

**Speaker Comments (2)**  
**Special Meeting Convening as Governance/Policy COW**  
**February 2, 2021**

Name	Affiliation	Topic	Comments
	Student		No Comments
Salena Klass	Parent		<p>Dear Board of Education and Superintendent Smalls,</p> <p>I am a mother and stepmother of 3 kids. All three of my children attend different schools. My sister in law is a teacher in the RCSD. I sat here last December fighting for my daughters pre k teacher not to be let go during budget cuts and now I sit here pleading for you to just answer some questions.</p> <p>In the beginning I chose not to send my daughter back to school, as with my step children, because we didn't know what would happen. The other two kids attend private and charter school. Both reopened and we kept them home too. It wasn't a decision based on the lack of information from RCSD. It was because I really didn't know the statistics on schools reopening at the time and I wasn't willing to risk my children, or my parents who would be helping us out half the weeks, health.</p> <p>Now that we see the numbers are better and the risk is low, I felt more comfortable. Our eldest private school is Norman Howard, and with his needs we decided to send him back full time and he has been flourishing. Our middle child is at GCCS, and she went back this week.</p> <p>I decided to send my daughter back to #15 - not because we can with the district reopening - but because I have had lengthy discussions with her teacher, I know the building and that I trust Mr. Piper. I also know that there was not enough room for all the kids who wanted to go back, and the fear of being moved out of the building scared other families away and that is when I emailed Dr. Smalls and Dr. Green and they worked to make sure that we would be able to come to a resolution that non of our children would be displaced. Thank you.</p> <p>Anyways, I am for schools reopening BUT I also 100% fully understand what the teachers are saying. They WANT to go back. They need more help. They shouldn't have to teach online and in person at the same time. It is not fair to my kids who are in person. OR the kids at home.</p>

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		<p>Seeing my stepdaughter who was at GCCS have to sit at home on her computer while her classmates at school and teachers left the room for a fire drill was disheartening. Seeing her teachers struggle to teach in two places was exhausting. It took multiple tries before they readjusted their schedule so that it was not happening at the same time. They had to get support staff in to help teach the lessons. My step daughter sat on her computer from 8:30-2pm! It was horrible. Then they went all virtual and it became MUCH better. Im happy she has the opportunity to go back two days a week and hopefully 4 come spring.</p> <p>What about the schools that are open in phase 1? What about the teachers who are saying that things are not being properly cleaned? Is that a custodial problem? A district problem? Can we have answers on why this is happening?</p> <p>What about the COVID positivity rates? Why are they not being reported and taken care of?</p> <p>WHY are you getting rid of testing? I get tested WEEKLY by choice so that I know if my family is safe. I also do not think that families who do not consent to testing should be allowed in the building. It is not fair to anyone else.</p> <p>The schools should be on their own NYS guided plan. Each school is different and has different needs. The teachers and families should be able to see what works best for each of the schools. Not district wide.</p> <p>Also, the crap that was pulled last night about Maloy's tweet or fb post was ridiculous. ALL she was saying was that some of the board members turned their screens off WHEN THE TEACHERS STARTED TALKING. It was obvious and disrespectful. Yes you have the option to turn your screen off, but the timing was telling. And having an argument online about it was embarrassing. For us to sit there for FIVE HOURS and thats how you end the meeting? Embarrassing. I felt for our teachers in that moment.</p> <p>I just want answers for out teachers. I think making them look like villains is horrendous. Our teachers are the LIFE BLOOD of schools. If we have no teachers, we have nothing. Not working with them to make it better only makes it fall behind. What is a school when we only have students and administration? It lost. This board is nothing with out our teachers. Start working with them. We need them. You are making us lose faith in this district more and more everyday. I want to keep my daughter in RCSD, and its hanging on by a thread.</p> <p>Thank you, Salena Klass</p>
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<p>Deborah Tseng Mori</p>	<p>Parent</p>	<p>Reopening Schools</p>	<p>Thank you for listening to all and moving forward to serve all students in the Rochester City School District.</p> <p>As parents of a 1st grade student we stand with honorable Dr.Leslie Myers Small, the distinguished Board of Education, Physicians who consulted in meetings, CDC, Mike Mendoza, Parents &amp; Students. Students ARE safer at school and we would like the schools to open during Phase 2 re-opening.</p> <p>The RTA does not stand for us or my children. Best Regards Deborah Tseng Mori</p>
<p>Molly Ball Kearstin Brown- Warren Gipsy Escobar Llerena Searle Pablo Sierra Mallory Smith</p>	<p>Parents</p>	<p>Reopening Schools</p>	<p>Dear Board of Education Members,</p> <p>We are a group of parents concerned with the RTA's resolution to pause the district's plan to move forward with Phase 2 of reopening. We wrote <a href="#">this petition</a> in response, which, at the time of this writing, has over 280 signatures. The RTA <b>does not</b> represent us as parents and we are dismayed by their attempt to silence the voice of the families who opted into the hybrid model. We urge you to move forward with Phase 2 as planned and to consider reinstating the original plan to conduct COVID-19 testing in each of the buildings. We also urge you to work with the teachers to bridge the wide trust gap that currently exists. Perhaps using restorative practices to bridge that gap could move all stakeholders forwards as opposed to maintaining the current stalemate. We support the district in moving forward with Phase 2 and offer to support our teachers through the transition as well.</p> <p>Thanks so much for your consideration.</p> <p>Best, Molly Ball Kearstin Brown-Warren Gipsy Escobar Llerena Searle Pablo Sierra Mallory Smith</p>

