

SAU #39 Board

Thursday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Meeting Minutes- Approved 09 20 2021

Attendees in Person and via Zoom/Phone:

Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent, Steven Chamberlain- Assistant Superintendent, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Amy Facey- SAU #39 Business Administrator, Roger Preston- Director of Facilities, Anna Parrill- Principal C/W, Dr. Bethany Bernasconi- Principal AMS, Thomas Lecklider- Principal MVVS, Mike Berry- Principal SHS, and Brian Miller- SAU #39 Director of Technology.

Amherst School Board: Chair- Tom Gauthier, Vice Chair- Elizabeth Kuzsma, Secretary- Victoria Parisi, Terri Behm, and Josh Conklin.

Mont Vernon Village School Board: Chair- Sarah Lawrence, Vice Chair- Peter Eckhoff Secretary- Jessica Hinckley and Stephen O'Keefe.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Chair- John Glover, Vice Chair- Stephanie Grund, Secretary- Laura Taylor, Steve Coughlan, George Torres, Pim Grondstra and Christie Peters.

Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

Public: (in order of speakers) Dr. Chelsea Dixon-Dionne, Amherst NH, Mike Norman, 11 Whiting Lane, Mont Vernon NH, Martin Goulet, 22 Veterans Road, Amherst NH, Peter de Bruyn Kops, 377 Boston Post Rd, Amherst, NH, Seth Smiley, 20 Holly Hill Drive, Amherst NH, Tim Kachmar 15 Mack Hill Road, Amherst NH, Madeline McFee, SHS Student, Lee Kachmar 15 Mack Hill Road, Amherst NH, Autumn Grdina, Mont Vernon NH, Analise Patterson, 20 Bloody Brook Road, Amherst NH, Maria Perez, Greg Fritz, Deer Hollow Road, Amherst NH, Kathy Levin, 6 Warren Way, Amherst NH, Ali Norman, 11 Whiting Lane, Mont Vernon NH, Adam Johnson, 5 Sawmill Lane, Amherst NH Tanya Brandt, Cricket Corner, Amherst NH, Mike Corrigan, 35 Christian Hill, Amherst NH, Samuel Aiolla, Manchester Road, Amherst NH, Chris Ager, 4 Edgewood Run, Amherst, NH, Tobin Fisher, 6 Sunridge Way, Amherst NH, Carolyn McKinney, Northfield Road, Amherst, NH, Thomas St. Cloud, 59 Kendall Hill Road, Mont Vernon, NH, Coberly Behn, 1 New South Drive, Amherst NH, Mark McDonald, Seaverns Bridge Road, Amherst NH, Jeff Davidson, Amherst Street, Amherst NH, Jeff Davidson, Amherst Street, Amherst NH, Kelly Schmidt, 11 Patricia Lane, Amherst NH,

I. Call to Order

**Chair of the SAU #39 Board, Mr. Stephen O'Keefe, called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.**

He thanked the public for their attendance.

II. Committee Updates

36 Mr. O'Keefe asked Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, to explain the Wellness Committee  
37 requirements.

38 Mr. Steel replied that the Wellness Committee Liaison would work with the School Nutrition  
39 Services Director about policies implemented in the National Student Lunch Program.

40 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the time commitment.

41 Mr. Steel replied that it is several times per year.

42 Ms. Kuzsma volunteered to serve on the Wellness Committee.

### 43 III. Reopening Plan

44 Mr. Steel noted that tonight he is presenting to the SAU board the Reopening Plan of the Task  
45 Force. The Task Force has met several times over the last few months. They followed the same  
46 protocol and process that they did last summer in that they had several stakeholder subgroups  
47 and those groups have reported back to the main task force. What is included in the packet today  
48 is a summation of the task force leading to his recommendation for our schools this fall. They are  
49 going to have a great year in SAU #39. They have talented and dedicated teaching staff that are  
50 ready to welcome back students. it is going to be a great school year in SAU #39.

51 Over the last several months, the Task Force has wrestled with several issues. Many of the  
52 issues that were brought about last summer have been removed either by experience from Covid  
53 or as a result of changing State or Federal guidance.

54 The plan that is being brought forward this evening boils down to mitigation while remaining  
55 safe. There is a balance that is struck between the personal freedoms that students and parents  
56 exhibit and the safety that they need to maintain in our schools. They know from the debates at  
57 State, Federal and local level how tricky it is to strike that balance. He believes that plan strikes  
58 that balance by using a multi-tiered system that is color coded but also uses several other factors  
59 to help them know the risk to their community. They know that in all of these choices that they  
60 are balancing risk. Their plan is to do everything in their power, with the mitigation strategies  
61 left to them, to ensure that the schools remain open.

62 Much of the plan relies on the goodwill of the community, that parents, students and staff don't  
63 come to school with symptoms and not getting tested. One key thing that has changed is that the  
64 quarantine requirements are significantly different than last year. Last year, if one student was  
65 diagnosed with Covid-19 the entire classroom was required to quarantine for a period of 10 or 14  
66 days. This year, the quarantine requirements are significantly altered where only if someone lives  
67 under the same roof do, they have to quarantine as a result of that infection.

68 As a result of that, the quarantine system changing, they have no need as a school system to ask  
69 for the vaccination status of their students. They are not able to require vaccination of our  
70 students, that's a state law. Parents will not have to disclose the vaccination status of their  
71 student/s.

Their color-coded system is broken down into levels that are easily referred to, red, orange, yellow, green, blue. Red status is when conditions are severe, the entire school campus will be closed much like the spring of 2020. This status will be reserved for the most intense safety concerns for the school community or due to an executive order by the Governor or decree from DHHS. He does not anticipate us having to do that at the local unless the conditions are worse than they were at their worse during the last school year.

In the orange status, masks will be required indoors for all staff and students regardless of vaccination status and will be recommended but not required to be worn outdoors. They would bring back the daily Covid symptom screening questionnaire and ask parents to do it voluntarily. There will be no access to the buildings by visitors or guests and all parent meetings that can be done remotely will be done remotely. Several smaller protocols will be put into place such as lunch will be in classrooms and in building travel will be limited.

The yellow status would require the use of masks for unvaccinated populations. Everyone 12 and older is able to be vaccinated. The yellow status requires vaccination by age. It is not the individual level and they will not ask. Masks will be required indoors for populations who do not have access to vaccinations. Masks will be required for all of a school building if part of the building has access to a vaccine and another part does not (such as AMS)

The green status will be where masks will be recommended indoors, but not required; and blue is returning to a near normal level.

In all of our status levels this year the number one mitigation factor that they are talking about are masks. The CDC does require masks indoors for all people. It also recommends social distancing in our schools while also suggesting that schools remain open for 5 days a week and available for all students. Anyone who knows how schools work knows that those recommendations are counterproductive because none of our schools are large enough to ensure social distancing while keeping schools available to our students 5 days a week. Those of us at the local level are left to wrestle with those various recommendations and strike the right balance locally. He believes that they have done that with their color-coded system.

Moving beyond our color-coded system, the thing that is different than last year is we have established a set of metrics to help them make this system at a building by building level about what a status level a building should be. In order of importance, they have identified 5 variables that can help us determine risk in our schools. The number one and most important is a percentage of our population in that building that has an active case for Covid 19. Second, is vaccination availability by population. The third, is something that he is going to suggest that they tweak, which is the rate of active cases per 100,000 in our community. Before, it was the number of actual cases in our towns but as we know Amherst is bigger than Mont Vernon. Next, is test positivity rate by region. Our residents, students, teachers and staff do not just live in Amherst and Mont Vernon. Finally, the vaccination rate by town. Regarding school cases they do not know. Mont Vernon currently has no active cases so they can surmise that the Mont Vernon Village School has no active cases as well. With vaccination availability, both Mont Vernon and Clark Wilkins would be orange, Amherst Middle School would be yellow and

Souhegan would be green. For rate active cases per 100,000, Mont Vernon would be blue, with their current metric of 0, and Amherst would be green based on the number of active cases per 100,000. It should be noted while they rely on state's dashboard, they know that local data is more accurate than what's even reported to the State. The State's dashboard sometimes lags. The PCR positivity rate by public health region is currently 6.6 percent, which would be orange. He would suggest for test positivity rate that they combine the PCR and Antigen test positivity rate going forward. The vaccination rate by town shows Mont Vernon at 51.8% which would be orange and Amherst at 57.9% which would be yellow.

That means if they had to open school today, he would suggest that they open three of our schools in yellow and Souhegan in green. Most of risk mitigation strategies boils down to masks and so that simply means that 3 our schools would require the use of indoor masks and Souhegan would not. He would simply recommend them.

At this time, he introduced Ms. Chelsea Dixon-Dionne.

My name is Chelsea Dixon-Dionne and I live in Amherst. My son will be at Wilkins Elementary this school year. I'm an internal medicine physician and work at a hospital in Manchester. I am a hospitalist, which means I am the attending doctor for hospitalized adult patients, including those with Covid. Prior to moving to New Hampshire, I worked in Detroit during the initial surge of April 2020. I have taped together trash bags for PPE, I have seen patients get better and go home and patients that have died alone.

Overall, I am in support of the proposed plan. In my medical opinion, the level of masking required is the bare minimum of what we should be doing. I recognize the difficult position you are put in as board members. This is when we have to rely on expert advice and data. The AAP and the CDC have released recommendations to help guide schools in their reopening protocols. Both recommend universal masking of all staff and students. regardless of vaccination status. This is a change from prior recommendations which allowed for vaccinated individuals to forgo the mask. These institutions are not flip flopping or going back on their word or trying to make anyone's lives more difficult. These recommendations are made in light of the new Delta Variant.

Viruses mutate, they rearrange their genetic code, it happens all of the time and it is usually small changes that done make a big impact. Every so often, the virus will get the combination just right and it will have a big impact on transmission and virulence, and this is what we are seeing with the Delta Variant.

A couple of things appear to be different about the delta variant. First it seems to adhere to and enter our cells much more effectively than other variants. So basically, it's stickier and once it sticks it seems to replicate faster and more efficiently which leads to higher case viral loads. These two things have led to increased transmissibility as well as the ability of vaccinated individuals to spread the virus. The vaccines are still great at reducing the risk of severe illness for those who are vaccinated, but with Delta it is not giving us the same protection against carrying and spreading the virus. Not only are there several studies that have demonstrated similar viral loads in vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals for the first few days of infection.

152 We can quite plainly see the increase in cases in hospitalizations, even in areas with higher  
153 vaccination rates.

154 We live in Amherst and a small community it would be unwise to give this a false sense of  
155 security. Physicians around the country are expressing that the Delta Variant seems to be hitting  
156 everyone adults and children harder than prior variants. The CDC has some early data to suggest  
157 this that it may cause more severe illness. It is too soon to have real numbers.

158 The unfortunate reality is that some kids that get Covid will get really sick. Thankfully, it is not  
159 the majority. As cases increase hospitalizations will increase. I'm sure we have all seen what  
160 they are doing in Texas with running out of pediatric ICU beds. NH is not immune to this. I  
161 would like to remind everyone that Covid is not the only thing that can land kids in the hospital  
162 and it takes much less than you would expect for a hospital to become overwhelmed. I have been  
163 apart of both surges of Covid so far and looking at the exponential increase in cases and  
164 hospitalizations in our country it looks identical to or slightly close to the surge that began in  
165 November and peaked in January of this year.

166 I did not come here to spread doom and gloom but to express my recommendations. They all  
167 want their kids in school and safe. They want to use all of the tools that they have at their  
168 disposal, hand washing, social distancing when possible, staying home when you are sick and  
169 absolutely masking. Masks reduce the transmission of all illnesses spread by respiratory droplet.  
170 We have known this; it is standard of care period. I want my son in school it is better for all kids  
171 academically, socially and emotionally. They have been through so much in the last year and a  
172 half and they want to keep them in school. We have to be proactive about infection prevention.

173 Overall, I am in support of the proposed plan, monitoring community transmission is vital and  
174 has been shown to correlate with in school transmission so I am glad to see this factors into  
175 decision on status level. My recommendation would be to alter the mask requirement of staffing  
176 to status level yellow to reflect the guidance the of the CDC and the AAP.

177 Mr. Steel thanked Ms. Dixon-Dionne for her comments.

178 One question remains about the students who cannot be in school or whose parents choose not to  
179 have them come to school for various reasons despite our mitigation measures. So unlike last  
180 year, we do not have the funding or availability to provide remote classrooms with dedicated  
181 staffing. Instead, they are partnering with VLACS for students that choose to remain home. They  
182 will have the opportunity to enroll in VLACS classes with one of our federally funded but locally  
183 provided interventionists who will coordinate their academic movements in their school year.  
184 That is something that we have to decide as a board if it is available to all students to choose to  
185 join that or only students who through the IEP or 504 section process require access to that  
186 system.

187 One thing is that they have come adept with remote modalities. One consequence of requiring  
188 masks at three of our schools to open it that they have said in the past, that on very hot days that  
189 is possible that they switch to remote days because of temperature. In addition, for snow days  
190 this year, they anticipate when the power or cable is not out to ensure our school year does not

191 get extended into late June. Finally, the one question that's come up during this process had been  
192 about volunteers in our school. In the yellow status, we will support designated volunteers under  
193 the Amherst Volunteer Policy and at the other schools as necessary. In orange, they would not  
194 allow volunteers into their school system.

195 This evening after the board deliberates, he is going to ask the board for their support and  
196 motions this evening. If the board approves the plan in total then we will move forward  
197 tomorrow communicating this plan out to the community, parents, students and staff. Next week,  
198 if there are minor issues that are local to specific schools, they can address it at that board  
199 meeting. Depending on how the votes go this evening, he plans on going forward with the  
200 VLACS partnership and the other parts of our plan moving forward.

201 Mr. Steel turned it back over to Chairman O'Keefe.

202 Mr. O'Keefe asked Mr. Steel if he could explain how the task force concluded.

203 Mr. Steel replied that the task force comprises members of 6 different sub committees which  
204 include local school nurses and medical professionals, our school staff and union associations,  
205 they have a parent subgroup, an administrator subgroup. Those various sub committees met as  
206 part of the task force with the representative to the main task force. These plans were brought  
207 forward and available to the entire public to watch and participate. These plans have developed  
208 over the last several months both from the task force and their sub committees and community  
209 input, which there has been a significant amount. It is functionally similar in a lot of ways from  
210 what it looked like at the beginning of the summer. That is a result of a process of our task force  
211 and their subcommittees.

212 Mr. O'Keefe asked the administration and board to introduce themselves.

213 IV. Board Questions/Comments

214 Mr. O'Keefe opened the floor up to the board.

215 Ms. Grund asked where he got percentages in the status levels.

216 Mr. Steel replied it is based on the conditions and choices of what they did last year. It is also  
217 loosely based on the state's definition for the regional health in the area.

218 Ms. Parisi asked about the lunch expectations at CW and AMS with masks.

219 Mr. Steel replied that the lunch will be in the cafeteria for the yellow status. In the orange status  
220 they will be more restricted with lunch in the classrooms.

221 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the fluidity of the statuses and when will they be reevaluated.

222 Mr. Steel replied that if this plan is approved it will be published to their website having a status  
223 landing page for our community that they will update every day based on local conditions. Last  
224 year, they had a set periods of time that was broken up to 11 different segments. They are not  
225 doing that this year because conditions change somewhat fluidity. They will adapt fluidity as

- 226 well. He does not expect changes to be everyday and is not sure how quickly conditions will  
227 change.
- 228 Ms. Kuzsma inquired about the tipping point of Souhegan to change to a yellow status.
- 229 Mr. Steel replied that the top indicator is cases in Amherst. Given that and vaccinations are  
230 available, gives him reason to believe that Souhegan is very safe. He has listed them in priority  
231 order.
- 232 Mr. Grondstra commented that he would like to see a score and where each school falls. They  
233 would have a range that way it is not so arbitrary. Additionally, he would like to see the case  
234 count. It would make it more objective rather than subjective.
- 235 Mr. Gauthier asked if this plan will mandate extra preventative measures, if they are in a green  
236 status, such as masking with a Covid case.
- 237 Mr. Steel replied that he believes that it makes sense. There are probably some situations that  
238 they would look at making those decisions on a classroom by classroom level. The DHHS  
239 website is pretty clear in that they have to live and sleep in the same indoor shared space with  
240 another person diagnosed with Covid 19 to be quarantined. It is a pretty high threshold.
- 241 Mr. O’Keefe asked for questions from the remote board members. Mr. John Glover- Chair  
242 SCSB, Mr. George Torres- SCSB and Mr. Josh Conklin- ASB.
- 243 Mr. Torres, Mr. Glover and Mr. Conklin had no further questions.
- 244 Mr. Coughlan asked about the criteria for closure.
- 245 Mr. Steel replied that if conditions warranted, they would shift that classroom remotely if that  
246 had to be done.
- 247 Ms. Behm asked why are staff not required to wear masks if the children are.
- 248 Mr. Steel replied that the task force was split on that issue. If children are wearing masks, then  
249 the staff will be required as well.
- 250 Ms. Behm asked if they are adding that to the plan.
- 251 Mr. Steel replied, yes.
- 252 Ms. Grund asked if Souhegan was in the yellow status, Souhegan would still not be wearing  
253 masks.
- 254 Mr. Steel replied, correct.
- 255 Ms. Taylor asked about the risk assessment, where is he pulling the 5 items from and why.
- 256 Mr. Steel replied that 3 of those things come directly from the NH DHHS Covid dashboard page.  
257 Vaccination availability is something that we know what the rules are for that. School cases is  
258 something that they would draw ourselves. We found that the State website last year for school

259 cases lags significantly behind. Those 5 indicators represented local, regional conditions and  
260 vaccination availability.

261 Ms. Taylor asked if he could explain a little more why. She knows that 3 of them are readily  
262 available but even in the NH recommendations of schools, if there were clusters you do not have  
263 that in their matrix.

264 Mr. Steel replied that they are taking school cases specifically. As he mentioned before, if a  
265 cluster were identified in a classroom or grade level there is nothing that precludes us from doing  
266 specific mitigation for that class or grade level.

267 Ms. Taylor remarked that if there was a cluster how might it affect the entire school when the  
268 State did not consider it an issue.

269 Mr. Steel replied that they have to accept that things change over time with Covid 19. The things  
270 that they came up with over a year ago would not apply today. They shut down in March of 2020  
271 when there were less than 10 or 12 cases in the entire state of NH none in our schools or towns.  
272 That flexibility has to be part of this plan as well.

273 Ms. Peters remarked that she is looking at the State of NH School and Childcare Tool Kit's  
274 matrix and it seems to be a little less rigorous than what they are proposing. She is wondering  
275 what is the thinking there.

276 Mr. Steel replied that the school recommendations are to use level of community transmission  
277 and then cases in the school only to make determinations about mitigation strategies. The  
278 difficulty with that is right now the level of community transmission for the entire state is the  
279 highest level. That removes a lot of our decision making. If they were to follow that as our main  
280 metric, they would require masks everywhere and we'd have little hope of not requiring masks in  
281 any of our schools even if vaccinations became available to our young students. Having  
282 additional metrics gives us more flexibility to make better choices for our schools.

