

Subject: Re: Concerns

From: Mary Ellen Walker <WalkerM@middletownk12.org>

Date: 1/29/2021, 10:41 AM

To: "Michele E. Collins" <micheleecollins@gmail.com>

CC: Leonora Caminiti <caminitil@middletownk12.org>, Frank Capone <caponefr@middletownk12.org>, Michael Donlon <donlonm@middletownk12.org>, Tom Giaimo <giaimot@middletownk12.org>, Harmony Heffernan <heffernanh@middletownk12.org>, John Little <littlej@middletownk12.org>, Joan Minnuies <minnuiesj@middletownk12.org>, Jacqueline Tobacco <tobaccoj@middletownk12.org>, Deborah Wright <wrightd@middletownk12.org>

Dear Mrs. Collins,

Thank you for sharing your perspective, your support and your appreciation for our teachers.

The administrative team has created a draft plan for implementing Phase 6 of the Restart and Recovery Plan. We are also meeting with the District Pandemic Response Team Subcommittees to review the plan and identify strategies to ensure safe and effective school operations during Phase 6. [Linked](#) is information posted on our website about our movement to Phase 6 and the District PRT Subcommittees. As you can see, the timing of our movement to Phase 6 will be determined by administration in consultation with medical and public health experts and after review of health data related to the school and community.

As a parent of two students in our district, your input is valued. Thank you for being an engaged and active member of our school community.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Walker

Superintendent of Schools
Middletown Township Public Schools
732-671-3850 Ext. 1002

On Fri, Jan 29, 2021 at 10:24 AM Michele E. Collins <micheleecollins@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear President Minnuies, Vice President Capone, Superintendent Walker and all Board Members,

Thank you very much for all you are doing for the Middletown Public School District during this very difficult time. I understand that you are under immense pressure from members of the public to open 5 full days per week as of February 16. I understand that you've formed committees to re-evaluate this plan and I applaud you for that, considering that the New York Times, just 2 days ago, labeled all of New Jersey as "Extreme High Risk" for contracting Covid 19. I am not fortunate enough to have been asked to sit on a committee. But, I feel that my perspective is important to consider, as I do have children in this school district who are happy with the hybrid model.

I see no reason to ignore science and medical professionals, just to get my children into a school building five days a week. I understand that social distancing, once cohorts are combined, will not be possible. Even in their most recent update, The CDC does not recommend doing away with social distancing. If cohorts are combined, I will be forced to remove my children from the hybrid model and

choose the full remote option. My family will have to cope with the psychological and emotional difficulties presented when children are deprived of any socialization or sense of "normalcy". I will be made to feel that I am sacrificing my children's happiness so that other, louder voices in the community can have their way. This doesn't sit very well with me, as you can imagine. As you prepare for your committee meetings, please remember my children. We may not be loud, but we are an important part of this community. I believe that we are the silent majority. Thank you for reading. Have a great weekend.

Sincerely,
Michele Collins
Mom of 2 South Students

On Wed, Jan 27, 2021 at 9:33 PM Michele E. Collins <micheleecollins@gmail.com> wrote:

My name is Michele Collins from Lincroft. I called into the BOE meeting last night. I have a Freshman and Junior at South in the Hybrid Program.

I'd like to thank you for making the hard decision to go virtual at South. I'm on the CST in a neighboring district and I appreciate you basing decisions on science and safety. My Uncle (who had no preexisting conditions) almost died from this disease - he was intubated multiple times and my cousins said their goodbyes twice over zoom. In a last ditch effort they put a trache in and miraculously his lungs improved enough for them to eventually take it out. After months in the hospital, he is home, but with many permanent medical conditions as a result. This virus is relentless.

My district just brought back all of the 4-5-6 graders full time and within three days, two schools had to close. This makes me apprehensive when our district is thinking about moving into the next phase. There is no way that students can safely eat lunch at school. Eating among others not from your immediate family is one of the most dangerous things you can do right now. In addition, kids (and sometimes staff) don't always wear their masks properly and plexiglass shields don't do much as this virus is airborne. If there are more students in the building, the risk of infection increases and then everyone loses if the school has to shut down. I would prefer two or three half days to nothing. Or maybe we can eventually go to five half days if students were still able to remain safely socially distanced. But staff should be vaccinated before anything moves forward.

And speaking of teachers, I hope Middletown teachers know how much they are appreciated. Whether you are teaching virtually or in person. Thank You. And for those who have been exposed while at work, I know how stressful that is. Many don't realize that some teachers are getting exposed multiple times which results in having to quarantine and be tested each time. This can affect & disrupt their entire family. Lastly, I hope as a community we can do better to stop the spread of the virus so it will be safe enough for all of our

schools to open back up.

In addition, I'd like to share a petition that we've put together as a result of Mr. Terence Wall's highly inappropriate call into the meeting to pressure this Board to open up full time:

https://www.change.org/p/middletown-nj-board-of-education-keep-politics-out-of-our-schools?utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=custom_url&recruited_by_id=d0c21200-67b1-11e5-b7c9-93945eb33098&fbclid=IwAR2oX_BGz5Bd3yQkqIEzWVq8DjySb-pt4Rytx4QEza-lxd5Gz4Qfum0WW-A

Thank you,
Michele Collins