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	Community		No Comments
Tamalyn Pritchard	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Good Evening-</p> <p>My name is Tamalyn Pritchard, this is my twenty-first year in the district. What you are hearing from teachers and staff is not about wanting to stay home but a lack of trust in the system and fears about the safety and well-being of our families and students. When we as professionals voice concerns the district ignores and vilifies us creating a culture of distrust and lack of faith in leadership. People can't function if they don't feel safe. We want to be safe and do our jobs.</p> <p>I have one point of clarification, it was stated that a return to the regular bell schedule on February 8th would not increase screen time, that is wrong. My classes will go from thirty minutes to forty-eight minutes. My students will now be on zoom in classes over five and half hours a day, four days a week with one forty minute break for lunch. My students think this is an unrealistic expectation and they will fail.</p> <p>Last Thursday my classroom had a smartboard partially installed and no computer. I have several questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What technology is available?</li> <li>• Am I expected to bring my laptop everyday?</li> <li>• Should I also bring the additional monitor I purchased so that I can see the multiple windows required to teach a zoom lesson?</li> <li>• Will there be time to test the setup before I have to teach a synchronous remote class at 8:30 Monday February 22nd?</li> <li>• Can you show me an example of a teacher conducting simultaneous instruction with only equipment provided by the district?</li> <li>• Can the school broadband support everyone a video call?</li> <li>• Will there be temperature checks at every building?</li> <li>• Will I have keys so I can secure my classroom when I go to the bathroom or out to my car?</li> <li>• What if a student has to go to the bathroom?</li> <li>• What if students don't have materials, like a charging cord?</li> <li>• How will we sanitize shared materials?</li> <li>• Are there similar districts successfully implementing simultaneous instruction?</li> </ul>

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			<p>Common problems and districtwide issues need district level guidance and solutions. Buildings are solving these problems because they have to. They should be focused on instruction to engage and accommodate their students so they will be successful. Schools can safely open for in person instruction if they follow the CDC guidelines so show us how RCSD will do that.</p>
Craig Zaremba	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>I'm Craig Zaremba and I'm a middle school Science teacher at Henry Hudson School 28. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak regarding the reopening plan for phase 2 and 3 as put forth by the superintendent and the board of education.</p> <p>I am a graduate of the city school district, John Marshall High School class of 84. I have been a teacher in this district since 2001. I am on the fence regarding the reopening of our schools. I want to be back in the classroom as do many of my colleagues. Based on conversations with my students they want to be back in the classroom. We strive for the social interaction that's connects us.</p> <p>My concerns and the concerns of my students are valid. We are living in a country where more than 443,000 people have died because of the covid 19 virus. Several of my colleagues and many of my students have lost loved ones due to this pandemic. We have listened to our elected officials' state that the virus is a hoax, that it will be gone soon, and that vaccines are going to be available. Some of these statement are false.</p> <p>Many of my colleagues have not been vaccinated against this virus, even fewer of my students have been vaccinated. The Governor of our state has removed the covid testing for staff and students entering our buildings, as a screening, that were put into place to keep us safe. So who are we to believe?</p> <p>When I go to the store to buy groceries or essentials, there are safety protocols, protective barriers, hand sanitizer stations and floor signage to keep employees and customers, social distant, and safe.</p> <p>The only place in my building that I see protective barriers in place, is the main office. The only pace I see signage as reminders to stay social distanced is outside the bathroom or music room.</p> <p>There is NO signage in my classroom, there is NO protective barriers in my classroom, and there is NO hand sanitizer station outside my classroom.</p>

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Amy Mihalakas	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Hello,</p> <p>My name is Amy Mihalakas, I have a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader at School 12 and a child in UPK community program. Rochester City schools MUST reopen ASAP, we have plans in place and it’s time to get moving. Any delays to re-opening in-person learning would have a compounding effect on students with disabilities, some of whom were not included in the January plan. We must re-open now.</p> <p>In addition to the clear inequalities already visible in our county the lengthy remote learning model of RCSD will widen the gap between our students and those in the suburbs if it were to continue. Don’t cave to the demands to delay re-opening from RTA</p>