283 Ms. Peters asked why they are jumping so hard with universal masks with the little students.

284 Mr. Steel replied that this is something that he wrestles with as well. He does not want kids  
285 wearing masks and return to our normal school system. Students under 12 do not have access to  
286 a vaccine and parents it is a singular factor in helping them determine risk for their students.

287 Ms. Parisi asked to understand the process for families that are noted as close contact in  
288 situations where they are not masked.

289 Mr. Steel replied that will notify classrooms when there's been a positive case that has been  
290 identified so parents can choose for themselves.

291 Mr. Gauthier asked for plans for athletics at AMS.

292 Mr. Steel replied that the fall athletics will be mostly outdoors. The data suggests that there is  
293 almost no risk of transmission outdoors. He feels very comfortable with our students  
294 participating in athletics at their choice if they want to wear a mask or not outdoors. Indoor



295 athletics is a little different and trickier. They will work with the indoor sports based on status  
 296 level for masks and social distancing.

297 Mr. Gauthier asked if they required masks last winter.

298 Mr. Steel replied they were mandatory last year.

299 Ms. Kuzsma asked if families and nurses still be a little more diligent with students that are sick.

300 Mr. Steel replied yes. They will still be diligent with parents to disclose any information about  
 301 preexisting conditions as part of the registration process as they always have. If a student shows  
 302 up with symptoms of Covid 19 they will not be able to stay, and they will ask parents to come  
 303 and get them. If they provide a negative Covid test, they can return to school after being  
 304 symptom free for 24 hours.

305 Mr. Gauthier asked about colds, they never did that before.

306 Mr. Steel replied that until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

307 Mr. O'Keefe asked for any other questions from Mr. Glover, Mr. Torres and Mr. Conklin.

308 Mr. Torres and Mr. Conklin did not have further questions.

309 V. Public Comment

310 Mr. O'Keefe reminded the public that they have 3 minutes to share their comments the board by  
 311 policy is instructed not to respond. After 30 minutes has expired the time per person will be  
 312 adjusted to two minutes. The microphones are listed by in support of the proposed reopening  
 313 plan and against the reopening plan.

314 Mr. Mike Norman, 11 Whiting Lane, Mont Vernon NH, commented that is extremely  
 315 appreciative for the time to comment. He has a dual PhD in dual neuroscience and complex  
 316 systems. What they are doing with continued masking small children is trading an insignificant  
 317 risk for a highly significant one. They need to account for the maximum downside of both  
 318 decisions to mask or not to mask.

319 As a result of not wearing masks, lets assume for a minute that cloth masks are effective at  
 320 stopping individual viral particles. For the sake of making headway, he will take that assumption.  
 321 If as a result of not wearing a mask all the kids contracted Covid it would probably be ok. The  
 322 naturally immunity would protect them from Covid.

323 Now, let's address the maximum downside potential of masking. It will permanently affect these  
 324 kids in ways he cannot even fathom. Let's talk about what we do know will happen. We can all  
 325 agree that any mask that filters anything also reduces the flow of air. So, we know that masks can  
 326 cause children to be afflicted with chronic low oxygen levels, high Co2 and all the negative  
 327 downstream effects on neurocognitive development. Personally, my child has multiple health  
 328 conditions. He has had to have invasive surgery to enable him to get more oxygen. They do not  
 329 know 99% of the long-term effect of covering children's faces when children are supposed to

330 learn empathy. They are hurting the vulnerable of the most vulnerable. The most important social  
331 feedback is reading faces.

332 Let's talk a little bit more about mental development. Will all of these K-6 kids develop  
333 sociopathic tendencies? The problem here isn't germs these kids need some to stand up for their  
334 rights against this arrogant fear based emotional decision making.

335 Mr. Martin Goulet, 22 Veterans Road, Amherst NH. reminded the public and the board about the  
336 US Constitution and the Constitution of the State of NH. The very first words in the US  
337 Constitution tell us its utmost objective "We the People of the United States in order to form a  
338 more perfect union". The NH Constitution starts with Article I "all men are born equally free  
339 and independent". Therefore, all government of right originates from the people are founded in  
340 consent and instituted for the general good. A more perfect union for the general good. In both of  
341 these founding documents the very first articulated objective of our government relates to our  
342 independence as a community.

343 The question of masks or vaccines, or any of the risk mitigation strategies boils down to a  
344 balance of personal freedoms and a more perfect union that they are compelled by our  
345 constitution to seek. When we choose personal freedoms while simultaneously ignoring well  
346 established principles of risk mitigation and public health, we chose to ignore that most  
347 important element in federal and state constitutions. Will they do that? Will we teach that to our  
348 children?

349 Mr. Peter de Bruyn Kops, 377 Boston Post Rd, Amherst, NH, commented that the focus on plan  
350 development seems to be one threat Covid 19. However, health and safety requirement are for all  
351 health threats.

352 My experience with people, employees, children, ect. is that the side effects often produce more  
353 significant effects than the intended direct effects. The risks of negative effects for social,  
354 emotional, and psychological problems are significant. Seeing smiles are incredibly important.  
355 My understanding is that we had some serious problems last year on the social, emotional and  
356 psychological spectrum. We need to dial down the fear and abnormality.

357 Mr. Seth Smiley, 20 Holly Hill Drive, Amherst NH, noted that when the first wave of Covid hit  
358 he and his family were having a hard time. He even contacted Superintendent Steel with  
359 concerns about the hybrid model, but he was wrong and admitted it. He trusts that the  
360 administration is making the right decision and believes that the lack of spread around Amherst  
361 is because they took the right type of precautions. The masks are protecting the teachers and  
362 adults and for that reason he supports exactly what the school is doing and is confident in the  
363 color-coded statuses.

364 Mr. Tim Kachmar 15 Mack Hill Road, Amherst NH, commented that some positions that I state  
365 below have been borrowed from other concerned parents at their school board meetings because  
366 there are a lot of people in this country who are fed up.

367 I have been in the pharmaceutical industry since 1995. I started in drug manufacturing, so I know  
368 what real containment and preventative measures are having worked in sterile manufacturing

369 suites. My career in pharma switched to regulatory affairs where I act as the interface between a  
 370 company and the health authorities, mostly the FDA. I have personally filed 24 investigational  
 371 new drug applications to get drugs into clinical trials. I have worked on getting three drugs  
 372 commercially approved, two with FDA and one in Canada and the European Union. I have met  
 373 with and presented to the FDA numerous times, many European health authorities and India's  
 374 Ministry of Health in India. I also have a Master of Science in Biology.

375 At Tuesday night's Souhegan Co-op board meeting I went over what the PCR test actually tests  
 376 for, that it cannot distinguish between variants, that to this date, no actual Covid 19 virus  
 377 particles have been used in the validation of the assay, and that the test has a high likelihood of  
 378 generating false positives. It is actually being removed at the end of December as a viable test to  
 379 be replaced with an assay that can more accurately distinguish between Covid and the flu. I hope  
 380 you watched that meeting. Just because you test positive does not mean that you are sick! Think  
 381 about this- the PCR tests for RNA supposedly from the virus, the vaccine is what, synthetic  
 382 mRNA from the virus. I wonder why all these vaccinated people are testing positive? Do they  
 383 actually have symptoms?

384 I can also tell you that none of the vaccine companies completed the basic required toxicology  
 385 studies that any other drug would have to complete before being tested in pediatric patients. They  
 386 did not complete juvenile toxicology studies in pediatric patients. They did not complete juvenile  
 387 toxicology studies nor Segment 1, 2 or 3 reproductive toxicology studies. Therefore, there is no  
 388 basic idea on how the vaccine will affect a child's growth, fertility or their genetic code being  
 389 passed onto their children. Or even what the drug does to a developing fetus. Our children and  
 390 pregnant moms are their guinea pigs. If I went to the FDA to try to get a drug approved in  
 391 pediatric patients without that information, I'd get laughed out of Beltsville. Remember, that the  
 392 FDA also approved Thalidomide.

393 But I am not here to talk about vaccination and PCR tests. Vaccination is and must remain a  
 394 personal decision. However, ask yourselves why the CDC, FDA and Pfizer are not making the  
 395 vaccine mandatory for their employees?

396 I am here because the Superintendent and you are discussing once again starting the school year  
 397 under oppressive, ridiculous and Orwellian guidelines due to a virus that is almost no risk to kids  
 398 at all. 4.2 million children have tested positive for Covid, and 0.07% of deaths with Covid were  
 399 children. That's 423 out of 610,000 all of them with underlying health conditions according to  
 400 the CDC. The funny thing is, that the national annual death rate in 2020 did not rise by 500,000  
 401 some thousand, it pretty much stayed the same. Wouldn't you think that there would be a huge  
 402 spike in the death rate? Are people still dying from other causes or just Covid?

403 The Superintendent is here today to make his and the reopening committee's recommendation  
 404 for how to start the school year. At the August 11<sup>th</sup> reopening task force meeting the most  
 405 unqualified members barely could scrape a recommendation or even provide thumbs up  
 406 agreement with the superintendent's recommendation to offer routine Covid testing in schools  
 407 and start off the year with the children muzzled.

408 I listened to the meeting and the arguments and noticed that a few things were missed: namely  
 409 evidence, data, science, common sense and basic human decency. A vague and somewhat  
 410 useless color-coding decision grid was provided by the NH Dept. of Health for decision making,  
 411 where the majority of the grid was red status, all determined by irrelevant numbers of cases and  
 412 no other meaningful statuses. A decision grid based on cases determined from a flawed test and  
 413 community spread. A decision grid clearly developed to keep kids in masks and society locked  
 414 up. No meaningful facts at all were presented just the parroting of CDC talking points and one  
 415 reference to what was seen on the news about Florida cases! Yes, the News!

416 Using the CDC information can be very confusing, as they continually contradict themselves in  
 417 their messaging. Looking at their Science Brief: Transmission of SARS-Cov-2 in K-12 Schools  
 418 updated July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. They present a significant amount of data how there is minimal spread in  
 419 schools from student to student and even student to teacher and even that students are not the  
 420 primary source of exposure to adults in schools. In several of these studies cited, there was no  
 421 mask policies in place. And yet, they go into a litany of how masks are required and can save the  
 422 world. So, let me get this straight, kids don't spread Covid in schools, but kids spread Covid in  
 423 schools and should be muzzled. Our "scientists" are failing us.

424 How about the flu? CDC estimates that 480 kids died from the flu in the 2018-2019 flu season.  
 425 That is more than have died from Covid in a year and half! How did the Superintendent, school  
 426 nurses, the teacher's union or anyone on this board suggest at any point that year that kids wear  
 427 masks? Did anyone in this room suggest that at ANY POINT ANYONE WEAR MASKS FOR  
 428 FLU, which is more dangerous to kids than Covid?

429 Have you read the recently released study results from Brown University showing a large drop in  
 430 the IQ's of infants and children over the last year? lack of facial recognition and natural  
 431 evolutionary interaction has dropped the average IQ down into the high 70's. Below an IQ of 70, a  
 432 child will likely need some form of support and aid for the rest of their life. Do we want that for  
 433 our kids?

434 This is the largest case of Munchausen's by Proxy. Adults are putting their delusional, psychotic  
 435 hypochondria on children. It is literally like telling kids to wear helmets outside the Perseid  
 436 Meteor Shower for fear that one may strike them on the head. Based on current numbers, a kid is  
 437 almost as likely to die from Covid as they are of being hit by a meteor.

438 Do you know what it is called to force our children to wear masks again, for the fear of a virus  
 439 that poses almost no threat to them?

440 IT'S CALLED CHILD ABUSE AND WHEN DOES IT END?

441 If I saw my babysitter on my nanny cam smothering my child with a pillow, I would call the  
 442 police. You are smothering my child with a mask!

443 Do you know what sorts of psychological damage you do to children by forcing them to cover  
 444 their faces? Teaching them that the air is toxic, that everyone around them is sick and that they  
 445 could personally kill their loved ones or teachers?

446 Have you wondered about the health effects of forcing kids to breathe through sweat and spit,  
 447 dirt-soaked rags every single day? Do you know about the study that showed pneumonia, E.coli,  
 448 staph and meningitis bacteria on them after one day- and where does the bacteria go? They  
 449 rebreathe it.

450 You all have Munchausen's by Proxy- you are doing this to make yourselves feel better. You  
 451 need to make sure the schools are safe to reopen. The kids already are safe. Their masks is a  
 452 political security blanket for YOU. It's a disgrace and you should all be ashamed. I cannot  
 453 believe that we are doing this to our children again- this has to stop!

454 One last point on masks, if a little kid is going to be forced to wear one, then the damn teachers  
 455 better also be wearing one- you are the adults- you lead by example. Teachers, if you don't like  
 456 that because you got vaccinated, then you should be up here fighting to keep the muzzles off of  
 457 your students so that you can all breathe! And no more catering to the minority, if one student is  
 458 compromised, that one student stays home. It's a pandemic right, what parent in their right mind  
 459 would send a compromised child out in public during a pandemic? 30 kids should not have to  
 460 wear a mask just because. Virtue signaling is for adults, not kids.

461 Start the year with masks as optional, take temperatures and have daily surveys. Hopefully,  
 462 parents have learned that sending a kid to school with cold symptoms is no longer appropriate.

463 Honestly, do you want to stop Covid? Stop going to get tested when you have the sniffles, there  
 464 are still colds in circulation and people get sick. Stop testing healthy people and children. What is  
 465 the outcome when you get tested anyway? Is there some treatment paradigm that you can get  
 466 placed on? No, those have been blocked and you are sent home and told to drink water. That was  
 467 the exact advice my son was provided when he caught it at college. Normalcy will not return  
 468 until we stop feeding the cases engine. What we need is an injection of common sense and to  
 469 turn off our televisions.

470 In the end, with your decision today, I view each one of you as individually and legally  
 471 accountable.

472 Thank you,

473 Tim Kachmar

474 <sup>1</sup><https://data.cdc.gov/NCHS/Provisional-Covid-19-Deaths-Focus-on-Ages-0-18-Yea/nr4s-juj3>

475 Ms. Madeline McFee, SHS Student added that she is in favor of the proposal. Most are in favor  
 476 of wearing masks if it means that they are in person.

477 Ms. Lee Kachmar, 15 Mack Hill Road, Amherst NH, commented that we heard when Covid  
 478 started, kids were little vectors that could unknowingly spread Covid to grandma. Thankfully  
 479 since so much time has passed, we know that is totally false. As an astute member of the school  
 480 board (Laura Taylor) said in last night's meeting, asymptomatic spread does not happen, and  
 481 since kids don't get Covid severely, they can't spread it to grandma. Also, grandma is most likely  
 482 now vaccinated! This is really good news. We are much safer than we were last school year. And  
 483 guess what? NO NEED TO TEST. Testing is for doctors to test their patients to devise a

484 treatment plan in the setting of illness. Dr./patient relationship with parents overseeing. This  
 485 blanket school testing is completely insane and is most likely a huge violation of privacy rights.

486 Masks:

487 There is an alarming study out that showed cognitive decline (loss of 21 IQ points) in children up  
 488 to 3 years from these severe COVID medication measures

489 (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.08.10.21261846v1>).

490 IQs that started around 105 dropped to the 70s. IQ in the low 70s and lower result in the child  
 491 needing assistance for basic tasks. That decline is from masks and isolation. Please think about  
 492 this. I encourage you to read the study. Though the study age only goes up to 3 years, logic  
 493 dictates that damage will continue to occur from mask wearing. What is most concerning, no one  
 494 knows if the damage is reversible. So, despite what we've been told since this started, masks  
 495 have now been objectively shown to be very harmful. To continue to make our kids wear them is  
 496 now tantamount to child abuse because they aren't even at risk.

497 Ms. Autumn Grdina, Mont Vernon NH, added that she applauded the board and administration  
 498 for all of their work providing an in person learning experience. She noted that she is in support  
 499 of masks and social distancing in the schools.

500 Ms. Analise Patterson, 6 Bloody Brook Road, Amherst NH, I'm here today to hopefully shed  
 501 some light on the situation regarding masks because that is what it is a situation. My name is  
 502 Annalise and I am a young 22 year old mother to my daughter and I can tell you if you mandate  
 503 masks and try to co-parent these children as if you had the right constitutionally or otherwise my  
 504 child will not be entering your school district. I can promise you many wise parents will pull  
 505 their kids out of school and opt for homeschooling as I have because having our children wear  
 506 masks 8 hours a day is highly abnormal and damaging. They are not medical professionals and  
 507 the rate of infection for children is beyond low, I'm talking there is a decimal , 2 zeroes and a  
 508 small number so why are you having them wear masks. These cases of children ending up in  
 509 hospitals from Covid are so marginal.

510 Let's talk about science for a minute. In terms of medical credentials I am just a community  
 511 college student finishing up my health science degree, but even I can see holes in the basic  
 512 science surrounding masks. Although you can only cite some promoted hasty studies, why aren't  
 513 people paying attention to all studies that points to masks not only being ineffective but harmful.  
 514 Everyone knows what cross contamination is. What about the constant recycling of Co2 for 8  
 515 hours or what about the psychological effects it has on kids not to see each other smile, laugh  
 516 together or socialize normally. What about the kids that do sports, are you going to mandate  
 517 them to wear a mask outside or inside while running around? And if one of the children pass out  
 518 will you be held liable because you decided to co-parent our children and mandate face  
 519 coverings, would you be ready to be sued?

520 We all know, the smart thing to do is to leave it up to the parents whether or not their child is  
 521 vaccinated or unvaccinated or whether they wear a mask or at school or not. If you personally  
 522 want to vaccinate your child or mask them up to and from school that is fine. But do not act as a

523 health professional and parent and mandate masks on these kids, that is overstepping your power  
524 and overstepping your boundary. Thank you.

525 An Amherst Resident at 26 Dream Lake, commented that he believes in the US Constitution  
526 “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness” this needs to stop. He is fortunate to send his kids  
527 to private school. He is not here to argue he believes in the US Constitution. Let’s not forget that  
528 they have the this ends here.

529 Ms. Maria Perez noted that she is a State Representative. She has been going to all of the school  
530 board meetings. She commented that she respects the school board and what they do.

531 Mr. Greg Fritz, Deer Hollow Road, Amherst NH, commented that he is not in support of masks  
532 in schools. He would he would like to find common ground. It is important to keep in mind the  
533 problem we are trying to solve. He added that there is no danger, it takes a little bit of bravery.  
534 This is all silly. They should have no masks and no fear. They should open the schools like he  
535 wants, and they need to tell the kids that there will be a day He inquired if the proposal passes,  
536 what is the punishment for not wearing masks correctly or at all? It is an important part of the  
537 policy. He added that they need to have the conversations sooner as people need to get their  
538 homeschool materials ready because they do not want their children wearing masks.

539 Ms. Kathy Levin, 6 Warren Way, Amherst NH, commented that she has a daughter who is an  
540 incoming freshman here. I would like you to vote NO to the mandatory masking of our children,  
541 or at least make it optional. Outside of preschool, this is the first year my daughter will be a  
542 student in Amherst schools. She knows almost no one here, is extremely shy, has anxiety and a  
543 stutter. She is terrified that she will not make any friends and while I try to reassure her, I  
544 understand why she is worried.

