the speaker. There should not be a worry about reduced state funding for allowing masks to be optional. Could the district add a rider to its insurance policy? The Board and Administration was acknowledged for their efforts in getting through the school year and does have community support moving forward.

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

There were four additional members who spoke- Dr. Katherine Barnewolt, Jessica Turner, Courtney Strahm, and Marilyn Eberle. Their comments included the following: Science is never settled. Opinions were shared on masking. The Board and Administration was encouraged to look more into the statistics. It is rare for children to fall ill and be hospitalized for COVID-19. The topic of masking has been overwhelming other safety precautions. A letter, which was

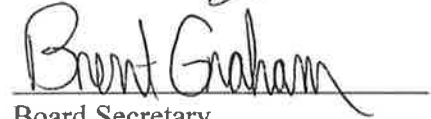
written by another school Superintendent, was shared. The mental health of students should be a top priority and masking a personal choice. Also, Doctors have been encouraging children to wear masks and children have been doing a good job at doing so, despite some having medical impairments. Children may not be sick or hospitalized due to COVID-19, but can be carriers to others who are more vulnerable. The Board was acknowledged for having a complete team.

At 7:47 p.m. Johnson moved and Snyder seconded to adjourn the July 14, 2021 Special Meeting of the Brimfield CUSD #309 Board of Education. Motion carried



Ann Yellen

Board President



Brent Graham

Board Secretary