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Jennifer Flanagan	Staff	Reopening Plan	<p>Good evening Commissioners and Good evening Superintendent,</p> <p>My name is Jennifer Flanagan and I have been a teacher in the district for 20 years. I currently teach 8th grade Math at Northwest Junior High School.</p> <p>I am speaking tonight on the behalf of teachers and students!</p> <p>We all want normalcy.....but let's be honest....normal won't happen until the pandemic is over!</p> <p>Teachers and students want to go back BUT we want to go back when there is a safety plan in place and can be vaccinated!</p>

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			<p>We want to teach like the “other” districts but we also want the same safety precautions and protocols put in place in those districts. It says in our safety and protocol plan that students can have an official mask exemption...Shouldn't that student remain remote? What are those exemptions?</p> <p>It states that teachers will wear a shield in those situations...what about the other students in the room... Will they be provided with shields? It will be unsafe for them as well.</p> <p>What if parents have questions? Will ALL their concerns be addressed before Feb 25th? What if they dont want the same choice for their child they made weeks ago? Can choices change? How will the district manage that?</p> <p>My main concern as a teacher has always been MY students!</p> <p>My 8th graders miss that social interaction with other children but they are also scared of this virus! They have many questions.....</p>
John O'Neil	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>This is my 24th year as an ENL teacher in the District and I've heard lots of educational buzzwords and expressions over the years. This reopening reminds me of "building the plane while flying it" and I'm afraid that I'll be hearing it again as our Reopening Phases come to pass.</p> <p>"Building the plane as you fly it" when you are trying something new in the classroom under normal conditions can be exciting as you want to see how students respond to something new. "Building the plane as you fly it" while we are reopening schools during a pandemic, makes me only feel a sense of RISK and UNCERTAINTY... two words that should never be associated with a plan for reopening.</p> <p>I was part of Phase 1 and I have enjoyed being in the classroom with my co-teacher and students. We follow the guidelines in the classroom I work in pretty well, respecting social distancing and mask wearing. During the science class I support we have engaged the 7 or so remote and 3 in-person students but I don't know that my experience will be the norm across the District.</p>




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			<p>I believe I work with one of the best principals and administrative teams in the District and yet, when I am in meetings and questions are asked and the responses are "we don't know yet" or "we're learning these things as you are" or even worse, we learn about changes in the media, it doesn't increase my confidence in the plan.</p> <p>This time, let's not build the plane as we fly it. Let's reopen with a complete plan where everyone, educators, parents, and students alike, understands the rights, responsibilities, and expectations for everyone.</p> <p>John O'Neil ESOL Teacher</p>
Karen Wagner	Staff	Reopening of Schools	<p>Good evening School Board members and RCSD community, My name is Karen Wagner and I am a high school teacher at School Without Walls.</p> <p>I appreciate hearing the passion and reasons that parents have given this evening. As a high school teacher at School Without Walls, I want to make it clear that I am not opposed to students returning to school. However, I feel that the process has been rushed and is not currently safe or in the best interest of the majority of high school students.</p> <p>There was a 6 week period between when Special Education Students went to hybrid in January and elementary students returned this week. I believe a similar gap should be in place before high school students return to hybrid. In that way, technology and custodial resources will not be diffused and 100% of the support can go to making sure elementary runs safely and smoothly. In addition, by phasing in the hybrid model more gradually, more staff and parents will be vaccinated. The steep recent rise in COVID cases among children reinforces the importance of having a safe environment.</p>