545 Our uncovered faces are who we are as individuals. Our faces share information, even on a  
546 subconscious level, about who we are and what we might be feeling at any given moment. A  
547 smile has the ability to convey so much, but if people cannot see our faces, how are we to convey  
548 nonverbal information? How will my daughter and kids like her, be able to identify a potential  
549 friend? Its no small thing to cover the face; psychologically, it is dehumanizing. It is unhealthy to  
550 not be able to breathe freely. It negatively affects the immune system. Masks create hypercapnia  
551 in the body which is an elevated level of carbon dioxide in the blood stream. This in turn can  
552 cause dizziness, headache, confusion and drowsiness. This is not creating a healthy learning  
553 environment. How are the many negative aspects of masking worth it?

554 We have known from nearly the beginning of this pandemic that Covid is not a serious risk to  
555 children. The survival rate for children is 99.995%. More children die every year from the flu  
556 than from Covid. Not only are they not at serious risk of Covid, but they are not efficient  
557 spreaders of the virus due to their much lower viral loads. Yet, it appears that many children are  
558 being conditioned to walk around in fear, to see everyone as a potential viral bomb, to view  
559 themselves as carriers of potential death. And this is wrong to do. And that is what the mask  
560 represents, that fear.

561 We are now 18 months into dealing with Covid. If masks actually work to mitigate transmission,  
 562 and there are still no randomized clinical trials that prove that they do, then where is the proof? If  
 563 Covid were a bacterial infection instead of viral, then masks would be useful. But I remember  
 564 from Biology 101, that viruses are very tiny, smaller than the weave of any paper or cloth mask  
 565 outside of a N95 type mask. So that tells me that forced masking for a virus is virtually useless  
 566 and has become a form of security health theater. People feel helpless in the face of a pandemic,  
 567 and so grasp at anything to prove that they are doing something. The mask has become a  
 568 talisman of sorts, for some people. But it is essential to look at science and data when making  
 569 decisions that affect others. Science and data do not support the masking of children, and any  
 570 alleged benefits were washed away by any negative effects.

571 Please vote no on mandatory masking for our children. Every parent should have the opportunity  
 572 to evaluate the risk to their own child, and then act accordingly. Schools are responsible for the  
 573 physical safety of the students who spend a good portion of their day there. I expect that my  
 574 child will be safe from physical harm at school, but I do not expect that she will be protected  
 575 from illness there because it is an impossible task. Protecting the health of children is the  
 576 province of the parent, and every parent should have the right to decide whether their child needs  
 577 to wear a mask or not.

578 Please vote for optional masking, not mandatory. Thank you.

579 Ms. Ali Norman, 11 Whiting Lane, Mont Vernon NH, commented that mask mandates for  
 580 children are absurd, illogical, nonsensical and dangerous. Have you ever seen what a 7-year-old  
 581 does with his mask throughout an 8-hour period of use? It is on the desk, it is on the lunch table,  
 582 its used as a tissue, its on the bathroom floor. It is stepped on, its touched hundreds of times with  
 583 dirty hands. My son has come home from school wearing his friend's soiled mask! The way a  
 584 young child wears a mask throughout the day goes against all guidance from the WHO and  
 585 CDC, for what it is worth. Masks have been shown to increase the risk of viral transmission for  
 586 the wearer, and a soiled wet mask is a biohazard.

587 My next point is that I believe that I've identified some bias in the way the community data form  
 588 the latest survey results what instrumented for collection and subsequently analyzed which has  
 589 resulted in a misinterpretation of the vast majority of the community's desires. The community  
 590 you are elected to serve.

591 Let's start with the false conclusion in the "community values" being used to justify the  
 592 community's support for masking that has been conjured up via selective application of biased  
 593 data:

594 "Most parents (75% plus) support the use of masks on a temporary basis of the requirement for  
 595 masks enables more students to attend the in-person school environment"

596 So, we're going to now show that this does not represent the feelings of the community for  
 597 multiple reasons. First, only 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the community responded. So the first word of this along is  
 598 false. Where is the qualifier in this statement?



599 Now, let's examine the responses to the first survey question, which provides a much clearer  
600 data point and has been ignored (another example of bias) in this planning thus far:

601 "If you had to make a choice today, and masks were not required for any students or staff, what  
602 modality would you choose for your student to start the school year?"

603 The results show that only 8% of families that responded would choose remote with a mask less  
604 environment. That tells you everything you need to know. 92% do not see the need to force  
605 masks. Since the default for all of American history has been not to wear masks, this should be  
606 case closed. But apparently there was some concern that this simple and clear survey question  
607 needed some confusing and conflated augmentation.

608 The second and third question are highly biased in their phrasing and basically drive at the same  
609 thing, so I'll just read the third aloud for brevity.

610 "Even if you are comfortable with your child being in a mask free environment at school, would  
611 you be willing to have your child be placed in the classroom where masks are required of all  
612 students and staff until vaccines are made available to all students in the grade level of your  
613 child?"

614 The two major points of implicit bias here are:

- 615 1. That these respondents have the opportunity to remove their kids if they were not willing  
616 to accept the oppression that is masks. FALSE
- 617 2. Masking is a default mode of operation. FALSE

618 The only valid conclusion that one can draw from these results is that approximately 25% of the  
619 community can afford to keep their kids home or send them to a private school that won't require  
620 masks. This is a measurement of financial capability, not community desire, which the previous  
621 question clearly drove at and showed the community doesn't wear masks. What this is measuring  
622 is how dependent the community is on the public-school system. To interpret this as "suddenly  
623 92% of the people who took the time to fill out the survey and answer that they don't support the  
624 non-default masks are now apathetic to whether or not masks are in place" is criminal.

625 Was I supposed to answer that I am going to take my toys and go home because I am so  
626 privileged that I don't depend on the public services that are provided to me by my tax money?  
627 How could you ever think that a majority of respondents would come back with that answer? Its  
628 almost as if this question was designed to elicit the response that would continue to place power  
629 with the certain folks who want it.

630 The inherently biased question I've been analyzing is the closest data point I've been able to find  
631 to the initial claim being made in the draft plan: "Most parents (75% plus support the use of  
632 masks on a temporary basis if the requirement for masks enables more students to attend the in  
633 person school environment"

634 I never answered that question.

635 Only 1/6 of eligible folks responded. That means saying “most” is fake news. And pointing at  
636 this to enact your agenda is a lie.

637 Perhaps, the response rate was low because questions were ambiguous. Perhaps purposefully.

638 You won’t ask the question straight because you don’t like the answer you are going to get. That  
639 75% of parents or more DON’T want their kids in masks and CAN’T PULL THEM OUT.

640 The only reason to package up a multi part question like this instead of decomposing it into its  
641 constituent components is if you are operating in bad faith to engineer the response you want.  
642 You conflated the wants of the community with their financial capabilities. Again, the only  
643 conclusion you can draw from this, assuming you actually got every community member to  
644 respond (which you didn’t) is that 25% of the community is financially or otherwise prepared to  
645 pull their kids out.

646 The other 75% is not.

647 So, any critically thinking scientist who tries to interpret this will conclude that we need to  
648 decompose this question so there’s no conflation and we can acquire accurate data. I move that  
649 this fraudulent statistic be stricken from consideration. And that leaves the pro mask agenda with  
650 no community support.

651 The inquiry should have been decomposed into three separate and clear questions that don’t  
652 create conflation as follows:

- 653 1. Do you want your child wearing a mask?
- 654 2. Would you actually pull your child out of public school if masks are mandatory for any  
655 length of time.
- 656 3. Would you like to pull your kids from public school if masks are mandatory for any  
657 length of time but cannot afford to?

658 Where did this data come from? There was no question about “enabling others”.

659 The wants and needs of others are irrelevant here. The data should not be taken using questions  
660 about hypothetical situations that the answering parent cannot control. It can probably be safely  
661 assumed that if a parent responds that they want their child in masks that they want every child in  
662 masks. But you could make that a fourth question. In fact, you could have simply asked:

- 663 1. “Do you want to force children who aren’t your own to wear masks against their  
664 wishes?”

665 This pays respect to the default mode of operation instead of conflating and deviously hiding  
666 behind a false pretense of a community wide sense of altruism for the 36 Karens who want to  
667 abuse other people’s children.

668 How many people do you think would have responded “yes” to that tyrannical statement? 75%  
669 No way in hell. If you look at the data honestly instead of embedding POST-HOC false pretenses  
670 about “needs” that don’t exist in reality and turning it into a virtue signaling opportunity, it  
671 wouldn’t support a pro masking narrative. I cry foul.

672 Once you've laid out clear questions which are built on fundamental and universally agreed upon  
673 assumptions, you can slice and dice the data to tell a narrative about it. But no narrative is  
674 possible from this garbage in the garbage out process.

675 Since you're lying about the community's desires since you don't actually know, and the only  
676 risk to these kids is the mask itself, who are you working on behalf of?

677 Where is the incentive to purposefully mislead the community with leading and conflated  
678 questions and then purposefully misinterpret their responses?

679 Why does it seem that masking is being treated as a default rather than an extreme exception  
680 only admissible in times of actual fatal risk to kids? This is a school not a hospital.

681 The data gathering and analysis would not pass any peer review in ANY publication. How can it  
682 be used as justification for setting such draconian and oppressive policy?!

683 The biased data collection was instrumented to get a whether there could be a mass exodus of  
684 whether the majority are stuck with the system they have paid into.

685 The biased analysis of the data shows that you won't back down from this power grab unless  
686 there is financial revolt.

687 In conclusion, the fact that the majority of parents are willing to send their kids into a mask less  
688 school is all you need to know. The burden should be placed on those looking to destroy these  
689 children's development and introduce novel risk to them- instead the intention here is to place  
690 the burden on those that simply want the ability to choose which risks they put upon their own  
691 children.

692 These conclusions are based on devious and fraudulent manipulation of biased data rather than  
693 the one data point that's actually applicable: 92% want their kids to be able to develop into  
694 normally functioning adults.

695 So, it's clear your intent does not represent the desires of the community. Its also clear that your  
696 intent is not to follow the science as the science says that masks don't really work unless they are  
697 fit tested N95. And that children don't get seriously sick from this. So what is your intent? What  
698 is your agenda? We'd like to know.

699 In summary, the people who are afraid of my child's beautiful face will always be afraid of  
700 unmasked people. Even when a vaccine becomes available, there will always be a breakthrough  
701 case, a new variant, another germ. We cannot cater to fear, especially when the fear is based on  
702 propaganda fueled feelings, not data. If these people are truly terrified, the science would dictate  
703 they should send their child to school in an N95 mask. And maybe a football helmet in case of a  
704 collision with a falling meteor, which is more likely.

705 Leave my kid's face alone!

706 Thank you.

707 Mr. Adam Johnson, 5 Sawmill Lane, Amherst NH, encouraged the board to vote for the mask  
708 option for the younger children. He would like the board to follow the CDC's guidance.

709 Ms. Tanya Brandt, Cricket Corner, Amherst NH, commented that she is not against mask  
710 wearing. It should be the parent's choice.

711 Mr. Mike Corrigan, 35 Christian Hill, Amherst NH, commented on his background in  
712 pharmaceuticals, he can read a clinical trial and he does not have prepared remarks. They are  
713 heading into a second year. This is not a zero-sum game. There is so much more to our lives than  
714 managing a potential threat. Actions speak louder than words. Within the school system, your  
715 policy is your actions, are they operating in a reactive, submissive, or myopic way or do we want  
716 to empower them. All of the opinions are thoughtful. He has three kids in school that could be  
717 impacted. Children are not at risk, they are strong.

718 Mr. Samuel Aiolla, Manchester Road, commented that he has it is pretty sad that the other towns  
719 are optional, but this is mandatory. They all had Covid in their family, they all stayed home and  
720 were fine. The natural antibodies kicked in and they are fine. Now, why not make it optional and  
721 it would not be a debate. He encouraged the board to listen to the numbers that are actually true.

722 Mr. Chris Ager, 4 Edgewood Run, Amherst, NH thanked the board and administration. You put  
723 in a lot of effort and it is appreciated. He would like them to reconsider the vaccination for 12  
724 years and older. You are not allowed to ask, you are treating a class, it does not make sense to  
725 him. *"May a school require that students who have not received a Covid-19 vaccine wear a*  
726 *mask (when others are not required to do so) or that they occupy different physical spaces than*  
727 *vaccinated students?" NH Department of Education- June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 )* They are a discriminated  
728 class and you are opening yourself up for some kind of action. Generally, kids 12 and under do  
729 not get sick 12. Please, please make masks optional. In 1941, FDR said that the only thing that  
730 you have to fear is fear itself.

731 Mr. Tobin Fisher, 6 Sunridge Way, Amherst NH, noted that he has a student at AMS. He gave  
732 his support for optional masks. He is not masking his child long term. You are overreaching on  
733 this thing and the Governor has not mandate. Give us choice, choice, choice.

734 Ms. Carolyn McKinney, Northfield Road, Amherst, NH commented that her children are in  
735 private schools and have not had to deal with this madness. This is misguided policy. This is a  
736 year into the pandemic into June of 2021, and they met a friend in the ASD up at an outdoor  
737 playground and she had to have a mask on. What you are doing to these kids is criminal. Please  
738 stop conditioning them into fear, and tyranny. She has submitted a letter and they are relying on  
739 pseudo- science. Please take a courageous stand for our children.

740 Mr. Thomas St. Cloud, 59 Kendall Hill Road, Mont Vernon, NH, he will never allow this  
741 children under a doctrine of pseudo- science. If this goes on much longer, they should look at  
742 reducing budgets and taxpayer relief.

743 Mr. Peter Maresco, Amherst NH, commented that he does not know how this became a very  
744 emotional issue. You have to make the best choice and come out. Florida opened up and they are

745 now one of the worst states in the country. It is in the best interest of the students; I don't want to  
746 hear emotions.

747 Ms. Coberly Behn, 1 New South Drive, Amherst NH, commented that last year they were in a  
748 different situation, she does not know why they are putting the masks back on. Why are you  
749 punishing the middle school and younger, they are punishing the children. They are not  
750 susceptible, and they need to celebrate their children. If people want to wear mask, then go  
751 ahead. Leave it up to the family, it should be a personal selection.

752 A resident on Shadow Lane, Amherst NH, read the quote "*our children are now being raised in*  
753 *fear, they are being taught to fear everything. Prolonged fear is terror and terror become trauma*  
754 *and it becomes irreversible*" She is an educator and teaches in a private school. They had about  
755 12 to 15 cases in total, and there was no in school spread. She asked why death rates are not part  
756 of the color code. If there are cases, there are cases, but not severe ones and no deaths.

757 Mr. Mark McDonald, Seaverns Bridge Road, Amherst NH, thanked them for in person school  
758 last year. He thought it was weird that they had a doctor speak in favor for the masks. He is not  
759 in favor of the masks. He asked what do they all say to parents who for the first time are looking  
760 into private school.

761 Mr. Jeff Davidson, Amherst Street, Amherst NH, added that he is concerned about the new  
762 school they are planning on building. They navigated through this nearly flawlessly, with a week  
763 to go they took the masks off. In hindsight, you were right. They are in a bad shape in the State  
764 of NH with the Delta variant. Child cases are massively increasing, with half the population  
765 getting sick because they are not vaccinated. This is a cautious approach; it is not permanent. He  
766 is in support of the masks.

767 Ms. Kelly Schmidt, 11 Patricia Lane, Amherst NH, inquired about aspects that relate to funding  
768 regarding this plan. She would like to know if there is any part of this plan that would impact  
769 funding. She knows there is a VLACS option and there is one position covered by ESSER funds.  
770 There is more to this discussion and we are taxpayers.

771 Ms. Lee Kachmar, 15 Mack Hill Road, commented that people will use Covid deaths and  
772 extrapolate them to the little kids. That is using emotion to scare people, they are not at the same  
773 risk level. You have three dead people that should not be dead, none of these vaccines are  
774 approved. They are all emergency operated use and none of them were studied on children. They  
775 are doing that now, when you march your 12-year-old. How many of you have gotten a risk list,  
776 but you are lining up and partaking in a trial. It is still a clinical trial. There was permanent  
777 paralysis in a 32-year-old mother of two. You are pushing a vaccine and tying it to the masks are  
778 criminal.

779 Mr. Seth Smiley, Holly Hill Drive, Amherst, NH. commented that passion does not equal truth,  
780 you will have a lot of people that want to go to their school based on the decisions tonight.

781 A resident of Amherst asked the audience by straw poll. If you want this to end you get rid of  
782 these phony leaders and reelect Trump.

783 Mr. Peter Maresco, Moss Wood Circle, Amherst NH, added that he worries about schools and  
 784 the spread. There was a school in Minnesota that opened up and in three days had to shut down.  
 785 You hear about making it “parent optional” are the kids going to keep it on? Is it up to the  
 786 teachers to keep track? How do you tie in the availability, you cannot ask if they are vaccinated.  
 787 You are choosing to use it to avoid the mask. He was trying to counter a rude interruption.

788 Ms. Carolyn McKinney, 4 Northwood Road, Amherst NH, added that united non-compliance.  
 789 The Delta variant is the latest scare tactic. It is more transmissible but far less deadly. 100% of  
 790 masking and 100% of vaccine compliance will not stop the spread of the delta variant. They need  
 791 to stop deluding we and put away fear. They need to put away the fear.

792 Ms. Lee Kachmar, 15 Mack Hill Road, Amherst NH, commented that the Chair of SCSB came  
 793 to the Tuesday, meeting sick. He mentioned that he does not have Covid but was he really sick.  
 794 Rather than masking, the Covid questionnaire is it punitive to answer no and then her child gets  
 795 sick at school. They need to go back to logic. Unvaccinated does not mean sick and that is one  
 796 thing they have to understand.

797 Mr. Tobin Fisher, 6 Sunridge Way, Amherst NH commented that he would go back to the data  
 798 and what the families stated on the last week of school. You need to take that weight off of their  
 799 shoulders and it should be choice. He hopes that he is not here next year having this same  
 800 conversation.

801 Mr. O’Keefe thanked the public for their comments.

802 VI. Public Comment Correspondence

803 Good afternoon,

804 I would request that I have the opportunity to address the public during the first and second  
 805 public session, at the upcoming meeting.

806 Due to health conditions I am not able to attend in person (never mind the wet weather).

807 Therefore, I am requesting that the attached letter be read during public comment I and II.

808 Respectfully,

809 Marilyn Gibson

810 A Problem in SAU 39

811 Now that the school year for most children, teachers, parents, and guardians has come to the  
 812 finish line, there appears to be a problem that has existed for an exceptionally long time within  
 813 SAU 39.

814 As a parent and grandparent of children who went through the system and attended  
 815 Amherst schools, my experience includes receiving report cards, attending parent teacher  
 816 conferences, being partisan to an IEP, and assisting children with homework, projects, and test  
 817 prep. The angst that I experienced and still do is connecting the dots.

