



Marsha DeGennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>

[External Email] Shari Storeygard Public Comment

1 message

Shari Storeygard <sstoreygard@yahoo.com>
To: Woodbridge School District <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>

Wed, Jul 15, 2020 at 8:32 AM

Hi Marsha,
I sent you an email last night about wanting to present my public comment tonight.
This is an edited version.

Shari Storeygard

My name is Shari Storeygard and I am a parent of children at the school and pediatrician to many children in this community. My mother, father, sister, and brother are teachers.

I am grateful to the many people who have spent countless hours in meetings already trying to figure this out. You have a very hard job and it is very complicated. Parts of our larger system have let us and you down and we are forced to come together locally to find solutions.

I want to make a few observations and suggestions with the *assumption* that some in-school learning will happen. That will be guided by continued data, COVID numbers in our community, and public health guidelines.

-The risk of COVID19 transmission is *significantly* reduced by being **outside in open air**. I believe that it is **VERY POSSIBLE** to have large parts of the school day be outside in open air. I believe that our community is capable of helping the school have sun and rain shades or tents and is capable of raising money for every child to have proper rain and cold weather gear, lap desks, and personal mats for children to use outside. I believe that outdoor tables and chairs could be donated. Being outside would allow a break from masks. It would also allow for easier cohorting, which I will get to next. Skeptics may question the weather and other obstacles, which while real, are possible to overcome with community-wide creativity. Call on parents to form groups to gather these materials and to problem-solve for weather plans.

-We know that **small group cohorting** is critical for safety. It also allows for better flexibility and decision-making should someone have sick symptoms. I believe that by having much of school be outside, it will be more possible to have only small groups together inside in a cohort (for example, ½ of the class outside, ½ inside). I know that staffing will be the primary challenge for this.

-If small group cohorting while inside is a goal, the issue of **bussing** is hard. I believe that if you survey parents, many will opt out for safety reasons and for the good of the community. Those who do not have other options can be bussed in much smaller, safer numbers. There are ways to have drop-off/pick-up of many cars work, especially if each class convenes at its own dedicated place outside and especially if you recruit parent volunteers to help children get to/from their outdoor meeting spots.

-I believe that the goal should be for all to wear **face-coverings** inside. If given ample opportunity for breaks from masks while outside, this won't be as hard to do. Many children have shown that they **CAN** do this. I have heard from many camps that the first 2 weeks of mask-wearing need constant reminders (over your nose!) and that it has tended to get much easier after that.

In order to imagine most of school outside, one needs to let go of some preconceived notions about what school is and of the usual ways of doing things and usual ways of learning. We did that last spring already. We can do it again. This pandemic is forcing humans to consider options we never have needed to think

place of convening and learning. When obstacles arise, call on the community to help problem-solve. If in-school learning happens, it will be hard and will need a lot of tweaking as experience is gained, but using the outdoors has the potential to be absolutely beautiful, fulfilling, healing and most of all **SAFER**.