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Safer@Home Learning Options

1 message

Tiffani Taggart <tiffanitaggart@gmail.com>

Thu, Sep 23, 2021 at 8:39 PM

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Dear SDMA School Board Members,

I request that this email be read during the next scheduled meeting of the school board, currently scheduled for Monday, Sept. 27, 2021.

My name is Tiffani Taggart and I currently have three children registered within the district. One is in 4K at the Child and Family Study Center at UW-Stout. Another is a 1st grader who is currently participating in remote home learning due to her having Down Syndrome and at increased risk of complications if she were to contract COVID-19. And a 3rd grader who had been attending at Oaklawn up until the recent decisions of the Board to proceed with an essentially quarantine-optional academic year. With that decision it became clear that a safe in-person learning environment could not be provided and our 3rd grader has been temporarily not attending school in-person.

I understand my obligation to adhere to the compulsory attendance laws within the State of Wisconsin. It needs to be clearly understood that I want to send my children to their designated school within the district. For the health of my children and others, I encourage the board to seriously consider providing a Safer-at-Home option as soon as possible so that alternative education options do not have to be pursued by myself and other families.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, Safer-at-Home was offered and implemented under significantly less problematic circumstances than what we are currently experiencing. Given the current state of COVID-19 within the school district as well as within the community at-large, I am requesting that the Board formally provide a Safer-at-Home option, as stated within the current district COVID-19 Safety plan. Additionally, I am requesting increased transparency with the COVID-19 recommendations provided to the district and the board from the leadership at the different district schools.

I fully support and believe in public school education. I know that being at school in-person, during normal circumstances, is the best place for my children. Even during the early pandemic, we sent all three of our children to school in-person for the entirety of the 2020-2021 academic year. However, notably different safety protocols were being followed and enforced. Due to the delta variant and other variants not yet fully understood, these are not normal circumstances and the start of the school year has proven that they are worse than one would have hoped.

Personal/family risk tolerance should not be the default approach to mitigating negative impacts of a global pandemic. Many have chosen this approach within our community. As such the information necessary for any parent to understand the risk to their child/family is not currently being provided. For example, if a case has occurred within a particular classroom, which specific classroom, how many close contacts were notified, and finally how many of those close contacts returned to the classroom without completing quarantine or isolation protocols. Without this information, there is no possible gauge for weighing the potential risk of asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 within the in-person classroom environment.

It is the responsibility of the board to be proactive and do everything within their sphere of influence to provide a safe learning environment for all students. Providing a Safer-at-Home option, whether implemented on a large scale or small, is the most responsible next step. If a Safer-at-Home option is not provided, at a bare minimum a mask requirement and more stringent quarantine option needs to be brought back.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Tiffani

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9/24/21, 8:30 AM

School District of the Menomonie Area Mail - Safer@Home Learning Options

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