Dots are curriculum, class work, homework, standards, and more. Best Practices is a buzz word with great significance. We all want our teachers and district to use best practices. Dr. Arendale notes, "*Best Education Practices*, the wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches to achieving positive changes in student attitudes or academic behaviors. This umbrella term encompasses the following designations that differ on the level of evidence supporting desired student or institutional outcomes: "*promising*," "*validated*," and "*exemplary*." (<https://www.arendale.org/best-education-practices>) The definition covers a lot; however, one best practice is that of curriculum mapping. Hence, the problem in SAU 39 is not using a best practice, that of curriculum mapping.

When in the educational field you should be knowledgeable of Heide Hayes Jacobs. "Heidi Hayes Jacobs, EdD, is an internationally recognized expert in curriculum development, vertical planning, modern assessment design, and 21st century strategic planning. Her model for curriculum mapping is used throughout the world." (<https://www.solutiontree.com/heidi-hayes-jacobs.html>)

What are the concerns when not using curriculum mapping? In brief, parents and guardians need to know the curriculum being taught to our child/children. More essential than that, is knowing the standards that are aligned to what is taught in every domain (albeit that is in the skeleton the SAU uses on its web site). It provides, when done correctly, the essential questions for each unit, the exact resources used, the formative and summative assessments, and the rubrics (4, 3, 2, 1) for each unit. Therefore, it provides a sequence for teaching and learning. It provides a diversified educational tool.

Curriculum mapping provides a platform that teachers share withing the domain horizontally and vertically; therefore, a tool for parents and guardians providing the essential information they need. Each school year, over the last several, the administration has reconfigured leadership teams, curriculum coordinators, specialists (math and reading) to shore up the education of our children. Now, the district has not one but two assistant superintendents, charged with providing what curriculum mapping would do, and less costly.

Professional Development for Curriculum Mapping is provided for within the budgets of the SAU, ASD, MVSD, and SCD; however, it will go to another goal, a project that has not been productive for the education of our children, as seen in our standings and test scores in NH. SAU 39, use the taxpayer money wisely with curriculum mapping opportunities and invest wisely in our children's education.

In conclusion, curriculum mapping is a best practice that affords accountability and ownership for teaching and learning. SAU 39 must move forward implementing PD for curriculum mapping while providing an efficient teaching and learning tool, a best practice.

Submitted by: Marilyn Gibson, Amherst

Marilyn F. Gibson

**From:** John Moriarity <[john.r.moriarity@gmail.com](mailto:john.r.moriarity@gmail.com)>

856 Subject: School Board Concern

857 Date: August 17, 2021 at 10:53:02 PM EDT

858 To: [asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org), [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

859 Please enter this into the minutes and read for the meeting.

860 To Amherst Citizens,

861 I first want to thank everyone for allowing me to send in my thoughts and voice my opinions  
862 through this email.

863 I fully understand this is a very delicate subject. My current career focuses on the development  
864 of new drugs and vaccines. I spent 4 years working at the CDC in the tick-borne virus team and  
865 have a strong understanding of epidemiology.

866  
867 In brief, the current data simply does not warrant the mandatory usage of masks for children (5-  
868 14). As of 08 Aug 2021, there was a total of 121 deaths attributed to COVID 19. There were 250  
869 deaths attributed to pneumonia and 79 to influenza. These are taken strictly from the data  
870 published by the CDC. Kids immune systems are extremely resilient, and the data suggest that  
871 they are not at any elevated risk. I truly believe we should implement a system for this school  
872 year the allows the parents to decide on choice of masking their child.

873 Look no further than the concert held on Tuesday night. It was the perfect setting of having Mr.  
874 Allwarden playing on the village green with hundreds of kids running around playing and asking  
875 each other what teacher they had. In only two short weeks, we're proposing a requirement that  
876 they wear masks? How does this make sense? Where is the scientific data that specifies that it is  
877 okay today to be mask less on the village green with kids holding hands and hugging, but at  
878 school that isn't allowed?

879 The easy answer is that it should be up to the parents to decide what is best for their kid(s)

880 Thanks

881 John Moriarity

882 Dear School Board(s),

883 I am writing regarding re-opening plans for 2021/22. I support the color-coded system and the  
884 reliance on local/community data. I do not support mitigation strategies that are not supported by  
885 local public health data, such as opening in a more restrictive status than necessary because "it is  
886 easier to take away measures than to ask for them later." I believe this is incorrect. Opening in a  
887 more restrictive nature than is required will only upset and further divide families. Follow the  
888 guidelines in your plan and communicate early, often, and resolutely. Much of the anxiety  
889 parents and students are experiencing at the moment is compounded by not knowing, with  
890 certainty, what to expect on August 31. Once your plan is set, this will alleviate a lot of  
891 uneasiness.



892 I do not support pool testing at this time. The benefits, as described, do not outweigh the  
893 disruption, in my view. There are enough moving parts to contend with at the moment.

894 When we are in a situation that warrants increased mitigation (yellow & orange), it would be  
895 very helpful to see greater detail regarding the following:

- 896 • How will students be afforded outdoor learning opportunities unmasked with room to  
897 stretch (at all grades, particularly the lower grades)?
  - 898 ○ How will building level expectations support and ensure this happens? How will  
899 the boards support this?
- 900 • How often will you be evaluating the color status?
- 901 • What is the plan on hot days, if yellow or orange status, when indoor masking will most  
902 certainly increase discomfort to a level that impedes learning?
- 903 • Will PK, K and Grade 1 teachers have the discretion to open windows, increase air flow  
904 and perhaps unmask while teaching early literacy skills that are nearly impossible to do  
905 effectively while masked?
- 906 • How often will mask breaks occur, when in yellow and orange?
- 907 • Is there a process to request an exemption from certain mitigations (such as masking) if  
908 medically necessary? If so, where can parents find this?

909 The greater detail provided to parents, the greater they will be able to support students and set  
910 expectations.

911 In closing, I support the reliance of the plan on local data to determine appropriate mitigation  
912 measures. I look forward to hearing more details regarding the day-to-day execution.

913 I support the Boards and Administration. Thank you for all the work you are doing. This isn't  
914 easy.

915 Respectfully,

916 Shannon Gascoyne  
917 5 Parker Farm Ln  
918 Amherst, NH  
919

920 From: Ashley Snider <[ashleylsnider@gmail.com](mailto:ashleylsnider@gmail.com)>

921 Subject: Fwd: Thoughts for the School Board on Reopening Plan

922 Date: August 19, 2021 at 12:16:13 PM EDT

923 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

924 Hi Stephen,

925 Please share my thoughts below with the rest of the Board in advance of tonight's vote.

926 Thanks,

927 Ashley

928 ----- Forwarded message -----

929 From: Ashley Snider <[ashleylsnider@gmail.com](mailto:ashleylsnider@gmail.com)>

930 Date: Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 11:22 AM

931 Subject: Thoughts for the School Board on Reopening Plan

932 To: <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)>

933 Good morning,

934 I wanted to send in my thoughts to the School Board in advance of the upcoming Board meeting  
935 to vote on the reopening plan. I'm a concerned parent of 2 children currently attending SAU  
936 schools. One attends AMS and the other attends CW, and neither are yet eligible to receive the  
937 Covid vaccine due to their age (under 12).

938 With the explosion of the Delta variant across the country, its scientifically proven increased  
939 transmissibility and contagiousness, and the CDC currently classifying Hillsborough county as  
940 having "Substantial" community transmission, I'd like to recommend that the School Board  
941 require masks indoors in our schools for all children, regardless of their vaccination status. This  
942 measure will help keep all of our kids safe and take the burden of proof off of parents and/or  
943 teachers to prove vaccination status.

944 Schools across the country, but particularly in the southern states where I have family, have  
945 already implemented these measures after opening at the beginning of August to extremely high  
946 numbers. I think it makes the most sense to open our schools using protective measures to keep  
947 our kids safe, instead of waiting to take a reactive measure once our local school cases  
948 significantly increase in the same manner.

949 The current CDC guidance related to the Delta variant, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>, recommends all people, both vaccinated and unvaccinated,  
950 wear masks indoors in public spaces. I don't think our schools can afford to take the  
951 "recommendation" approach and should instead follow in the footsteps of other schools by  
952 requiring them for attendance. For the health and safety of all students and teachers. This same  
953 updated CDC guidance has caused major corporations, businesses, and employers across this  
954 country to reverse their relaxation of mask requirements just in the last month, so that masks are  
955 now required again in public indoor buildings.

957 I know this topic has become a highly politicized one, but I implore the Board to look past any  
958 political arguments about rights and freedoms and instead focus on the science and the CDC  
959 guidance. The fact of the matter is that the mask requirement last year worked wonderfully in  
960 our schools for the entire year, and they helped stop any major spread within classrooms even  
961 when exposure happened there. Our children's health and safety should be the number one  
962 priority. It should not be optional.

963 Thank you for your consideration on this matter,

964 Ashley Snider

965 From: Ashley Snider <[ashleylsnider@gmail.com](mailto:ashleylsnider@gmail.com)>

966 Date: Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 10:19 PM

967 Subject: Re: Thoughts for the School Board on Reopening Plan

968 To: <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)>

969 I found another CDC page with more detailed guidance for schools that I hope the Amherst  
970 School Board will consider in its decision:

971 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

972 “Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor  
973 masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless  
974 of vaccination status.”

975 Thanks,

976 Ashley

977

978 From: Shawna <[shawna75@gmail.com](mailto:shawna75@gmail.com)>

979 Subject: Re-Opening Thoughts - Please make masks optional

980 Date: August 19, 2021 at 11:54:46 AM EDT

981 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

982 Can you please share the following email with the board for tonight's meeting on reopening?

983 Thank you!

984 Shawna Lupoli

985 ----- Forwarded message -----

986 From: Shawna <[shawna75@gmail.com](mailto:shawna75@gmail.com)>

987 Date: Thu, Aug 19, 2021, 8:05 AM

988 Subject: Re-Opening Thoughts - Please make masks optional

989 To: <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)>, Adam Steel <[asteel@sau39.org](mailto:asteel@sau39.org)>

990 I'm writing this letter in support of making masks optional for our children in this school district.  
991 I've written and re-written this letter a dozen times, and ultimately, I've decided to keep it short  
992 and to the point.

993 I have so many facts that speak to my assertion that masks should be optional, but I'm certain  
994 you've been sent every study known to mankind at this time, on both sides of the argument. So  
995 I'm just going to make an appeal:

996 Please. These kids have been through enough in the last year and a half. Mental health \*matters\*  
997 so much. When is it enough? These kids are in the very lowest risk category, and yet we put  
998 them through restrictions and mandates that are causing fear, anxiety, and PTSD.

999 We, as parents, want the right to choose for our children and families the level of risk that is  
 1000 acceptable. We, as parents, should be making the decisions for our children.

1001 We, as a district, should - first and foremost - think of the children and what they need. They  
 1002 need the freedom to be kids ... To see smiles ... To not lug around 20 lb backpacks down one-  
 1003 way hallways because lockers and regular hallways aren't allowed ... To be able to relax enough  
 1004 to actually learn.

1005 My youngest son flailed last year, as a direct result of the restrictions. His anxiety skyrocketed,  
 1006 and I ultimately had to put him remote to combat it. And he loves school! But after weeks of  
 1007 morning stomachaches and begging to stay home, he tearfully shared with me that he spent all  
 1008 day at school worried that he'd accidentally "break a Covid rule" so he couldn't focus on  
 1009 learning.

1010 He couldn't focus on learning.

1011 This is what is happening to our children. But we have a chance to stop it right now. Please, do  
 1012 the right thing: make masks optional.

1013 And, for the love of all that is holy, please give them back their lockers!! I already have a  
 1014 doctor's note ready for the lockers, because my son isn't going to hurt his spine with that heavy  
 1015 backpack this year. And no more one-way hallways at the middle school. Those are ridiculous  
 1016 and unnecessary.

1017 On a side note: the idea to keep all of AMS masked because the younger ones aren't old enough  
 1018 is unacceptable and unfair. Please reconsider that. I want them all to have the freedom to be  
 1019 unmasked, but if we're going with age groups, don't punish the older kids at AMS simply  
 1020 because younger kids go there. They're kept separate for the most part anyhow.

1021 Thank you for listening, and I hope you vote to give our children their best chance at learning  
 1022 this coming school year: masks optional!!

1023 Shawna Lupoli

1024 From: Kate Pellegrino <[kathleen.kacevich@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.kacevich@gmail.com)>

1025 Subject: Mask Decision at Re-Opening Meeting

1026 Date: August 19, 2021 at 11:53:03 AM EDT

1027 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

1028 Good Afternoon,

1029 Thank you for your time reading this email. I am the mother of an incoming kindergartener (as  
 1030 well as a 16-month-old) and we are gearing up to start at "the big kid school!"

1031 I am a homecare physical therapist in both urban and suburban environments which gives me a  
 1032 unique first-hand account of the divide that the mask debate has unfortunately caused. I see the  
 1033 effects of COVID both on patients and their families and the impact both physically and

1034 mentally the virus has, long after hospitalization. The country is slipping backwards and those  
1035 unable to be vaccinated are left to suffer the consequences.

1036 I please urge you, as both a health care professional and a mother to please uphold the universal  
1037 mask ruling. Both the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of  
1038 Pediatrics both recommend universal masking for elementary age and I ask you to please uphold  
1039 their guidelines. This is the most we can do for our children at this time and help to finally curb  
1040 the virus.

1041 Please trust the science and your past guidelines and require universal masking at schools.

1042 Sincerely,

1043 Kate Pellegrino

1044 From: Mark Lundvall <[mark.lundvall@gmail.com](mailto:mark.lundvall@gmail.com)>

1045 Subject: School Re-Entry Plan/Board Meeting

1046 Date: August 19, 2021 at 11:43:29 AM EDT

1047 To: [asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)

1048 Cc: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

1049 Hello. I am reaching out ahead of tonight's board meeting. I would appreciate if you could  
1050 share this with the rest of the Board(s), if I did not include them directly on this email.

1051 My understanding is that the school re-entry plan will be submitted for approval  
1052 tonight. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend tonight's meeting. However, I do want to share  
1053 some thoughts and questions ahead of the meeting. I will try to watch the recording when it is  
1054 available. But I would also appreciate direct follow up. I can also make myself available via  
1055 phone if that is helpful. I watched the most recent task force meeting and reviewed the materials  
1056 posted ahead of tonight's meeting. I tried to summarize my thoughts/questions in the bullets  
1057 below. Thank you for serving the school and community.

- 1058 • Based on the recent meeting and materials, there seems to be a general lack of  
1059 acknowledgement that the current situation with the Delta variant is different than last  
1060 school year. The meeting materials note certain items that have changed since last year  
1061 but doesn't note that the Delta variant presents new risks. For example, Delta is much  
1062 more highly transmissible than the Covid strain present during the prior school  
1063 year. Many more kids are getting infected and hospitalized. Vaccinated people can  
1064 spread Delta just as easily as unvaccinated.
- 1065 • There seems to be a lot of debate over masks, distancing is not an option, and limited to  
1066 no restrictions on kids moving throughout the school building interacting with others. So  
1067 it seems that Delta presents a higher risk for the school population (especially CW and  
1068 AMS), yet we seem to be taking less safety measures. We have seen in many other

1069 schools so far, hundreds and thousands of kids and staff either testing positive or need to  
1070 be quarantined.

- 1071 • No funding for remote option (where did the money go from last year?) and no  
1072 information being shared about how the school will support quarantined kids, which  
1073 could be larger groups of kids given the transmission of Delta and fewer restrictions in  
1074 school. VLACS was noted in the meeting and materials, but how does this work? Is it a  
1075 parent option or only based on certain student criteria. If so, what is the criteria?
- 1076 • What options do parents have if they feel the 'approved' plan does not meet their safety  
1077 expectations now or during school year, and how flexible can the school be if it needs to  
1078 pivot quickly to a remote option mid-year or possibly multiple times during the school  
1079 year. Based on the 'no budget' response, it sounds like the school cannot support a  
1080 remote option, even if conditions warrant it.

1081 I recognize the range of opinions in the community and it is unrealistic for any of us to believe  
1082 all expectations will be met. Some of the matters are polarizing, but I hope that if the school  
1083 errs, it is on the side of safety versus the side of anger. Everyone is now living in a new world  
1084 with constantly changing factors. We all need to find ways to be flexible and nimble, as we adapt  
1085 to the changing situation. I hope that options and agility are built into the plan.

1086 Thank you,  
1087 Mark Lundvall

1088  
1089 From: Matthew Ostrowski <[4anfractuosity@gmail.com](mailto:4anfractuosity@gmail.com)>

1090 Subject: Reopening Plan

1091 Date: August 19, 2021 at 11:35:02 AM EDT

1092 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

1093 Stephen,

1094  
1095 Can you please share this with the board prior to tonight? Thank you.

1096  
1097 Dear Administration and Amherst School Board Members:

1098  
1099 We are the parents of an incoming kindergartener. It is our hope that the board will follow the  
1100 guidance of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which recommends universal masking  
1101 for students and staff. The vast majority of the students, whether because of age restrictions or  
1102 their parents' political beliefs, do not have access to the vaccine. Therefore, the most effective  
1103 way to protect the children and keep schools open in the long term is to require masking. At the  
1104 very least this should be true of the elementary students and staff.

1105  
1106 By definition, public schools are an exercise in collective action to benefit all students and  
1107 families. The board is entrusted with helping to keep these students safe. Please do not abdicate

1108 that responsibility. This is an opportunity to teach students that temporary discomfort is  
 1109 worthwhile and morally obligatory if it helps to safeguard the most vulnerable in our community.

1110

1111 Thank you for your anticipated consideration.

1112

1113 Matthew Ostrowski & Josefine Garcia

1114 5 Narraganset Rd

1115 Amherst, NH

1116

1117 From: Sarah Urban <[sjlync@gmail.com](mailto:sjlync@gmail.com)>

1118 Subject: Fwd: reopening guidelines

1119 Date: August 19, 2021 at 11:31:07 AM EDT

1120 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

1121 Hello,

1122 I emailed the ASB email regarding the reopening guidelines that are being voted on tonight. I  
 1123 was advised to forward me email to you and request that it be shared with board members for the  
 1124 meeting tonight.

1125 Thank you for all that you do,

1126 Sarah

1127 ----- Forwarded message -----

1128 From: Sarah Urban <[sjlync@gmail.com](mailto:sjlync@gmail.com)>

1129 Date: Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 8:04 PM

1130 Subject: reopening guidelines

1131 To: <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)>

1132 Hello,

1133 I wanted to write to you to express my support for indoor masking of children under 12 and staff,  
 1134 regardless of vaccine status.

1135 I have read through the reopening proposal posted and noted under the "Changing Factors Tab"  
 1136 the following bullet point:

1137 • *The use of masks has become a politically divisive and scientifically disputed topic.*

1138 This is an inaccurate statement. As a healthcare professional, we now have data to support the  
 1139 fact that masks have been shown to be very effective at controlling community spread of  
 1140 COVID 19. Please see the following article from the Journal of The American Medical  
 1141 Association and the CDC:

1142 <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2776536>



1143 [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html)  
 1144 [cov2.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html)

1145 I have a child beginning at Clark and a child returning from remote learning to Wilkins. Neither  
 1146 are eligible for vaccines at this point. While vaccinated people are less likely to cause the spread  
 1147 of Covid, there is still risk that a vaccinated teacher can bring a COVID infection into the  
 1148 classroom of vulnerable students and the results can be devastating. Teaching young children is a  
 1149 full contact sport, they require a lot of close contact and working in physically close proximity to  
 1150 the teacher. This is why I believe that all teachers, regardless of vaccine status, should be  
 1151 required to mask indoors while working with classrooms of unvaccinated children.