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			<p>It has been stressful and I have been deeply saddened to see how so many of our students have struggled. However, if going to a hybrid model is supposed to be seen as a cure, then I wonder why the vast majority of students have opted for remote teaching.</p> <p>Right now, the majority of students are present in the high school classes I teach. When I start teaching hybrid, I will have 15-20 students learning remote at the same time as I teach 1 to 8 students (I believe the average number of students in a hybrid classroom is about 4). I will need to stop using some of the technological tools that I have learned to be successful in the classroom like Peardeck because I can't have my eyes and attention in 3 places at the same time. My concern is that the cost of this inevitable shift will be that my remote learning students will suffer. I am worried that their anxiety and stress will increase and they will become less engaged. On a personal level, if I knew what classroom I would be teaching in and there were written protocols for my particular building with its specific layout, community and issues in mind, I would feel much more comfortable going back. The District protocols right now seem very vague and I do not have confidence that they will be adhered to since we are hearing stories from other buildings of staff not wearing mask and not removing a child from the room who is refusing to wear a mask.</p> <p>Let's go to a hybrid model but let's do this thoughtfully and carefully. Let's establish clearly written protocols that each building develops with a committee of staff, parents and students. Let's involve students in the process of re-opening so that they will become interested and make this a choice. Let's make sure that custodial and technology support staff are not stretched too thin and that resources are not diffused too thinly. We can do it, but we have to do it right--for the students and for the safety of all.</p>
Michelle Repp	Staff	Reopening of Schools	<p>I have been teaching for thirty years and twenty-seven of those have been in the Rochester City School District. I am a VERY PROUD RCSD teacher. As a teacher of students with Special Needs, I want to go back to teaching my students in person. They are my heart and reason for continuing teaching. My concern is that we don't have the technology to teach simultaneously in an effective manner to both in person and virtual students. There will not be equity for the two groups. Also, the cleanliness of the building, wearing of masks by all students, testing of staff and students for safety purposes and being in the classroom with students whose family had Covid or the student themselves have had it and the concerns of bringing home the virus to our own</p>

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Alexandra Pitnell	Staff	Reopening of Schools	 Video.mov Click here to hear video
Kenneth Canfield	Staff	Reopening of Schools	<p>Thank you for being such a wonderful host for the speakers.  The demands of submitting grades make it impossible for me to wait longer to speak this evening. Please submit my comments in the body in the email for the meeting record.  Sincerely,</p> <p>Ken Canfield, School of the Arts</p> <p>My name is Ken Canfield and I'm a teacher at School of the Arts.</p> <p>I miss my students. I miss my colleagues. and I miss my school. Remote learning has failed to serve our district scholars. I will be back enthusiastically at my post to teach in person at the very first possible moment despite any particular health risks. Nonetheless, I have many deep concerns regarding the District's reopening plans. I am further concerned at the communities' impression that the district has dealt in good faith or collaboratively with the RTA in planning the reopening. Teachers have no</p>

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			<p>confidence in the reopening plan and fear for the leadership of our district because the district has completely stonewalled any efforts on the part of the RTA to participate and offer good counsel in crafting a reopening plan. It is an incomplete, un-thorough plan. It is a bad plan. So many tonight have stated a desire to return in a hybrid model. That is not what this plan calls for. It calls for a simultaneous model. I would like to address two specific points about the reopening plan.</p> <p><b><u>Instructional Inequity:</u></b> Teachers cannot possibly give their best to any of their students in a simultaneous classroom environment. The instructional needs of remote students and in-person students are in direct opposition, and will so divide the efforts of instructors at every turn that most learning and class activity will come to a grinding halt. I desperately want to see my students in person and break free of the remote learning constraints, but the simultaneous model will only serve to compound the challenges our students face, not relieve them.</p> <p><b><u>Teacher preparedness:</u></b> The district has been woefully bad at preparing teachers for the reopening. It seems, in fact, that the district has abdicated all responsibility for the necessary professional training to the Instructional Technology department. The IT staff has done a wonderful job as far as that goes, but technology is not instruction. Teachers need practice and peer review and then more practice. Also, the reopening guidelines I have seen are weak at best. They amount to regulations on social distancing and mask wearing copied and pasted from one document to another. The support structures and protocols to establish and maintain even the most basic of the reopening standards are nowhere to be found. The district is not prepared. Because the district has failed to prepare its teachers.</p> <p>Respectfully Submitted,</p> <p>Kenneth Canfield, Teacher - School of the Arts</p>
Claire Labrosa	Staff	Reopening Plan	<p>Hi Ms. Scott,</p> <p>Thank you so much for sending me the link. I see there are a lot of speakers tonight, and I want to submit my comments for the record in case I don't get a chance to speak.</p>

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			<p>person who works and learns inside a classroom. Give us a plan that is equitable in comparison to the rest of the districts in Monroe county and prove it is being followed through with. We cannot rest until we know we will be safe. All of us. Many Superintendent's ago, we were asked to treat each student in the RCSD as if they were our own. I wouldn't send my own child into one of our school buildings right now, the district has to step up, and prove parent's can trust the plans and practices are safe, equitable, and science based.</p>
Laurie Marsocci	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>I apologize that I was unable to stay on this evening to share my thoughts with the Board of Education.</p> <p>My name is Laurie Marsocci and I am an elementary school teacher. What I have is a list of questions and concerns from my colleagues and myself as we have been preparing to go back to our building on Feb. 8th. One of our biggest concerns is how this will upset the routines, procedures and successes of remote learning that we have put into place the past 20 weeks. Our students need and deserve consistency, especially this year. A change in their routine, will upset what has been put in place for students and families. We are asking the BOE to address these concerns in the upcoming days.</p> <p>The district does not seem prepared with the necessary technology to teach our hybrid and remote students. How can we successfully teach our students without this equipment (microphones, projectors, etc.)?</p> <p>Our students depend on computers daily. How can 2 technicians support students and families with computer issues? How can 2 building technicians support all of the classrooms that are preparing to go back on Monday? As of today, there are classrooms where computers that are to be used by teachers to teach hybrid and remote simultaneously are not connected to the internet, attached to the proper equipment and do not have the needed Smart Board equipment. We cannot put to use the information from the professional development provided because our computers aren't in the proper working condition. How will this be corrected by Monday? What tech support do teachers have and what is an appropriate turn around time to have these issues corrected for the remainder of the year?</p>

