



Marsha DeGennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>

[External Email] Public comment 5/17/22

1 message

Whitney Randall <whitney.randall@gmail.com>

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 4:15 PM

To: Jonathan Budd <jbudd@woodbridgeps.org>, Marsha DeGennaro <mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org>

To the Woodbridge Board of Education and Superintendent Budd:

Thank you for allowing public comment for the meeting that will be held today, May 17, 2022. I am writing to again reinforce my hope for the board to consider public health and safety when reviewing the Safe Return Plan. Since the special meeting that was held last week, it has come to our attention that COVID cases have continued to rise in our community (the case rate today in New Haven County is 78 per 100,000 people, according to the NYTimes, which has consistently reported accurately when compared to the CDC and Connecticut weekly tallies. This compares to a case rate of 50 per 100,000 people at the time of the last meeting) and 33 students were reported to have tested positive at Beecher Road School from May 6th through 13th. As Dr. Budd has noted in his letters, this increase number of cases reflects the trend that exists in other communities as well, and is not unique to our school. However, this increase should not be dismissed nor minimized.

It is worth noting that the case count at BRS from May 6th-13th is higher than what we saw at the peak of the Omicron wave in January, which did not surpass 25 cases (occurring January 10th-14th). This higher count occurred despite that the current case rate in Woodbridge and in New Haven County is significantly lower than it was during that January wave. It is safe to assume that the increased mitigation strategies that were present at that time, including masking, helped to keep the number lower during Omicron. Conversely, the removal of those mitigation strategies, and failure to reimplement them at the start of this current wave, has potentially allowed more children to be exposed to the virus.

Although there are parents who have expressed concern about mandated masking in school, it should not be ignored that 33 children this past week were required to remain at home, learning remotely, due to their COVID positive status/illness. Those 33 children were deprived of the opportunity to interact with their friends and to learn in the most effective way – in-person. It should also be considered that one way masking loses its efficacy when the case rate is this high; two way masking, especially with correctly worn KN94 or equivalent masks, would be most effective at helping our children to avoid COVID infection and remain at school. I would therefore like the board to again consider mandatory masking as an option, even as we near the end of the school year, to allow children to remain in the classroom as much as possible.

Thank you for your consideration,

Whitney Randall

21 Evergreen Dr

(mother of 2 current BRS students)