1152 If a masking policy for young students is not put into effect, I fear seeing a post for a GoFundMe  
 1153 to support the family of a Wilkins student that is critically ill with COVID infection they  
 1154 obtained while in school.

1155 I appreciate that some parents want to make their own decisions about masking their children for  
 1156 their own reasons. Unfortunately, our rights to make our own decisions about masking end when  
 1157 these rights infringe upon those of others to remain disease free and safe at school. There are no  
 1158 proven ill effects to masking other than inconvenience. The benefits to the community certainly  
 1159 outweigh the discomfort.

1160 In closing, I appreciate and respect all the hard work all the teachers, staff, administrators, nurses  
 1161 and custodians and volunteers have done to keep the children safe.

1162 We are not out of the woods yet.

1163 I implore you to update your data regarding mask effectiveness and requiring masks for all  
 1164 children under 12 years old indoors and for all teachers working with these vulnerable  
 1165 populations.

1166 Kind Regards,

1167  
 1168 Sarah Urban  
 1169

1170 From: Martin Goulet <[Martin@goulimmerman.com](mailto:Martin@goulimmerman.com)>

1171 Subject: Public Comment at Board meeting

1172 Date: August 19, 2021 at 10:46:21 AM EDT

1173 To: [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org), [asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org), Adam Steel <[asteel@sprise.com](mailto:asteel@sprise.com)>

1174 I would like to make the following short statement at the Board meeting this evening. Is there a  
 1175 way to ensure that I would have that opportunity?

1176 The first words in the US Constitution are:

1177 “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union”



1178 The NH Constitution starts with Article 1

1179 “All men are born equally free and independent; therefore, all government of right originates  
1180 from the people, is founded in consent, and instituted for the general good”

1181 A more perfect union. For the general good. In both of these founding documents the very first  
1182 articulated objective of our government relates to our interdependence as a community.

1183 The question of masks, or vaccines or any public health decision, boils down to a balance of the  
1184 personal freedoms we cherish, and the “more perfect Union” we are compelled by our  
1185 Constitution to seek.

1186 When we choose personal freedoms, while simultaneously ignoring well established principles  
1187 of public health, we choose to ignore the most important element in our Federal and State  
1188 constitutions.

1189 Will we do that? Will we teach our children that THEIR personal freedoms matter more than  
1190 “the general good?” That’s not what I have been trying to teach my children, and I hope it is not  
1191 what we will decide to teach the children of Amherst and Mont Vernon.

1192

1193 Martin Goulet

1194 [martin@goulimmerman.com](mailto:martin@goulimmerman.com)

1195 Begin forwarded message:

1196 From: Amily Dunlap <[amilydunlap@gmail.com](mailto:amilydunlap@gmail.com)>

1197 Subject: Fwd: Please require masks

1198 Date: August 19, 2021 at 10:44:55 AM EDT

1199 To: [asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org), [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

1200 Cc: [vparisi@sau39.org](mailto:vparisi@sau39.org)

1201 Dear Amherst School Board members,

1202 Sharing my email below because I am unsure, I sent it to all of the correct email addresses.

1203 Please require masks in our schools this year.

1204 Thank you for your consideration,

1205 Amily Dunlap

1206 ----- Forwarded message -----

1207 From: Amily Dunlap <[amilydunlap@gmail.com](mailto:amilydunlap@gmail.com)>

1208 Date: Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 6:28 PM

1209 Subject: Please require masks

1210 To: <[tgauthier@sau39.org](mailto:tgauthier@sau39.org)>, <[ekuzsma@sprise.com](mailto:ekuzsma@sprise.com)>, <[vparisi@sau39.org](mailto:vparisi@sau39.org)>,

1211 <[tbehm@sprise.com](mailto:tbehm@sprise.com)>, <[jconklin@sau39.org](mailto:jconklin@sau39.org)>

1212 Cc: Adam Steel <[asteel@sprise.com](mailto:asteel@sprise.com)>, <[aparrill@sau39.org](mailto:aparrill@sau39.org)>

1213 Dear Amherst School Board members,

1214 I hope you're well. I do not envy you as you determine policies for the fall. As a parent of a  
1215 Clark-Wilkins student, I wanted to reach out.

1216 I wanted to send an endorsement to require mask wearing at our schools, regardless of  
1217 vaccination status. Many of us have at-risk family members and/or younger children who cannot  
1218 yet be vaccinated (such as my Wilkins student!).

1219 The most prudent thing to do to protect the community-at-large would be to continue to require  
1220 masks. Students had no problems masking up last year and I hope you will require it again this  
1221 year.

1222 Thank you for your consideration.

1223 Amily Dunlap

1224 From: Julie Smiley <[smilesjusa@yahoo.com](mailto:smilesjusa@yahoo.com)>

1225 Date: Tue, Aug 17, 2021 at 1:00 PM

1226 Subject: Board Communication re Masks

1227 To: Adam Steel <[asteel@sau39.org](mailto:asteel@sau39.org)>

1228 Cc: Seth Smiley <[mrsethsmiley@yahoo.com](mailto:mrsethsmiley@yahoo.com)>

1229 Hi Adam,

1230 I just wanted to put in my two cents worth regarding masks in advance of the Board meeting  
1231 tmrw. If you could share this with the Board members, I'd appreciate it.

1232 Our schools did a fantastic job mitigating Covid risks this past year. That in large part was due to  
1233 masking mandates which are proven effective in preventing transmission of Covid. With  
1234 numbers increasing dramatically and insufficient people within our schools vaccinated for herd  
1235 immunity, it would be prudent to start the school year with a mask mandate in place when  
1236 children and indoors and social distancing cannot be enforced.

1237 It would be devastating to be forced into a fully remote situation which could be prevented by  
1238 the relatively small inconvenience of wearing a mask while indoors and in close proximity.

1239 We are seeing schools across the country having to implement mask mandates after too many  
1240 students and teachers test positive for Covid, sometimes with the most devastating  
1241 consequences, [https://www.wmur.com/article/raleigh-mississippi-girl-dies-covid-19-complications/37322298?utm\\_campaign=snd-](https://www.wmur.com/article/raleigh-mississippi-girl-dies-covid-19-complications/37322298?utm_campaign=snd-autopilot&fbclid=IwARlotgtRrfe1DyhBEGn7LDuZ_pbjyZTMn72TluhmVozo7zRIUrZyY7hW_XLY)  
1242 [autopilot&fbclid=IwARlotgtRrfe1DyhBEGn7LDuZ\\_pbjyZTMn72TluhmVozo7zRIUrZyY7hW](https://www.wmur.com/article/raleigh-mississippi-girl-dies-covid-19-complications/37322298?utm_campaign=snd-autopilot&fbclid=IwARlotgtRrfe1DyhBEGn7LDuZ_pbjyZTMn72TluhmVozo7zRIUrZyY7hW_XLY)  
1243 [XLY](https://www.wmur.com/article/raleigh-mississippi-girl-dies-covid-19-complications/37322298?utm_campaign=snd-autopilot&fbclid=IwARlotgtRrfe1DyhBEGn7LDuZ_pbjyZTMn72TluhmVozo7zRIUrZyY7hW_XLY).  
1244

1245 As the delta variant causes children to experience more symptoms, I would appreciate our  
1246 district maintaining our track record of success in mitigating Covid 19 in our community by

1247 implementing simple, common sense strategies. These include wearing masks in adherence with  
 1248 guidance set forth by the AAP and CDC. Let's continue to defer to the experts.

1249 Sincerely,  
 1250 Julie & Seth Smiley

1251  
 1252 On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 11:18 PM Kate Pellegrino <[kathleen.kacevich@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.kacevich@gmail.com)> wrote:

1253 Good evening,

1254 Thank you for your time reading this email. I am the mother of an incoming kindergartener (as  
 1255 well as a 16-month-old) and we are gearing up to start at "the big kid school!"

1256 I am a homecare physical therapist in both urban and suburban environments which gives me a  
 1257 unique first-hand account of the divide that the mask debate has unfortunately caused. I see the  
 1258 effects of COVID both on patients and their families and the impact both physically and  
 1259 mentally the virus has, long after hospitalization. The country is slipping backwards and those  
 1260 unable to be vaccinated are left to suffer the consequences.

1261 I please urge you, as both a health care professional and a mother to please uphold the universal  
 1262 mask ruling. Both the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of  
 1263 Pediatrics both recommend universal masking for elementary age and I ask you to please uphold  
 1264 their guidelines. This is the most we can do for our children at this time and help to finally curb  
 1265 the virus.

1266 Please trust the science and your past guidelines and require universal masking at schools.

1267 Sincerely,

1268 Kate Pellegrino

1269 From: Chelsea Dixon-Dionne <[cdixon.une@gmail.com](mailto:cdixon.une@gmail.com)>

1270 Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 9:27 PM

1271 To: [jglover@sau39.org](mailto:jglover@sau39.org); [sgrund@sau39.org](mailto:sgrund@sau39.org); [ltaylor@sau39.org](mailto:ltaylor@sau39.org); [scoughlan@sau39.org](mailto:scoughlan@sau39.org); [cpeters@sau39.org](mailto:cpeters@sau39.org);  
 1272 [gtorres@sau39.org](mailto:gtorres@sau39.org); [pgrondstra@sau39.org](mailto:pgrondstra@sau39.org); [asteel@sau39.org](mailto:asteel@sau39.org)

1273 Subject: Re-opening plan comments

1274 Dear school board members,

1275 My name is Chelsea Dixon-Dionne and I live in Amherst. I'm an internal medicine physician  
 1276 and work at a hospital in Manchester. I am a hospitalist, which means I am the attending doctor  
 1277 for hospitalized adult patients, including those with COVID. Prior to moving to New Hampshire,  
 1278 I worked in Detroit during the initial surge of April 2020. My son will be at Wilkins Elementary  
 1279 this school year.

1280 I watched the recording of Tuesday's meeting and in light of the number of audience members  
 1281 that were expressing views or data without sourcing, I will include links for your review to  
 1282 validate my statements.

1283 This is me: <https://www.doximity.com/pub/chelsea-dixon-dionne-do>

1284 As much as I would like to address the many scientifically inaccurate comments made on  
1285 Tuesday, most of them were very off topic and I don't believe they were relevant to your  
1286 decision making.

1287 My concerns are as follows:

1288 1. The CDC and the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) both recommend universal  
1289 masking of staff in schools regardless of vaccination status. This recommendation was  
1290 made in light of the emerging evidence that the delta variant can asymptotically spread  
1291 among vaccinated individuals.

1292 i. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html)  
1293 [childcare/k-12-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html) (Updated Aug 4)

1294 ii. [https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-](https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-updates-recommendations-for-opening-schools-in-fall-2021/)  
1295 [releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-updates-recommendations-for-opening-](https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-updates-recommendations-for-opening-schools-in-fall-2021/)  
1296 [schools-in-fall-2021/](https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-updates-recommendations-for-opening-schools-in-fall-2021/) (released July 19, 2021)

1297 b. Not only do we have a couple studies showing that viral load titers in the posterior  
1298 oropharynx grew at similar rates in vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals for  
1299 the first few (~5) days (then dropped off in vaccinated hosts); we have seen  
1300 firsthand substantial and high transmission rates even in areas with higher  
1301 vaccination rates, such as New England.

1302 i. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html)  
1303 [variant.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html) (CDC info about delta variant in plain English)

1304 ii. <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.07.28.21261295v1> (simila  
1305 r viral load study)

1306 c. I fully recognize the importance of in-person learning not only for academics, but  
1307 for social and emotional development as well. A proactive approach to masking  
1308 will reduce interruptions in in-person learning; keeping our kids in school where  
1309 we all want them to be. Interestingly, an audience member quoted a recent study  
1310 regarding drop in IQ in children during the pandemic in relation to masks. I  
1311 reviewed this article, despite it not yet being peer reviewed, and in addition to it  
1312 not mentioning masks at all, the authors actually posited that the increase in  
1313 caregiver stress/less time engaging with young children and social isolation were  
1314 likely to blame for the IQ drop. This was thought to be related to shutdowns,  
1315 quarantining, and decreased access to supports outside the home. All things we  
1316 should be able to avoid with proactive masking policies.

1317 i. <https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/374/bmj.n2031.full.pdf>

1318 2. The next area of concern is regarding the percentage of PCR positivity as it impacts  
1319 status level. If you make the decision based on PCR positivity alone, you would be

underestimating the community positivity rate. Many healthcare settings use antigen testing as first line testing and only confirm with PCR when clinically indicated.

- a. For example, at my hospital, we use the BINAX antigen testing which is ~64% sensitive for symptomatic individuals with almost 100% specificity. Meaning it will miss a lot of positive folks (false negatives), but it's almost unheard of to have a false positive.

- i. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7003e3.htm>

- a. In January, when we had our last surge, we came very close to running out of PCR tests. We relied heavily on antigen testing and reserved PCR testing for those patients that tested negative by antigen, but we had a high clinical suspicion.

- b. Currently there is about a 1.2 percentage point difference if you don't factor in the antigen test, but I anticipate this gap will grow as we head into yet another surge.

- i. <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/dashboard/testing>

- c. I also think it is important to note that these data reported by the NH government do not include over the counter antigen testing done by the layperson at home. They include only laboratory samples.

Lastly, I would like to address that we are a small community (thankfully), but we also have to accept that this comes with drawbacks, such as fewer resources. The entire state of NH has only 10 pediatric ICU beds. Of all COVID deaths since January 2020, children make up 463. Which is <1% of COVID deaths, but still feels like far too many. With the emergence of the delta variant, there has been a significant spike in nationwide pediatric hospitalizations.

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#new-hospital-admissions> (change age group by dropdown menu on the right).

There was a comment made on Tuesday that our hospitals are not overrun. My hospital has seen a significant spike in COVID hospitalizations, and almost half of our ICU beds are currently occupied by COVID patients. I would ask you to please keep in mind that it does not take much for a hospital to become overrun.

I do not envy your position. I would offer that for each shouting person at the meeting, there were many more at home or at work, quietly trusting you to make the best decision. I encourage you not to misinterpret voice volume with expertise, nor with level of community backing.

I am more than happy to discuss any of the above further. I understand you were put in a position to make these decisions without much support. You don't know me from Adam, but please feel free to use me as a medical resource. My job gives me access to a group of wonderful infectious disease physicians as well, and I am happy to try to set up meetings or informational sessions with them should this be of interest.

Thank you kindly for your time,

1357  
 1358 Chelsea Dixon-Dionne, D.O.  
 1359  
 1360 Dear School Board Members,

1361 I am writing to you as a mother of three Amherst students (CW and AMS) in regards to the  
 1362 reopening plan vote tomorrow night. I appreciate everything you are doing for our children and  
 1363 schools and know you have a lot of emails coming in so I will keep this brief and simple.

1364 1. Masks optional.

1365 I reviewed Mr. Steele's proposed plan and disagree that masks should only be optional in green  
 1366 and blue status'. Was blue even a status last year? I feel masks should be optional for all  
 1367 students and staff unless there is a serious risk of children spreading covid which there has not  
 1368 been (even just red/orange status would be better) Staff has had the opportunity to be vaccinated  
 1369 and can choose to wear a mask if they want.

1370 2. More outside time, and more normal lunch and recess time.

1371 I also feel that we need to make better use of outdoor space with the tents purchased last year for  
 1372 classes, breaks, and lunch. Lunch was so sad last year and really needs to change this  
 1373 year. Almost any child will tell you that prior to last year, lunch was their favorite part of the  
 1374 day. Last year our children had to sit silently facing forward, watching disney movies while  
 1375 eating their lunches indoors, there has to be a better option. Our cafeteria is big enough to  
 1376 stagger students so they can safely socialize while they eat their lunch or they could eat outdoors  
 1377 where the risk of transmission is almost zero.

1378 3. No Covid tests at school.

1379 And finally, please leave the medical testing to medical facilities. Our nurses have enough on  
 1380 their plates, and it's not the school's job to be testing students for any illnesses.

1381 I also work in a local school district and they are opening near normal with masks optional, and  
 1382 lunches in the cafeteria for all grade levels, Amherst can do this too!

1383 That is all, good luck and gods speed.

1384 Thank you,  
 1385 Kate Costello

1386 ----- Forwarded message -----  
 1387 From: Kelly Mooney <[kellyrmooney@gmail.com](mailto:kellyrmooney@gmail.com)>  
 1388 Date: Thu, Aug 19, 2021 at 11:09 AM  
 1389 Subject: School Board Meeting Tonight  
 1390 To: <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)>

1391 Hello Amherst School Board,

1392 I am writing to let you know my feelings on the mask situation at school since I will not be able  
 1393 to attend tonight's Board Meeting. I have two daughters at AMS, one is vaccinated and one is  
 1394 unvaccinated because her age limits her. I feel like the best way to protect both of my children is  
 1395 to require masks in school, until at least the vaccination is made available for all school aged  
 1396 children, and every child has had the opportunity to get vaccinated.

1397 Thank you for your time.

1398 Best,

1399 Kelly Mooney

1400 Good Afternoon Steve,

1401  
 1402 I just wanted to reach out and just voice some concerns I as a parent of kids in several of the  
 1403 schools ( 3@MVVS, 1@AMS, 1@SHS) have after reading the proposals for this school year  
 1404 related to masks and color Covid levels. As I read it (and I could have misinterpreted wrong).  
 1405 The younger children <12 so the MVVS and AMS are in a yellow status largely because they  
 1406 cannot be vaccinated. I don't foresee the community or school levels being any lower than they  
 1407 are currently. So our younger children be most likely be in a yellow level for most of the year  
 1408 wearing mask unless they can be vaccinated (which may not be this school year) or the  
 1409 community rate drops significantly. So most parents 75% said they would temporarily agree with  
 1410 mask ( according to Adam Steel's stats). Yet when you look at the levels is won't really be  
 1411 temporary for the younger kids.

1412 I personally think it should be parents' choice to mask or unmask their children. I also only see  
 1413 the CDC as they resource level for the bases of this decision. If there is more data, I would love  
 1414 to see it. The CDC recommendations of how to wear a mask properly is not how children wear  
 1415 them throughout the day. Masks should not be touched and not soiled and in my house, I know  
 1416 my kids mask were touched and soaked by the end of the day even when changed during the day.  
 1417 Cloth masks and gaiters are just a false sense of security N95 is truly the only really preventive  
 1418 mask. I really just want the truth and evidence-based research. I am also including a short video I  
 1419 found and researched myself. We hold the CDC as the golden rule or standard, so I researched  
 1420 what their evidence is and found everything this surgeon states from the CDC true. The CDC  
 1421 evidence base research is hugely lacking.

1422 Also, I think teachers being unmasked and kids masked is sending a wrong signal to our  
 1423 children and pushing fear on our kids.

1424 I know there is so much politics sadly involved in all this. I appreciate all your hard work, time  
 1425 and wisdom you have brought to the meetings ( I have been watching them all online). I just  
 1426 wanted to share some thoughts and concerns I had.