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			<p>Students mental health and SEL is very important. Who, when and where are the extra supports that you will be putting into building for students that the district has promised?</p> <p>How do we give the hybrid and remote students what they need while still providing quality education for both simultaneously?</p> <p>These are a few of our concerns we want the Board of Education to consider.</p>
<p>Martha Morales-McBride</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Reopening Schools</p>	<p>TO the BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE SUPERINTENDENT:  I am Martha Morales-McBride a Dual Language Teacher at School 12 and a CIT Mentor  Teachers know that children do better in school.  Our issue is the actual plan, lack of training and resources.  Some families and CO are making us out to be lazy not understanding or caring about the issues and unfairly comparing us to suburban schools, which is like apples to oranges. Suburban teachers have resources and had weeks of training to prepare. None teach our population, nor teach in two languages.  In the supposed trainings, we got a schedule and an overview of hybrid teaching. No sample lessons or modeling. They suggested that we purchase our own technology. After pushback, they said we could request a webcam and maybe a mic. To date these are not in our classrooms.  A good teacher has been trained with resources to keep the kids engaged and safe. They are prepared, know what they will do throughout the day, how they will do it. what tools they will use to teach and how to use them and have a plan B if something goes wrong.  I spent hours googling how to teach in a hybrid classroom and what technology I need, this after teaching all day and preparing report cards. We are working harder than ever.  The district did not even consider all their programs when they prescribed a plan and schedule. If you are a Dual Language teacher in K-2 it is impossible to teach Remote and In-Person in two languages. The only solution is for the children to receive half of the language arts instruction. No thought was put into this plan, it actually leaves some kids with less instruction.</p>

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			<p>Leading requires garnering and earning the trust of those you lead. When we are repeatedly left to figure things out on our own and to make things work at any cost we lose faith and trust our leaders. We are repeatedly led to mistrust by the actions and decisions CO makes without input from stakeholders or us that will have to carry out "THE PLAN."</p> <p>Suburban schools are open many with extra teachers so one teaches in person and one remote. They are not teaching in two languages or had to google how to teach in a hybrid classroom or had to spend upwards of \$300.00 in purchasing technology so that the 3 in person students and remote students can interact.</p> <p>So compare us to the suburban teachers. CO and the Board, should plan the way I do and put more money and thought into the students where it should be, so that we can be compared to the suburbs.</p> <p>Martha Morales-McBride Dual Language Kindergarten Teacher</p>
Nicole Fraser	Staff	Questions Reopening Schools	<p>Based on the comments of teachers that have been back in the building for the last four week I have the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will the classroom trash be emptied daily?</li> <li>2. Will teachers have keys to the classrooms?</li> <li>3. Will students be required to wear masks?</li> <li>4. Will any rules be enforceable?</li> <li>5. What will be the consequence for a student that does not wear a mask?</li> <li>6. What will happen if a student arrives to school and they are living with family members that have covid?</li> <li>7. Will students eat in the classroom?</li> <li>8. Will the parking lots be plowed?</li> <li>9. Will students/staff have their temperature checked daily?</li> <li>10. Will classrooms be cleaned daily?</li> <li>11. Will teachers be allowed to bring their second monitor to the classroom?</li> <li>12. Will teachers be allowed to collect students' phones?</li> <li>13. What happens when protocols are not followed?</li> <li>14. What supports are in place for students that are learning by Zoom?</li> </ol>



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			Sincerely, Nicole Fraser
Salena Klass	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Dear Board of Education and Superintendent Smalls,</p> <p>I am a mother and stepmother of 3 kids. All three of my children attend different schools. My sister in law is a teacher in the RCSD. I sat here last December fighting for my daughters pre k teacher not to be let go during budget cuts and now I sit here pleading for you to just answer some questions.</p> <p>In the beginning I chose not to send my daughter back to school, as with my step children, because we didn't know what would happen. The other two kids attend private and charter school. Both reopened and we kept them home too. It wasn't a decision based on the lack of information from RCSD. It was because I really didn't know the statistics on schools reopening at the time and I wasn't willing to risk my children, or my parents who would be helping us out half the weeks, health.</p> <p>Now that we see the numbers are better and the risk is low, I felt more comfortable. Our eldest private school is Norman Howard, and with his needs we decided to send him back full time and he has been flourishing. Our middle child is at GCCS, and she went back this week.</p> <p>I decided to send my daughter back to #15 - not because we can with the district reopening - but because I have had lengthy discussions with her teacher, I know the building and that I trust Mr. Piper. I also know that there was not enough room for all the kids who wanted to go back, and the fear of being moved out of the building scared other families away and that is when I emailed Dr. Smalls and Dr. Green and they worked to make sure that we would be able to come to a resolution that non of our children would be displaced. Thank you.</p>

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		<p>Anyways, I am for schools reopening BUT I also 100% fully understand what the teachers are saying. They WANT to go back. They need more help. They shouldn't have to teach online and in person at the same time. It is not fair to my kids who are in person. OR the kids at home.</p> <p>Seeing my stepdaughter who was at GCCS have to sit at home on her computer while her classmates at school and teachers left the room for a fire drill was disheartening. Seeing her teachers struggle to teach in two places was exhausting. It took multiple tries before they readjusted their schedule so that it was not happening at the same time. They had to get support staff in to help teach the lessons. My step daughter sat on her computer from 8:30-2pm! It was horrible. Then they went all virtual and it became MUCH better. Im happy she has the opportunity to go back two days a week and hopefully 4 come spring.</p> <p>What about the schools that are open in phase 1? What about the teachers who are saying that things are not being properly cleaned? Is that a custodial problem? A district problem? Can we have answers on why this is happening?</p> <p>What about the COVID positivity rates? Why are they not being reported and taken care of?</p> <p>WHY are you getting rid of testing? I get tested WEEKLY by choice so that I know if my family is safe. I also do not think that families who do not consent to testing should be allowed in the building. It is not fair to anyone else.</p> <p>The schools should be on their own NYS guided plan. Each school is different and has different needs. The teachers and families should be able to see what works best for each of the schools. Not district wide.</p> <p>Also, the crap that was pulled last night about Maloy's tweet or fb post was ridiculous. ALL she was saying was that some of the board members turned their screens off WHEN THE TEACHERS STARTED TALKING. It was obvious and disrespectful. Yes you have the option to turn your screen off, but the timing was telling. And having an argument online about it was embarrassing. For us to sit there for FIVE HOURS and thats how you end the meeting? Embarrassing. I felt for our teachers in that moment.</p>
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			<p>I just want answers for our teachers. I think making them look like villains is horrendous. Our teachers are the LIFE BLOOD of schools. If we have no teachers, we have nothing. Not working with them to make it better only makes it fall behind. What is a school when we only have students and administration? It lost. This board is nothing without our teachers. Start working with them. We need them. You are making us lose faith in this district more and more everyday. I want to keep my daughter in RCSD, and it's hanging on by a thread.</p> <p>Thank you, Salena Klass</p>
Martha Keating	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Good evening Board Members and Superintendent L Myers-Small  Speaking to you tonight on the eve of Phase two about communications.  Our members communicate with our students every single day. It is our most important duty to our students. It is what we do each and every school day.  I wish I could tell you that Central Office communicates that well. This is not aimed at anyone in particular but a systemic failure. While understanding that this large bureaucracy is hard to change. In these pandemic times, it is more critical than ever that the District becomes more accurate, more transparent and more timely. Changes need to be communicated rapidly and widely.  As the RTA Labor Relations Consultant, I remain ready to respond to our members, however, there are certain items that we just don't know about.  What technology is going to be standard in each classroom?  Are all of the requisite tools installed or in the rooms?  When will teachers be getting demonstrations of how to implement simultaneous instruction?  Is this an equitable situation for students working remotely?</p>