1427 Thank you for your time,

1428 Todd Wilkins

1429 [https://fb.watch/7tSQ\\_ZGD92/](https://fb.watch/7tSQ_ZGD92/)



1430 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33205991/>

1431 This is the Denmark study that the CDC discredited because they said was too small yet had over  
1432 4,000 people that he mentions.

1433 [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html)  
1434 [cov2.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html)

1435 On Aug 19, 2021, at 2:39 PM, Gmail [kcknova@gmail.com](mailto:kcknova@gmail.com) wrote:

1436 Hi All-

1437 Thank you so much for all that you are doing to create the best possible school year.  
1438 Unfortunately, I am out of town and cannot make tonight's meeting. Please feel free to share my  
1439 email with anyone needed.

1440 I know you are hearing from a lot of anti-mask and others. Just wanted to send you a note to let  
1441 you know that there are plenty of parents like me who are very happy to have students masked,  
1442 and whatever other precautions you deem necessary to keep the kids in school and learning. Last  
1443 year it was amazing to have them in school amidst all of the surrounding towns in and out of  
1444 their buildings. Very supportive of starting out cautious.

1445 Also, happy to fill out any additional surveys that would help you to have concrete input from  
1446 parents to back up your choices- unfortunately I fear the most vocal people may not have the  
1447 most balanced perspective, nor represent the majority of parents.

1448 Thank you, and best wishes for a safe school year!

1449

1450 Kim Koch

1451 Dear Chairman,

1452 I would like to request that the below email be added to the meeting minute materials for  
1453 tonight's school board meeting. Please let me know if there's anything else I need to do to meet  
1454 this request.

1455 Kind regards,

1456 Lee Kachmar

1457 15 Mack Hill Road

1458 Sent from my iPhone

1459 Begin forwarded message:

1460 From: [lee.kachmar@gmail.com](mailto:lee.kachmar@gmail.com)

1461 Date: August 18, 2021 at 7:06:13 PM EDT

1462 To: [yparisi@sau39.org](mailto:yparisi@sau39.org), [cpeters@sau39.org](mailto:cpeters@sau39.org)

1463 Subject: Re: Crisis Moment - We are here!



1464 One major and critical point I failed to mention below.

1465 SAU39 has removed the remote option for parents who don't want masks. And telling parents to  
1466 "go to another school" without refunding our tax dollars is not only wrong, it feels extremely  
1467 illegal as this is a public school. That is not a threat, but it needs to be part of this conversation.

1468 Thanks,

1469 Lee

1470 On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 2:25 PM L Ka [lee.kachmar@gmail.com](mailto:lee.kachmar@gmail.com) wrote:

1471 Dear Christine and Victoria,

1472 We are at a critical tipping point, and I very much value your willingness to listen. There is  
1473 growing support against further lockdowns and mandates in our town. I am encouraged and  
1474 heartened to see parents finally finding their voices to protect our children. We have been too  
1475 trusting and silent for far too long, and now with the discussion of continuing COVID measure  
1476 despite having vaccines and a year plus of experience, we must be heard. The kids in our town  
1477 desperately need advocates.

1478 Yesterday, I heard a respected physician say that the pandemic is over. It's really true. Vulnerable  
1479 populations have been vaccinated. Everyone else is at very low risk, essentially aligned to risk of  
1480 flu in any given season. The bright spot of COVID is that unlike the flu, COVID does not affect  
1481 kids (unless in the rare case of underlying comorbidities).

1482 Kids under 18 are at a risk of almost 0 for death or severe illness. Did you know that?

1483 I will hopefully have an opportunity to speak tomorrow night at the meeting, but I wanted to let  
1484 you know ahead of time that I plan to focus on two things: masks and the vaccine. As an  
1485 epidemiologist with 20 years as a Pharmacovigilance Scientist, I think I am qualified to speak on  
1486 these topics. Frankly, masks and vaccines are not warranted in our children population as I  
1487 alluded to above.

1488 We heard when Covid started, kids were little vectors that could unknowingly spread COVID to  
1489 grandma. Thankfully since so much time has passed, we know that is totally false. As an astute  
1490 member of the school board (Laura Taylor) said in last night's meeting, asymptomatic spread  
1491 does not happen, and since kids don't get COVID severely, they can't spread it to grandma. Also,  
1492 grandma is most likely now vaccinated! This is really good news. We are much safer than we  
1493 were last school year. And guess what? NO NEED TO TEST. Testing is for Drs to test their  
1494 patients to devise a treatment plan in the setting of illness. Dr./patient relationship with parents  
1495 overseeing. This blanket school testing is completely insane and is most likely a huge violation  
1496 of privacy rights.

1497 Masks:

1498 There is an alarming study out that showed cognitive decline (loss of 21 IQ points) in children up  
1499 to 3 years from these severe COVID medication measures  
1500 (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.08.10.21261846v1>).

1501 IQs that started around 105 dropped to the 70s. IQ in the low 70s and lower result in the child  
 1502 needing assistance for basic tasks. That decline is from masks and isolation. Please think about  
 1503 this. I encourage you to read the study. Though the study age only goes up to 3 years, logic  
 1504 dictates that damage will continue to occur from mask wearing. What is most concerning, no one  
 1505 knows if the damage is reversible. So, despite what we've been told since this started, masks  
 1506 have now been objectively shown to be very harmful. To continue to make our kids wear them is  
 1507 now tantamount to child abuse because they aren't even at risk.

1508 Vaccines:

1509 I worked for 3 months monitoring thromboembolic events, anaphylaxis, and thrombocytopenia  
 1510 for one of the COVID vaccines. I actually quit my job because I couldn't handle the serious and  
 1511 debilitating side effects occurring in very healthy young people. Did you know that it is the  
 1512 younger people who are having the most severe reactions? Luckily, the vulnerable older  
 1513 population doesn't have the most severe side effects, which is good since they actually need the  
 1514 vaccine to protect them.

1515 Did you know that for all COVID vaccines, they never studied them in children under 18?

1516 Did you know that due to the rush to get emergency use, they skipped reproductive toxicology  
 1517 studies and only did 7-day safety studies? 7-days of follow up in animals. They are usually  
 1518 required to do 28-day follow up. We were lucky to serendipitously meet one of the animal  
 1519 researchers on the vaccines from the largest animal research lab at dinner one night. She  
 1520 confirmed this.

1521 So, now you know the vaccines were never studied in kids, and they didn't do vital toxicology  
 1522 studies. And now you know kids are at almost 0 risk of dying from COVID.

1523 They are doing a live trial on these kids in real time. No one knows of the long-term effects.  
 1524 People are not thinking at all!

1525 So, I beg you to end masks, end testing, end push to vaccinate our children who are NOT AT  
 1526 RISK. Please moms, get informed so we can save our kids!

1527 [https://www.yorechildren.com/blog/2021/8/14/the-big-covid-reveal-the-precipitous-21-drop-in-](https://www.yorechildren.com/blog/2021/8/14/the-big-covid-reveal-the-precipitous-21-drop-in-iq-in-children)  
 1528 [iq-in-children](https://www.yorechildren.com/blog/2021/8/14/the-big-covid-reveal-the-precipitous-21-drop-in-iq-in-children)

1529 Thank you so much for listening. Please feel free to forward this to other board members as you  
 1530 see fit,

1531 Kind regards,  
 1532 Lee Kachmar  
 1533 15 Mack Hill Road  
 1534

1535 Good Afternoon Mr. O'Keefe,

1536 I would like to request that my letter below be shared with all SAU 39 Board members prior to  
 1537 tonight's meeting.

1538 Thank you

1539 To SAU Board Members and Amherst School Board,

1540 First, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the board, committee members and  
 1541 Superintendent for all of the hard work and effort that went into making last year a successful  
 1542 and safe school year. As a parent of multiple children with different learning needs, this was a  
 1543 huge relief to know that my children would be able to learn in-person with their health and safety  
 1544 a top priority. This year, I will have children in both Wilkins and AMS. I would like my children  
 1545 to continue to have the opportunity to attend school in-person in an environment in which they  
 1546 are safe and an environment in which their safety is a priority.

1547 With recent changes with Covid 19, including the Delta variant and increase of cases, it is more  
 1548 important now than ever to put precautions in place for the safety of students to ensure a  
 1549 successful school year. This is a public health issue, not a personal issue, not a political issue.  
 1550 While I do understand that many have strong beliefs relating to the topic, we need to be able to  
 1551 put personal beliefs aside and look to the science, follow guidelines set forth and recommended  
 1552 by qualified medical experts, and learn from those that have gone before us. Having our students  
 1553 be able to engage in-person with masks is better than the alternative of remote learning as a  
 1554 result of widespread outbreaks due to students not being required to comply with recommended  
 1555 precautions.

1556 I support the use of masks, as this is a proven precaution and provides students with the greatest  
 1557 opportunity to have a successful in-person year. Students have proven that they can adapt and  
 1558 still thrive, while wearing a mask. They can interact with others, have individual engagement,  
 1559 face to face learning time, and gain all of the experiences school may offer while also wearing a  
 1560 mask. I ask that the school board make this a requirement to ensure the health and safety of all  
 1561 our students and to keep our children in-person as long as possible.

1562 Thank you for your time and consideration.

1563 Respectfully,  
 1564 Laura Caisse  
 1565 61 Spring Road  
 1566

1567 On Aug 19, 2021, at 4:04 PM, Linda Kaiser [lfkaiser@mac.com](mailto:lfkaiser@mac.com) wrote:

1568  
 1569 There is no science to say masks work, per OHSA. Before you have a lawsuit filed against each  
 1570 of you perhaps you should listen to real science and the 1000 doctors who have filed a massive  
 1571 lawsuit against the government to stop this ignorant behavior.

1572  
 1573 You have accomplished epidemiologists telling you this, yet you refuse to listen.

1574  
 1575 Linda Kaiser  
 1576 Chris Kaiser

1577  
 1578 On Aug 19, 2021, at 4:23 PM, [yjordan70@gmail.com](mailto:yjordan70@gmail.com) wrote:

1579 Good afternoon,

1580

1581 I would like you to know that I am opposed to any masking and or mandates for our children.  
 1582 We chose you all to be our voice and that means the voice for all. Masking and segregating  
 1583 based on vaccination status is both psychologically damaging and physically dangerous to the  
 1584 health of the children. The CDC recommendations are not based on actual science. They are  
 1585 politically motivated scientism. These are dangerous and should not be hung over these kids.  
 1586 If masking is required, many parents will be pulling their children and the school will lose  
 1587 crucial funding. I know that personally I will be consulting with a lawyer as to withholding the  
 1588 school portion of my property tax as I do not feel I shouldn't have to pay for shoes that don't  
 1589 fir(so to speak).

1590

1591 I trust you will see that this decision should be left to the parents to decide individually for their  
 1592 children. Please pass this email along to the rest of the board.

1593

1594 See you tonight.

1595

1596 Yvonne askew  
 1597 9 bloody brook rd.  
 1598 Amherst

1599

1600 On Aug 19, 2021, at 4:33 PM, Tanya Brandt [tanyabrandt23@gmail.com](mailto:tanyabrandt23@gmail.com) wrote:

1601

1602 Good afternoon,

1603

1604 I am writing in efforts to bring some scientific facts to why parents should have the choice to  
 1605 choose what is best for their child in regards to facemasks and the mandate.

1606

1607 I have shared a couple of links that will show you the research that has been done in defying the  
 1608 effectiveness of the face masks. The thought behind them seems quite logical, but when  
 1609 researchers tested them out, there are multiple recordings as to the insignificance of face masks.  
 1610 If parents choose to have their child masked by all means, they should have that choice, and the  
 1611 student body should be aware that everyone has the choice.

1612

1613 We went through an end of the school year without masks, how did that fare for everyone? I do  
 1614 not recall there being an outbreak.

1615

1616 What are you basing your thought process to mandate the masks to come back? I hope not the  
 1617 CDC since their own findings and research showed the inefficiency of them and decided to go  
 1618 against the research for whatever reason. Science is Science...

1619

1620 What came about of the parent surveys in regards to this topic that was sent out this summer?

1621

1622 I will share my personal experience with masks. The facility in which I work did NOT have a  
 1623 mask mandate up until November. I confirmed with Management that we did NOT have 1  
 1624 Covid case directly in any of the employees. Fast forward to when they Forced us to wear the

masks....touch our faces constantly and guess what happened within weeks...Covid outbreak. The type of work I do does not allow to wash or hand sanitize on a regular basis, it would be impossible, unlike a drs office or clerk/cashier who can wipe down screens and room after each patient and customer. So, from personal experience, the face masks brought the Virus to our office and faces and was spread around the office like Wildfire.

[https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/5/19-0994\\_article?fbclid=IwAR0ASH4TFAP\\_FPsIWK1TBBRPJA\\_sz6JJ8oOCLG-U1FI0apRFfL0Agn6Vjps](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/5/19-0994_article?fbclid=IwAR0ASH4TFAP_FPsIWK1TBBRPJA_sz6JJ8oOCLG-U1FI0apRFfL0Agn6Vjps)

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/x/126-u/126-u-mrg.htm>

I hope you have a moment to read through these. I will have these in paper form at the meeting tonight

Thank you so much,  
Tanya Brandt

<Studies-Referenced-during-Dr-Dan-Stock-Presentation-to-the-Mt-Vernon-School-Board.pdf>

From: Ellen Fallon [ellen@yancoappraisal.com](mailto:ellen@yancoappraisal.com)

Subject: masks in school (Please put in public record)

Date: August 19, 2021 at 4:55:50 PM EDT

To: "sokeefe@sau39.org" [sokeefe@sau39.org](mailto:sokeefe@sau39.org)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ellen Fallon and I have two children in the SAU-39 school system. My daughter Brooke is going to be a freshman at Souhegan, and my son Lucas is going to be a sixth grader at AMS. I am really hoping there will not be a mask mandate for them this year. Currently the vaccination rate is over 65% in the state of NH and approx. 100,000 or more (some reports claim 6x more) have already had COVID and have natural immunity which some studies prove is better than the vaccine. The reason why the kids were wearing masks last year was to keep their parents and grandparents safe. Per CDC over 90% of elderly people in NH are vaccinated. I know this is a different variant of COVID but like the flu, there could be a new one every year, and we can't be wearing masks year after year. Healthy kids do not to wear a mask. Kids have a higher chance of being hit by an asteroid particle than they do of dying of Covid. Should we require all kids to wear helmets? Of course not. Johns Hopkins studied 48,000 pediatric Covid cases in healthy children and not one has died. According to the CDC in 2019 there were over 400 pediatric deaths from the flu, higher than the pediatric mortality rate from Covid over the past 19 months. I appreciate the wonderful job our teachers, town officials, and school board has done in the past for the town of Amherst.

Thank you,  
Ellen Fallon

1671 On Aug 19, 2021, at 4:52 PM, Ashley Albert [ashley.rebecca.113@gmail.com](mailto:ashley.rebecca.113@gmail.com) wrote:

1672  
1673 Good Afternoon,

1674  
1675 I am just reaching out to express my dislike for mandates in our school.

1676  
1677 Our children need to stop living in fear and the mask just remind them of that fear. I tried to see  
1678 how much money the CDC has spent on mask research; I couldn't find anything! No-one truly  
1679 knows the impact that they may have on our children. They do have studies on facial expressions  
1680 being a big part of early childhood development.

1681  
1682 They also have studies on wet mask being very dangerous and encouraging bacterial growth.  
1683 That would mean on a rainy day, snowy day, humid day, or even just from coughing into the  
1684 mask that would actually make the mask harmful.

1685 For the parents and children who are scared, I can sympathize with them. With that being said  
1686 they have a choice to remote learn until they are comfortable. What choice does a parent or child  
1687 that doesn't want to live in fear or be masked up.

1688  
1689 WE SHOULD ALL HAVE A CHOICE!!

1690  
1691 If you could kindly forward this to the full board.  
1692 Thank you very much for your time,

1693  
1694 Ashley Albert

1695  
1696 On Aug 19, 2021, at 5:03 PM, Vanessa W [vanessa.whitehouse@gmail.com](mailto:vanessa.whitehouse@gmail.com) wrote:

1697  
1698 Please read this letter and share it with every member of the board and also please put it on  
1699 public record...thank you!

1700  
1701 Thank you, school board, for hearing the community this evening.

1702  
1703 I would like to voice my concerns about mandating masks for our children once again.  
1704 My goal is not to dwell on the 99% survival rate among children.

1705  
1706 Or that it is no longer a concern they might infect grandma or grandpa since the vaccine has been  
1707 available to those 12 and older.

1708  
1709 Or the fact that it is an obvious inconsistency to require masks now, when we never did for any  
1710 other virus, such as the flu(which we ALL know is way more dangerous for children than Covid)  
1711 ,strep throat or stomach bug, etc.

1712  
1713 Or the fact that the efficacy of masks is NOT proven at all, where Biden's own health advisor  
1714 admitted just a few weeks ago "they don't work."

1715  
1716 Or the many, many more arguments against masking children...

1717 My main objective is to talk first about, how masks negatively affect children socially, and  
 1718 emotionally by simply sharing a quote that seems to sum it up perfectly.

1719  
 1720 “our children are now being raised in fear.

1721  
 1722 Fear of each other.

1723  
 1724 Fear of the world.

1725  
 1726 Fear of illness, viruses and even the air they breathe.

1727  
 1728 They are being taught to fear everything.

1729  
 1730 Prolonged fear is terror, and terror becomes trauma...”

1731  
 1732 This is NOT the kind of world I want my children to grow up in, I want my children to lead the  
 1733 normal, carefree, beautiful life that they are intended to live. This virus is not Ebola, it is not  
 1734 polio, it is not killing the children. The one thing we are certain about this virus is that it is  
 1735 dangerous for the elderly and those with 3 or more comorbidities. I CHOOSE to let my child see  
 1736 Covid for what it is, and allow them to enjoy school, joke with their friends, laugh at the lunch  
 1737 table and play games at recess like they used to!

1738  
 1739 Which leads me to my last point. WE are the parents of our children, the decision to mask should  
 1740 be left up to the parents only. The board must trust the community, that each parent will make  
 1741 the right decision, that we will keep our kids home when they are not feeling well,  
 1742 understanding the new reality we are in with this pandemic (which will likely be around forever).  
 1743 So please, give parents the choice to mask or not mask... just like Milford schools... just like  
 1744 Merrimack schools....

1745  
 1746 Thank you

1747 --  
 1748 Vanessa Whitehouse

1749  
 1750 On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 7:15 PM Chiara Yates <[chiara.yates@gmail.com](mailto:chiara.yates@gmail.com)> wrote:

1751  
 1752 Good morning,

1753  
 1754 I have a kid in each school in Amherst.

1755 I am reaching out to express my support to the decision of enforcing the use of masks at all times  
 1756 indoors for both Clark-Wilkins and AMS since not all students have access to a vaccine.  
 1757 Because our community as a whole has low vaccination rates I think the high school should also  
 1758 enforce masks when social distancing cannot be enforced.

1759  
 1760 As restrictions have been loosened in the USA and in many other countries the infection rate has  
 1761 been on the rise, clearly proving that, until more people are vaccinated and children have access



1762 to the vaccine, masking, social distancing and hand washing should still be required - as they did  
1763 work.

1764  
1765 I asked my children if they would rather go to school and have to wear a mask or stay home so  
1766 they don't have to wear it and their answer was univocal. They would rather wear a mask if it  
1767 means they can stay in school in person.

1768  
1769 I think the effort put forth in 2020-2021 was successful and we should continue on that path.

1770  
1771 Thank you for all the thoughtfulness and hours you are putting into making sure we pursue the  
1772 best decisions for our children's mental and physical health.

1773  
1774 Chiara Yates

1775 --

1776 On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 8:14 PM Tiffany Jacobs <[tiffany.jacobs@verani.com](mailto:tiffany.jacobs@verani.com)> wrote:

1777  
1778 Hello all!

1779  
1780 I tuned in last night to the meeting regarding reopening. Yikes.  
1781 The people who showed up and even commented on the meeting do not share my views. I would  
1782 have been in favor of testing. I prefer more info and being proactive over a "wait and see"  
1783 approach. I truly don't see how people are so against mask wearing if it means we are going to  
1784 protect our citizens. If we are wrong, at least we just wore masks. If they are wrong, people could  
1785 be hospitalized or worse. And it won't be forever. Nobody WANTS to wear masks. I'm not living  
1786 in fear. I am trying to limit the risk and live as normally as possible. I heard from an uncle this  
1787 week who was anti vaccine and he and his whole family have Covid right now. He said, "If I  
1788 knew I was going to be this sick I would have been first in line for the vaccine." I don't want to  
1789 regret not doing more. Let's come together, for everyone who can't get vaccinated yet. Kids ARE  
1790 being hospitalized. Nobody wants that! This shouldn't be hard. I'm not sure why it has become  
1791 divisive and political. The guidance from people much smarter than me, experts in the field, have  
1792 told us that we need to wear masks regardless of our vaccination status. Let's just do that for  
1793 now. My kids are fine with it and so am I. To state at a meeting like last night that babies and  
1794 toddlers who wear masks suffer from a drop in IQ....that just did me in. Nobody is even  
1795 recommending that babies wear masks. And to ask what the goals are of the board? Please don't  
1796 listen to the noise. I support mask wearing. I support testing.

1797  
1798 Hang in there!  
1799 I appreciate you!

1800 Tiffany

1801 On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 7:19 PM Chris Rake <[chris@crakephoto.com](mailto:chris@crakephoto.com)> wrote:

1802  
1803 Greetings,

1804  
1805 First a huge thank you for taking on the incredibly challenging task of landing on a reopening  
1806 plan. As the leader of a global youth serving organization myself (100+ countries, hundreds of



thousands of kids PK-12), I know how heavy the burden can be in making decisions on how to best serve our community under seemingly impossible constraints.

I listened to the board call regarding athlete testing, and heard several things from those who showed up in opposition that were concerning and factually incorrect. I may not be able to attend tomorrow, but wanted to share some insight and thoughts regarding some of the topics discussed.

No evidence that masks lower IQ

There is no support for the statement that masks lower IQ. I am not aware of any scientific journal, peer-reviewed study, or other credible report that supports this claim. On the contrary there are studies (for example Guarnera, M., Hichy, Z., Cascio, M. I., & Carrubba, S. (2015). Facial expressions and ability to recognize emotions from eyes or mouth in children. Europe's journal of psychology, 11(2), 183.) that strongly supports the notion that children are extremely resilient in the areas of emotional learning when it comes to face coverings. I believe we can set this fear aside and we must avoid letting it dominate the conversation.

However there is evidence that those who get COVID may suffer "Brain Fog" Opposite of "masking lowers IQ" however is the unfortunate discovery that getting COVID does lead to a marked reduction in cognitive ability. A recent large scale student from the UK ([https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(21\)00324-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(21)00324-2/fulltext)) found that, controlled for age, education, and overall mood, those who previously had COVID-19 found it harder to complete tasks related to reasoning, problem-solving, and spatial planning. This is what has been referred to as "brain fog". I present that this should be treated as a serious concern.

CDC recommendations are not "all or nothing"

It is difficult, if not impossible, to meet all requirements. But this does not mean that it is "all or nothing". Precautions from infectious disease benefit from a layered, additive, defence where removing one layer does not collapse the ability to protect. Of the recommendations, wearing masks is the easiest thing that can be done while providing for in-person learning. Vaccinations are clearly superior, but we know we can't mandate, nor are they yet available for all ages. So in the meantime, we must do what we can.

Masks are not perfect... and that's ok

Arguments that masks don't stop the spread, or are imperfect and thus should not be mandated, are built upon flawed reasoning. We know masks don't stop the spread. And we know that masks aren't perfect. They do however slow the spread and are more effective than no masks. All of this is well studied (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7497125/>) and while cloth masks have limited efficacy when used in closed, crowded, indoor spaces involving physical proximity, they do help reduce the spread of infection.

CDC changes guidance over time... and that's ok too

Our knowledge is not fixed. Science is about discovery and building upon our knowledge over time. We also strive to make decisions based on the best knowledge we have. The CDC follows this methodology, in that as we learn more, the recommendations are refined and updated. The argument that because a recommendation changes that this somehow invalidates the

recommendation is ignoring the fact that knowledge grows over time, and as a result the decisions based on that knowledge also can and do change over time. It also ignores the fact that the conditions also change over time, and that recommendations can and do change to reflect this.

When we have substantial spread, everyone should wear a mask indoors in public spaces. Current recommendations are when there is substantial community spread, everyone should wear a mask indoors when in public spaces. This is very simple and straight-forward guidance. Our county is suffering from substantial spread (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>), thus everyone should mask up. Yup, it sucks. But that's what we need to do to get through this. Over time, as rates drop in our area, so can the masks. As we learn more and/or conditions change, and the CDC changes this recommendation (like they did earlier this summer), we can drop the masks. But right now, everyone should mask up when indoors in public spaces. Kids will be just fine wearing a mask.

Live free or die does not give the right to cause harm to others. Lots of arguments have been made about how wearing a mask infringes upon freedom. This too is a flawed argument firmly dismissed by established law. Despite what some may want us to believe, we do not live in a lawless, anything-goes society. We have social responsibilities and obligations to take precautions to protect each other. Just like you can't have a fire in your backyard when we are in the middle of a drought, we must take precautions to keep each other from getting sick during a pandemic.

I strongly support following CDC guidance, which for now means wearing masks by everyone when indoors as we are experiencing substantial community spread.

Chris

On Thu, Aug 19, 2021 at 2:36 PM Matthew Black <[immsb1138@gmail.com](mailto:immsb1138@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Good afternoon

I am a Mont Vernon resident and parent of students at Mont Vernon Village School and Amherst Middle School. I have recently reviewed the proposed School Safety Plan for FY22 and wanted to express my support for the plan as described in the agenda for tonight's meeting.

I think that the plan does a good job of protecting the health of the students and teachers and aligns well with the values of our community by asking us all to work together to reduce risk to the vulnerable. I greatly appreciate that the plan includes specific evidence based criteria for deciding on the levels of precaution to take in each school.

I want to thank the re-opening task force members for the great work they have done and strongly encourage the school board members to support and approve this plan.

I had some trouble finding contact information or a mailing list for all appropriate school board members. I hope you can forward this feedback on to any interested parties that I may have missed.

1899  
 1900 Thanks very much  
 1901 - Matthew Black  
 1902  
 1903 On Thu, Aug 19, 2021 at 2:42 PM 'Koch, Kimberly' via Amherst School Board  
 1904 <[asb@sau39.org](mailto:asb@sau39.org)> wrote:  
 1905 Hi All-  
 1906  
 1907 Thank you so much for all that you are doing to create the best possible school year.  
 1908 Unfortunately I am out of town and cannot make tonight's meeting. Please feel free to share my  
 1909 email with anyone needed.  
 1910  
 1911 I know you are hearing from a lot of anti-mask and others. Just wanted to send you a note to let  
 1912 you know that there are plenty of parents like me who are very happy to have students masked,  
 1913 and whatever other precautions you deem necessary to keep the kids in school and learning. Last  
 1914 year it was amazing to have them in school amidst all of the surrounding towns in and out of  
 1915 their buildings. Very supportive of starting out cautious.  
 1916  
 1917 Also happy to fill out any additional surveys that would help you to have concrete input from  
 1918 parents to back up your choices- unfortunately I fear the most vocal people may not have the  
 1919 most balanced perspective, nor represent the majority of parents.  
 1920  
 1921 Thank you, and best wishes for a safe school year!  
 1922  
 1923 Kim Koch  
 1924  
 1925  
 1926 VII. Board Discussion  
 1927  
 1928 Mr. O'Keefe mentioned that they will take a motion to adopt the Reopening Plan as presented. A  
 1929 second will be made and then board discussion.  
 1930  
 1931 He asked Mr. Torres, Mr. Glover and Mr. Conklin if it was unreasonable for them to be here and  
 1932 alone.  
 1933  
 1934 Mr. Torres, Mr. Glover and Mr. Conklin all stated that they were unable to be in attendance and  
 1935 are alone.  
 1936  
 1937 Mr. O'Keefe noted that Mr. Grondstra had left the meeting and will be resuming the meeting by  
 1938 phone shortly.  
 1939  
 1940 Ms. Taylor inquired about the school guidance from July 21<sup>st</sup> where it says specifically "*There*  
 1941 *are persons who legitimately have a difficult time wearing a face mask for prolonged periods of*  
 1942 *time, and there should be exceptions made for people with a health issue that might prevent them*  
 1943 *from wearing face masks (without*

- 1944 stigmatization)"<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/school-call-1945-presentation-072121.pdf>)
- 1946 Mr. Steel replied that it is part of their existing Emergency Policy on Personal Protective  
1947 Measures that was passed last July. On page 104 it states, "no person including a student shall be  
1948 required to wear a mask if their disability or medical condition prevents them from doing such".  
1949 It is existing policy.
- 1950 Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Steel to clarify.
- 1951 Mr. Steel replied in general, doctors note unless it is known to them. He added that he was  
1952 contacted by school nurses. The only symptoms that require someone to remain out of school  
1953 are, even post a negative Covid test, are fever or diarrhea. Other symptoms, even a cough or  
1954 runny nose are allowed after a negative Covid test.
- 1955 **Mr. Coughlan motion to adopt the re-opening plan as written and presented by the**  
1956 **Superintendent. Ms. Kuzsma seconded the motion.**
- 1957
- 1958 Mr. O'Keefe opened it up for discussion.  
1959
- 1960 Ms. Parisi remarked that she would like to discuss the time without the masks outside and  
1961 holding outdoor time.
- 1962 Mr. Steel replied that all of their teachers are encouraged to use outdoor spaces they have tents at  
1963 all of their schools. It will be continued to be encouraged.
- 1964 Ms. Parisi asked about time for walks.
- 1965 Mr. Steel replied, yes.
- 1966 Mr. Gauthier commented that this disease does not leave. You are looking at a disease that will  
1967 continue to have cases, it is hospitalizations and deaths. He has reviewed the updated NH chart  
1968 today , under 39 there was one death. Regardless they can have cases but if they do the odds are  
1969 99.97% will recover from this. There is not a single study that says that masks work with control  
1970 studies. Why not give people the choice. Cloth masks are disgusting. Those are his thoughts.
- 1971 Mr. Coughlan asked a process question for Superintendent Steel. If they vote no, then will they  
1972 not open.
- 1973 Mr. Steel replied; their schools are going to open on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.
- 1974 Mr. Glover commented on the personal comment about him at the meeting on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021.  
1975 He did have cold symptoms. He had two rapid tests that were negative, and he is fully  
1976 vaccinated. It raised the question for the parameters for reentry. He did not feel that he was  
1977 putting anyone at risk.
- 1978 On the motion, the plan as presented has already been amended but they have not seen the  
1979 amendments. He did not filter through the text it is hard to adopt as written. Number two, the

1980 yellow status at the high school is difficult. The entire population is able to be vaccinated and it  
 1981 is problematic. It might need a little changing. On matter three, they have to be protective and  
 1982 have to take a cautious approach. It is our duty to provide a clean, safe and healthy environment.  
 1983 There is a lot of variation and evolving guidance. Their state government has put it on them to do  
 1984 at the local level. What are they left with, taking the advice from people in the community or are  
 1985 they going to rely on the government institutions and experts therein. They risk opening up  
 1986 ourselves on liabilities on other fronts.

1987 Mr. Steel commented that from a legal perspective, last year the board passed a policy and that  
 1988 policy gave him the authorization to make those decisions that were made during the last school  
 1989 year. That policy remains in effect until it is rescinded by this board. If they do nothing, they  
 1990 continue and with a plan that they support.

1991 Ms. Grund added that her hesitation is that the numbers are low to make the change in status.

1992 Mr. Steel remarked that it was a low threshold, if they want a higher threshold. To be clear it is  
 1993 not a singular factor.

1994 Ms. Lawrence asked about a process for exemption in this plan.

1995 Mr. Steel replied that this plan hinges on the medical or disability.

1996 Ms. Taylor asked about the policy for an emergency policy. She does not understand how it is  
 1997 still valid.

1998 Mr. Steel replied that there is an “or”. It remains in effect or the latter. It is page 11 in the packet.

1999 Mr. Eckhoff inquired about the vaccine availability at the elementary schools. That needs to be  
 2000 looked at, they are never getting out of orange.

2001 Mr. Steel replied that the biggest unknown is that they may well be that there are no cases. If  
 2002 the board wanted me to take that factor out completely, he can certainly do that.

2003 Ms. Kuzsma added that they should discuss the remote support option for students and what is  
 2004 the threshold for that option. They know that they will be using VLACS. Right now, for the 38  
 2005 families that are identified, from the beginning. They discussed one staff member, however, what  
 2006 is the threshold and allowing families that want to be remote through VLACS and have  
 2007 assistance from us. It does not mean if they do not have a 504 or IEP they lose the connection  
 2008 with the families. That’s something, they need to discuss as part of this motion.

2009 Ms. Parisi asked a procedural question.

2010 Mr. O’Keefe replied that everything is on the table.

2011 **Ms. Parisi motioned to amend the Reopening Plan, to offer a choice for VLACS throughout**  
 2012 **the entire school year 2021-2022. Ms. Kuzsma seconded the motion.**

2013 Mr. O’Keefe opened it up for discussion.

- 2014 Ms. Parisi noted that they have received emails from families looking at their choices. They need  
2015 to be able to offer something or families. They might feel comfortable now but not in December.
- 2016 Mr. Coughlan asked Superintendent Steel asked about the lower grade levels with VLACS.
- 2017 Mr. Steel replied K-12.
- 2018 Ms. Peters asked about how it looks like at the younger levels.
- 2019 Ms. Landwehrle replied that for the younger students have one teacher for all 4 content areas, so  
2020 it streamlines and supports the student. The student has access through an online program, there  
2021 at least one meeting a week as a whole group and one meeting a week with their teacher.
- 2022 Ms. Peters asked about students that have special needs, do they have paper books or is it just  
2023 screens.
- 2024 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it is possible. They do enrichment activities and try to separate  
2025 students as much as possible from the computer.
- 2026 Mr. Grondstra apologized for missing part of the meeting. He asked at what point of the  
2027 discussion are they at.
- 2028 Mr. O’Keefe noted that there was a motion to amend the reopening plan with an option for  
2029 VLACS K-12 for everyone.
- 2030 Mr. Glover added that he has personal experience with VLACS. VLACS is already available all  
2031 year-round. The amendment is restating VLACS is remote, you will not be in person at school.  
2032 You can’t just roll into VLACS one day, it has a beginning and end. Then it is not available in  
2033 the middle. That decision for families is that they need to know is the critical decision date sand  
2034 the expectations.
- 2035 Mr. Steel replied that VLACS is available. They would have a dedicated staff member that is  
2036 federally funded and help the student maintain a connection to their school as well.
- 2037 Ms. Taylor inquired about the dedicated staff member’s salary. She does not know if the high  
2038 school could use the money.
- 2039 Mr. Steel replied that it is a board prerogative.
- 2040 Ms. Grund asked about having someone for the high school.
- 2041 Mr. Steel replied that they are thinking of one person for our students primarily K-8. They do not  
2042 expect there to be many students that feel uncomfortable at the high school. However, they do  
2043 not know how many will choose that option.
- 2044 Mr. Conklin asked if they end up with 100 families that would like to do VLACS, can they  
2045 allocate more positions.
- 2046 Mr. Steel replied that it is possible that they can allocate 2 positions with the ESSER funds.
- 2047 Ms. Taylor questioned about the funding and where they will be paid from.

- 2048 Mr. Steel replied that it will be based on a proportional basis, they would pay their share from the  
2049 funds.
- 2050 Ms. Taylor replied that she has a child that is taking an Economics course through VLACS.
- 2051 Mr. Steel remarked that federal funds have tremendous oversight.
- 2052 Mr. O’Keefe asked about the capacity of the VLACS program.
- 2053 Mr. Steel replied that they are told yes.
- 2054 Mr. O’Keefe asked for price.
- 2055 Mr. Steel replied that there is no cost to the district for VLACS enrollment because we are  
2056 providing a local person. It is low impact on the program, and they will not charge the district.
- 2057 Ms. Grund noted that they have multiple students that take VLACS.
- 2058 Mr. Steel replied that this is support for kids that choose to be remote and have decided not to be  
2059 in person.
- 2060 Ms. Taylor asked if the district will still be receiving money from the state when students are  
2061 enrolled in VLACS.
- 2062 Mr. Steel replied that if they would receive Adequacy Aid State if they stay enrolled with them.  
2063 If a student withdraws and do VLACS on their own then no, they are technically either  
2064 homeschool or enrolled in that charter school directly.
- 2065 Ms. Taylor inquired if the State is double paying.
- 2066 Mr. Steel replied that he does not know how it works on the VLACS side.
- 2067 Mr. O’Keefe asked if they adopt this motion will there be additional costs.
- 2068 Mr. Steel replied that at this time, he does not see additional costs.
- 2069 Mr. Gauthier mentioned that he does not understand how this amendment is different than the  
2070 suggested actions. They are offering VLACS already.
- 2071 Mr. Steel replied that with Ms. Parisi’s motion that any student can take advantage of this local  
2072 VLACS option as opposed to being restricted to only students who have a 504 or IEP.
- 2073 Ms. Kuzsma clarified that the 100% remote option is only for IEP and 504 students.
- 2074 Mr. Gauthier added that he understands now.
- 2075 Ms. Peters mentioned that they are not talking about families coming in and out.
- 2076 Mr. Steel replied that they wouldn’t have to. They would not restrict families.
- 2077 Mr. Steel remarked that a lot of what they have done is give families choice.
- 2078 Ms. Peters inquired about the report card format.

2079 Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, Ms. Christine Landwehrle, replied that it  
 2080 would say VLACS because the student is taking the course though VLACS. The student would  
 2081 be connected to the school and she would have access to their progress.

2082 Mr. Peters asked if this was for any student.

2083 Mr. Steel replied, yes.

2084 Mr. O'Keefe asked for questions on the amendment.

2085 There were not further questions or comments.

2086 He asked for a roll call vote. He added that if Mr. Glover heard the entire conversation about the  
 2087 amendment, he will have to mention that for legal counsel.