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			<p>There are still Phase 2 teachers who have not been told about the status of their accommodation requests. From an email this morning: No one has officially responded to me about when I am expected to return. Why wasn't more help given to the Benefits Department to handle all of these matters?</p> <p>Some itinerant teachers are still confused about their reporting locations. And no one is answering until the RTA asks.</p> <p>Today our parents were sent a letter that ALL students are returning on Monday. That is causing great confusion.</p> <p>Teachers want to be back in-person with our students every day. Until that happens, the District needs to improve its communication with and responsiveness to its employees. Our kids deserve the best from their teachers and the teachers deserve better from the District. And so, do their parents.</p>
Natalie Serour	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Good evening commissioners! I am here tonight to speak out against the reopening plan and to advocate for our remote students which in my room is roughly 70% of my students. Let me state wholeheartedly that I am not against schools to reopen for the families that want to return. But the reality is that the majority of families have opted to stay in remote model which means they will now be taught to simultaneously with their hybrid peers. I'm here tonight to say that simultaneous teaching is not the answer, it is in fact, worse than the strictly remote model.</p> <p>If you talk to the majority of teachers that have taught simultaneously they all say the same thing, it's impossible to do effectively, they are extremely stressed and overwhelmed and are floundering at best (and this is only a handful of remote – I will have 15). This is not a sound practice. And our remote students, the majority, will be the ones harmed the most by it because they will get LESS help and less support than they are currently receiving.</p> <p>Maybe people don't realize how much juggling remote teaching really is. We have students coming in and out, we have questions in chat, we have students with tech problems, can't find assignments, students needed help on their work AND we have to teach the content. This can be overwhelming to manage in of itself. Now imagine doing the same thing but with students in the classroom (my god, imagine kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> grade) that have a whole different need: making sure of social distancing, making sure masks are being worn, disinfecting supplies/desks/bathroom, not to mention that they may need extra</p>

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			<p>help and/or have questions. This is a nightmare and impossible to manage. The remote kids becoming more disengages, more frustrated and logging in less often which LESS learning, less support, less time to share. I won't have the time to connect with the remote kids privately during the day to motivate or check in or to just chat and make sure they are ok. The loss of learning for the remote kids will be substantially worse than it is with the current plan. And that doesn't even account for the learning less that will occur while developing new rituals and routines during the first few weeks (or more) of this change. What are we doing? There has got to be a better hybrid model we can follow that fits all our students equitably. I heard a lot about equity from parents tonight. What about the equity for the remote kids? Don't they matter.</p> <p>Please rethink this plan. It is more detrimental than helpful.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
Amy Levine	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Dear Board,</p> <p>I just want to share my comments with you. I am a long time Pre-K teacher in the district. As with all of us, these past 10 months have been incredibly difficult for me professionally, personally and emotionally. I have been also dealing with my 91 year old mother in a nursing home, so I have seen the devastation that this has caused at both ends of the age spectrum. I also believe that kids need to get back to school for their social/emotional wellbeing. However, I need to share concerns regarding going back safely and appropriately. I have heard from many other Pre-K teachers and I said that I would compile their concerns with mine. Please note, that these comments pertain only to Pre-K which I am familiar.</p> <p>1) Teachers express huge concerns about how setting children up in their own 'pods' 6 feet apart for 6 hours a day is <u>inappropriate</u>. It goes against every best practice in the early childhood community. Most 3 and 4 years olds have not developed their self-regulation skills and are unable to stay in one spot for very long...moments, not minutes. Every year, I have children with special needs that are unable to sit, are runners, and have severe needs that have not been developed. Outdoor play is essential and will be necessary in this setting. However, indoor large motor play is also necessary and colleagues have already told me that they will be unable to use the gyms. What spaces will teachers be able to utilize for gross motor?</p>

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			<p>2) Simultaneous learning is just not practical for Pre-K. Even with a teacher and a para in the classroom, teachers need to be hands on and working with students closely or one on one. How are they supposed to be working both technology, in person teaching and speaking to kids at home. Since many of our trained Pre-K paras were laid off, this makes it extremely difficult to work with a new teaching partner who may or may not have the unique PreK skills – very different than working with school age. How are you supposed to do small groups with materials that at home students do not have? Any Pre-K teacher knows that all attention needs to be on the student.</p> <p>3) Staff is also very concerned about enforcing masking and safety protocols. According to some teachers, masking issues have not been enforced in Phase 1. There is a lot of hands on while working closely with Pre-K children (helping get dressed to go outside, bathroom, consoling an emotional child). We need to make sure that everyone is safe.</p> <p>Amy Levine  #52 School Pre-K Teacher</p>
Patty Yildirim	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Good evening to all participants tonight. I am Patty Yildirim. For 27 years, teaching in this district has been my honor. I am an RCSD graduate and followed my dream to become one of you. I want to get back into the classroom; I am desperate to – but with reasonable planning. I have concerns AND recommended solutions to some of the issues that I have.</p> <p>-First, there is no more random Covid-19 testing- the district released a statement saying that random in person Covid-19 testing is over thanks to the governor. -No testing despite the new variant that spreads even easier is pretending that the threat is not real. - Some suburb schools are still giving this testing, we need to get our students the same protections. Let’s get those tests back.</p> <p>Also, please examine the directive given to staff yesterday, from the district, that stated, “we are not to send students to the health office because of a headache, rather: give them water – time- and see if they look ok.” -Why are we being directed to</p>