2088 Mr. Glover remarked that he heard the conversation.

2089 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Behm- Yes, Parisi-**  
 2090 **Yes, Gauthier- No, Kuzsma- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Torres- Yes, Hinckley- Yes (heard the**  
 2091 **entire conversation, was alone and unable to be at the meeting) , Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence-**  
 2092 **Yes. Motion passed.**

2093 Mr. O'Keefe noted that they are back to the original discussion on the reopening plan as  
 2094 amended.

2095 Mr. Grondstra asked if he change the way that the scoring is done.

2096 Mr. Steel remarked that the emergency policy that is in effect gives him latitude to make these  
 2097 adjustments as needed and situations change.

2098 Mr. Grondstra noted that he will not do an amendment at this time. He noted that they should  
 2099 change the indicator of case counts and change it 100,000 to make it more equitable between the  
 2100 towns. The other comment is the orange status, having the daily screening questionnaire, it was  
 2101 difficult to do on a daily basis. Some of their mornings start very early and were having trouble  
 2102 getting into the system. It is something they need to look into and made more accessible for  
 2103 parents in general.

2104 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the daily screening.

2105 Mr. Steel replied that in the orange status they would conduct that daily screen at home and not  
 2106 into PowerSchool.

2107 Ms. Kuzsma inquired if students in yellow status are required to wear masks then the staff,  
 2108 guests, volunteers would be required to wear masks.

2109 Mr. Steel replied yes, unless this board directs him otherwise.

2110 **Ms. Kuzsma motioned to amend the yellow status to state that if students in the building**  
 2111 **are required to wear masks then staff, and guests that enter the building are required to**  
 2112 **wear masks. Ms. Parisi and Mr. Glover seconded the motion.**



- 2113 Mr. O’Keefe opened it up for discussion.
- 2114 Ms. Peters noted that she has received quite a bit of feedback to leave it in the teachers’ hands.
- 2115 Ms. Kuzsma added that in the policy any staff member that needs assistance is allowed to use a  
2116 clear mask so lip reading can be seen. Masks in the yellow status are being discussed at the lower  
2117 grade levels. It makes it consistent in the schools.
- 2118 Mr. Glover commented that he seconded the motion because he echoed Ms. Kuzsma. If masks  
2119 are on, then masks should be on for everyone in the school. Yellow masks are on, in green status  
2120 masks are optional, orange is masks are on and red is when they are done for now. That  
2121 consistency is for ease of implementation. He asked if it was a motion to amend the amendment.  
2122 They need to talk about the broader concept.
- 2123 Mr. Coughlan added that it is poor practice to amend an amendment.
- 2124 Ms. Coberly Behn, commented that this gentleman has been wearing a mask all night. Every  
2125 time you talk you take it down. Our children are not able to do that. It has to be taken into  
2126 account.
- 2127 Mr. O’Keefe asked for further comments from the board.
- 2128 Mr. Steel mentioned if this amendment passes, that means that in status yellow masks are  
2129 required for all people in the building.
- 2130 Ms. Kuzsma added that she does not agree with that.
- 2131 Mr. Steel replied that yellow becomes simple that masks are required by everyone.
- 2132 Ms. Parisi added that she is confused from the Souhegan standpoint. She asked if they would  
2133 start in status green
- 2134 Mr. Steel replied yes.
- 2135 Mr. Gauthier asked and that is because the vaccination is available at that age group.
- 2136 Mr. Steel replied, yes that is the primary differentiator between the other three schools.
- 2137 Mr. O’Keefe asked for comments.
- 2138 Mr. Glover noted that he agreed with Mr. Gauthier in principle. They cannot know who is  
2139 vaccinated.
- 2140 Mr. Gauthier added that they can do both things, it is a reverse way of operating in society.
- 2141 Mr. Glover added that green is the masks optional status. They all want to be in green forever. If  
2142 they are going to do masks, then they should have a clear level up. They are talking about masks  
2143 as the primary mitigation level.
- 2144 Mr. Gauthier commented that this is the crux of the issue, masks and/or vaccines.

2145 Ms. Kuzsma added that her reasoning is that in reading this plan that yellow is the bridge until  
 2146 their younger children are able to be vaccinated. It feels as though yellow is the bridge. That is  
 2147 why she made the motion that she did.

2148 Ms. Grund added that she supports Mr. Gauthier and its their choice on how comfortable they  
 2149 are.

2150 Mr. O'Keefe called for a vote on Ms. Kuzsma's motion to amend class yellow to require if are  
 2151 required to wear a mask that all staff, faculty and other individuals are required to wear a mask.

2152 **Grund- No, Taylor- No, Peters-No, Behm- Yes, Parisi- Yes, Gauthier- No, Conklin- Yes,**  
 2153 **Hinckley- Not available, Torres- Yes, Glover- Yes, Grondstra- No, Eckhoff-No, O'Keefe-**  
 2154 **Coughlan- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, and Lawrence- No.**

2155 **Motion fails. (7- 9)**

2156 **Mr. O'Keefe motioned to amend class yellow to make masks optional for all individuals in**  
 2157 **all of the buildings. Ms. Peters seconded the motion.**

2158 Mr. O'Keefe asked for discussion.

2159 Mr. Glover asked for the count.

2160 Mr. Steel replied 7 to 9.

2161 Mr. Glover mentioned that they are not a school board.

2162 Mr. O'Keefe replied only in a weighted vote.

2163 Ms. Behm countered that they do not do this for the money, they are trying to do the most good.  
 2164 Masks are the only preventable mitigation factor that they have.

2165 Mr. O'Keefe asked the public to let the board engage in dialogue.

2166 Ms. Behm added that your children are mandated by law to use a car seat. Masks the only tool  
 2167 that they have for their youngest learners. They are a community in their schools. She wants to  
 2168 hear from the public and that is why they are still discussing this.

2169 Ms. Taylor clarified that they are speaking as individuals when we give our opinion.

2170 Ms. Behm replied, yes.

2171 Mr. Glover noted that he does not support the motion they need the ability to level up before they  
 2172 close schools.

2173 A member of the public asked if Mr. Glover could hear the entire conversation.

2174 Mr. O'Keefe replied yes.

2175 Ms. Kuzsma asked if making masks optional in status yellow for everyone really eliminates the  
 2176 purpose of status yellow. The only thing it does is it makes all parent meetings that can be done  
 2177 remotely.

2178 Mr. O'Keefe replied yes, that it would remove bullet point one, two and three.

2179 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Behm- No, Parisi-**  
 2180 **No, Gauthier- Yes, Kuzsma- No, Conklin- No, Torres- No, Hinckley- not available,**  
 2181 **Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes, O'Keefe- Yes. Grondstra- Yes, Glover- No (10-6)**

2182 Mr. Glover added that he is hearing everything, but there is a time lag.

2183 **Ms. Grund motioned to change the case percentages. Status Green would be under 2%,**  
 2184 **Status Yellow 2-8%, Status Orange would be 8-10% , Status Red would be over 10% Mr.**  
 2185 **Gauthier seconded the motion.**

2186 Mr. O'Keefe asked for discussion.

2187 He noted that he agreed.

2188 Mr. Steel commented that he will need clarity from the Amherst School Board directly. Either  
 2189 they will have different plans for different boards, which is fine.

2190 Mr. O'Keefe noted that there is a motion on the floor.

2191 Ms. Grund rescinded her motion.

2192 Mr. Gauthier asked Mr. Steel what he needed from them. They have made their stances perfectly  
 2193 clear. They will have two plans. He will not be changing his vote.

2194 Mr. Steel commented as he communicates to the community, the message is going to be as of  
 2195 tomorrow, based on this vote that Souhegan and the MVVS masks will optional but not be  
 2196 required but recommended and with Ms. Grund's motion it is unlikely that anytime soon that  
 2197 they will have a need for masks in those schools. Conversely, for the Amherst schools, CW and  
 2198 AMS, will be starting with required masks for staff and students.

2199 Mr. Gauthier added that it would be easier for them to go off of one plan. He is only speaking for  
 2200 his vote.

2201 Mr. Steel suggested they wait until the meeting.

2202 Mr. Gauthier added that they need to give the parents time.

2203 **Mr. Gauthier motioned to make masks optional at all levels.**

2204 Mr. Steel noted that if that is your motion that instead you simply withdraw your emergency  
 2205 policy from last year and let each board take up the issues on their own.

2206 Ms. Kuzsma added that it would be up individual board to rescind that policy.

2207 Mr. Steel noted that it could be rescinded at the SAU level as well.

2208 **Mr. Gauthier motioned to make masks optional at all levels keeping the other elements of**  
 2209 **the plan including remote parent conferences, visitors allowed or visitors not allowed.**

2210 Ms. Kuzsma asked for clarification.

2211 Mr. O’Keefe asked for a second for the motion.

2212 **Ms. Peters seconded Mr. Gauthier’s motion.**

2213 She added that there have been parents that have reached out to her and did not fall under the 504  
2214 or IEP. She believes that they can trust the parents.

2215 Ms. Grund inquired about the high school in orange, that is the one stopping point at the high  
2216 school.

2217 Mr. O’Keefe added that he is not in favor of the motion because mitigation procedures exist. The  
2218 community is owed information and data. Covid is here and it is their duty and obligation to  
2219 protect all of the students and have the Superintendent to create that protection. The value is  
2220 there.

2221 Mr. Gauthier remarked that it goes back to vaccines. He is not opposed to masks but mask  
2222 mandates.

2223 Ms. Kuzsma mentioned that it sounds to her that all three of the boards are very divided. Having  
2224 this discussion at the SAU level is not beneficial to anyone. She suggested that they table the  
2225 discussion to have at the rest of their board meetings.

2226 Mr. O’Keefe respectfully disagreed. He does not want the administrators to do three separate  
2227 plans. It is something that they can get together and discuss.

2228 Mr. Conklin added that he tries to find consensus. Mont Vernon might need a slight  
2229 modification; this issue tends to be a little more complicated.

2230 Mr. Gauthier noted that it has become a political weapon for 18 months and it is not going away.

2231 Mr. Grondstra mentioned that one of the notes he made is that all categories should have optional  
2232 mask usage. He is keen on the social and emotional impacts, especially at the younger levels.  
2233 The teachers have mentioned that they cannot see their facial expressions only from the nose up.

2234 Also, as a MV representative, he has to look at the constituents that he represents. Of the  
2235 residents that he represents that attended 4 were not in favor of masks. He also believes that as  
2236 well. It will be hard to come to a consensus as a SAU board.

2237 Mr. Glover added that Mr. Gauthier’s motion calls it to the mat. It takes away the influence of  
2238 Superintendent Steel and he feels uncomfortable with that. He has navigated last year  
2239 beautifully. It is not their job to run the school system. They have options and statuses where  
2240 masks are available. He needs to be able to lead us the way that he led us, and his menu is  
2241 falling.

2242 Mr. O’Keefe asked for further questions on the motion.

2243 Ms. Parisi added that they need to use outside guidance and the DHHS has recommended masks.

2244 Ms. Taylor noted that this is the first that the board has seen the plan and it would have been nice  
2245 to see it earlier. They look inefficient but it is the first time that they can discuss it.

- 2246 Ms. Peters noted that Superintendent Steel has done a wonderful job and she does not feel  
2247 comfortable taking away their parental rights.
- 2248 Ms. Behm commented that they all love their kids. It seems odd that they go for a all of nothing.
- 2249 Ms. Peters mentioned that kids are at Moulton's, at the library, etc. and they are not sick. It  
2250 seems like they are making a big issue. They can call an emergency meeting.
- 2251 Mr. Gauthier noted that this goes on the entire year, they are making playdates and sleepovers  
2252 not just the summer.
- 2253 Mr. O'Keefe called for a vote.
- 2254 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- Yes, Coughlan- No, Behm- No, Parisi-**  
2255 **No, Gauthier- Yes, Kuzsma- No, Conklin- No, Torres- No, Hinckley- Not available,**  
2256 **Eckhoff- No, Lawrence- No, O'Keefe- No, and Glover- No**
- 2257 **Motion fails.**
- 2258 Ms. Peters asked for clarification on the motion.
- 2259 **Ms. Grund motioned to change the case percentages. Status Green would be under 2%,**  
2260 **Status Yellow 2-8%, Status Orange would be 8-10% , Status Red would be over 10%. Mr.**  
2261 **Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion.**
- 2262 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Behm- Yes, Parisi-**  
2263 **Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Torres- Yes, Hinckley- Not available,**  
2264 **Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes O'Keefe- Yes, and Glover- Yes.**
- 2265 **Motion passes.**
- 2266 **Mr. O'Keefe motioned to Reopening plan as amended, to change the school case count,**  
2267 **reduced the mask requirement in yellow, proceed as is, above and beyond that and the**  
2268 **amendment to allow VLACS to continue throughout the year.**
- 2269 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- No, Coughlan- Yes, Behm- Yes, Parisi-**  
2270 **Abstain, Gauthier- No, Kuzsma- Abstain , Conklin- No, Torres- Yes, Hinckley- Not**  
2271 **available, Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes O'Keefe- Yes, Glover- Yes.**
- 2272 **Motion passes.**
- 2273 Mr. Gauthier noted that the ASB will talk about it tonight.
- 2274 **Ms. Peters motioned to resume the SAU remaining agenda items at 10:26 PM. Mr.**  
2275 **Gauthier seconded the motion.**
- 2276 **Grund- Yes, Taylor- Yes, Grondstra- Yes, Peters- Yes, Coughlan- Yes, Behm- Yes, Parisi-**  
2277 **Yes, Gauthier- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Conklin- Yes, Torres- Yes, Hinckley- not available,**  
2278 **Eckhoff- Yes, Lawrence- Yes O'Keefe- Yes, and Glover- Yes**
- 2279 VIII. Non-Public Session RSA 91 A:3 II

2280

2281 Date: August 19, 2021

2282

2283 Members Present: Stephen O'Keefe  
 2284 Sarah Lawrence  
 2285 Peter Eckhoff  
 2286 Jessica Hinckley – Not present  
 2287 Pim Grondstra  
 2288 Steve Coughlan  
 2289 John Glover  
 2290 Stephanie Grund  
 2291 Christine Peters  
 2292 Laura Taylor  
 2293 George Torres  
 2294 Elizabeth Kuzsma  
 2295 Terri Behm  
 2296 Joshua Conklin  
 2297 Tom Gauthier  
 2298 Victoria Parisi

2299

2300 Motion to enter Nonpublic Session:

2301 Made by: Stephen O'Keefe

2302 Seconded by: Stephanie Grund

2303

2304 Specific Statutory Reason cited as foundation for the nonpublic session:

2305

2306 RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the  
 2307 disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the  
 2308 employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open,  
 2309 in which case the request shall be granted.

2310

2311 RSA 91-A:3, II(b) The hiring of any person as a public employee.

2312

2313 X RSA 91-A:3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely  
 2314 the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an  
 2315 open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax  
 2316 abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the  
 2317 applicant.

2318

2319 RSA 91-A:3, II(d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property  
 2320 which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse  
 2321 to those of the general community.

2322

2323 RSA 91-A:3, II(e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been  
 2324 threatened in writing or filed by or against this board or any subdivision thereof, or by or against

any member thereof because of his or her membership therein, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled

RSA 91-A:3, II(i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life.

Roll Call vote to enter nonpublic session:

Stephen O'Keefe - Yes  
 Sarah Lawrence - Yes  
 Peter Eckhoff - Yes  
 Jessica Hinckley – Not in attendance  
 Pim Grondstra – Yes  
 Steve Coughlan - Yes  
 John Glover - Yes  
 Stephanie Grund - Yes  
 Christine Peters - Yes  
 Laura Taylor - Yes  
 George Torres - Yes  
 Elizabeth Kuzsma - Yes  
 Terri Behm - Yes  
 Joshua Conklin - Yes  
 Tom Gauthier - Yes  
 Victoria Parisi - Yes

Remove public meeting tape (if applicable).

Entered nonpublic session at 10:43pm

Other persons present during nonpublic session: None

Description of matters discussed and final decisions made. Superintendent Evaluation

Note: Any votes taken must be recorded “in such a manner that the vote of each member is ascertained and recorded”:

Note: Under RSA 91-A:3, III. Minutes of proceedings in nonpublic sessions shall be kept and the record of all actions shall be promptly made available for public inspection, except as provided in this section. Minutes and decisions reached in nonpublic session shall be publicly disclosed within 72 hours of the meeting, unless, by recorded vote of 2/3 of the members present, taken in public session, it is determined that divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board, or render the proposed action of the board ineffective, or pertain to terrorism. In the event of such circumstances, information may be withheld until, in the opinion of a majority of members, the aforesaid circumstances no longer apply.

2371  
 2372 IX. Public Session Resumes  
 2373  
 2374 Motion to leave nonpublic session and return to public session:  
 2375 Made by: Stephen O'Keefe  
 2376 Seconded by: Elizabeth Kuzsma  
 2377  
 2378 Motion: PASSED  
 2379  
 2380 Nonpublic meeting tape removed, public meeting tape replaced (if applicable).  
 2381  
 2382 Public Session reconvened at: 10:58pm  
 2383  
 2384 Motion made to seal the minutes?  
 2385  
 2386 Motion made to seal the minutes until July 1, 2022  
 2387 Motion made by Elizabeth Kuzsma  
 2388 Seconded by Steve Coughlan  
 2389  
 2390 Roll Call Vote to Seal the meeting:  
 2391 Stephen O'Keefe - Yes  
 2392 Sarah Lawrence - Yes  
 2393 Peter Eckhoff - Yes  
 2394 Jessica Hinckley – Not in attendance  
 2395 Pim Grondstra  
 2396 Steve Coughlan - Yes  
 2397 John Glover - Yes  
 2398 Stephanie Grund - Yes  
 2399 Christine Peters - Yes  
 2400 Laura Taylor - Yes  
 2401 George Torres - Yes  
 2402 Elizabeth Kuzsma - Yes  
 2403 Terri Behm - Yes  
 2404 Joshua Conklin - Yes  
 2405 Tom Gauthier - Yes  
 2406 Victoria Parisi - Yes  
 2407  
 2408 Motion: Passed  
 2409  
 2410 Motion was made to end the Public Meeting made by Stephen O'Keefe  
 2411 Seconded by: Elizabeth Kuzsma  
 2412  
 2413 Roll Call Vote:  
 2414 Stephen O'Keefe - Yes  
 2415 Sarah Lawrence - Yes  
 2416 Peter Eckhoff - Yes



2417 Jessica Hinckley – Not in attendance  
2418 Pim Grondstra  
2419 Steve Coughlan - Yes  
2420 John Glover - Yes  
2421 Stephanie Grund - Yes  
2422 Christine Peters - Yes  
2423 Laura Taylor - Yes  
2424 George Torres -  
2425 Elizabeth Kuzsma - Yes  
2426 Terri Behm - Yes  
2427 Joshua Conklin - Yes  
2428 Tom Gauthier - Yes  
2429 Victoria Parisi - Yes  
2430  
2431 Motion: Passed  
2432  
2433  
2434