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			<p>ignore what the world knows is an early sign of Covid-19. Suburbs send kids home with headaches, ‘in an abundance of caution.’ This is a deadly pandemic. Our children need the same protections.</p> <p>Parents also need to know this hybrid learning will split my attention between remote/ break out rooms and in-person instruction. I will push myself to the limit to compensate for this. The master schedule is too full. The schedule needs to be adjusted so that students in-person get my full attention and equally to my remote children. Adjust the master schedule to student centered focus – right now is NOT business as usual. Suburb schools adjusted class schedules so that teachers have blocks: for in person focus, remote focus AND the simultaneous group. -The statement that suburbs are in person, so RCSD deserves the same, is one I agree with.</p> <p>-However, you are saying this without defining the essential differences in RCSD and other Monroe County Schools’ plans. We need true equity, not one that is falsely advertised as comparable.</p> <p>I loathe the segregation of our schools, and sadly, see no end in sight. The majority of our students will face systemic racism; those hurdles should be lessened by the equity that we provide. This is an inequitable return plan and we can do better. We need guarantee that our children get every opportunity and precaution afforded to the burbs, where poverty does not make up the largest population.</p> <p>This is not coming from my union; it is coming from a place of experience and desperation for a better plan. If one of my children or their family get sick, I do not know how to live with that.</p>
Corrine Mundorff	Staff	Reopening Schools	<p>Ms. Scott,</p> <p>I am unable to continue to wait for my turn to speak this evening as I have to get my children to bed. Could you please forward my statement below to the Commissioners.</p> <p>Thank you, Corrine Mundorff</p>

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Due to Commissioner Van’s decision not to adhere to the resolution the Board agreed upon at the beginning of the meeting to hear the first 36 speakers (the Board chose to only hear 24. Had the Board followed their own resolution an additional 12 speakers would have been heard before Board business.) I unfortunately was unable to continue to wait for my turn to speak past 8:10 this evening. Although I am not surprised by the Board’s decision to ignore their own resolution as it allows the parent vs. teacher narrative to continue and take the heat off them, it still shocks me that teachers’ voices in this district mean so little. Below please find my intended statement to the Board this evening.

Good evening Commissioner and Superintendent,

I want to be clear that teachers are NOT saying we don’t want to go back. There is nothing more we want. What we don’t want is to go back without an instructional plan that is viable and without a reopening plan that is being implemented with fidelity.

I’ve joined you tonight to share with you an update on the unpreparedness of teachers to implement simultaneous instruction as required of us for Phase 2 and 3 of the Superintendent’s reopening plan.

To begin with, to date teachers have received only 4.5 hours of professional development on simultaneous instruction. I’d like to remind the BOE that suburban districts provided their teachers with anywhere from 1-2 weeks of PD on simultaneous instruction this summer and have had continuing PD opportunities throughout this school year.

Additionally, teachers have submitted hundreds of thoughtful questions in response to the simultaneous instructional model during the 3 professional development trainings we have had. As of this evening there are still just 2 questions answered on the Staff and Teacher FAQ page. We were PROMISED answers to all of our questions. Please can you advocate on our behalf and ask the Superintendent to answer our questions.



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			<p>Phase 2 begins tomorrow for teachers and Phase 3 begins on February 22nd - after 15 years of teaching I have never felt more unprepared in my life and I know many, many teachers feel the same way.</p> <p>Lastly, there are two reopening issues I'm hoping the BOE can address with the Superintendent:</p> <p>First, the reopening plan that is published on our website is either not current or is not being followed with fidelity. For example, there are Phase 1 schools that are not taking staff temperatures in the morning and although the reopening plan states that schools must modify fire and lockdown procedures they are stating that is not the case. It is imperative that an accurate reopening plan is available to all families and staff.</p> <p>And, finally, I am asking the BOE to insist the Superintendent and the Communications Department immediately send a statement to all families and staff clarifying that their communication last week in which it is stated "all school districts in Monroe County will immediately stop testing in schools" was inaccurate at and at worse simply false given the fact that many Monroe County school districts have not, and do not plan to stop tested - including Brighton, East Irondequoit, West Irondequoit, Hilton, Penfield, and Webster just to name a few.</p>
<p>Mechele Markajani</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Reopening Schools</p>	<p>Good Evening, I really could not wait in that long line to speak tonight. But I do have a question. Why did we not see a video as planned tonight? The last board meeting I thought it was discussed with the curriculum department that we would see a live video of what was to be expected of teachers. When this happens it makes us believe that a plan was never even thought of. Some people are now saying that because you did not have to vote on this that it was ok not to show us a video. What plan did the board approve when you approved Phase 1 and 2. I don't think anyone saw this type of teaching in the phase 1 plan or phase 2 plan that the board approved at some point. These are a lot of the reasons why there is so much mistrust in our district. Thank you once again for all your support.</p>