

VIRTUAL SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

The Special Legislative Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Cheltenham School District was held on Thursday, August 20, 2020, at 7:05 p.m. virtually via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Board President, Ms. Haywood. Those present were: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Haywood, Mr. England, Mr. Schultz, Ms. Henry, Mr. Fishbein, Mr. Pender and Mr. Burdell – Williams, Dr. Smith – Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Marseille – Superintendent, Mr. Roos – Solicitor, Ms. Michaels, Business Manager, and Mrs. Mance -Secretary.

The following members of the staff were present:

Mr. Barone, Director of Technology  
Ms. Collins, Director of Secondary Education  
Mr. Kaufman, Director of Communications  
Ms. Tolbert- Jackson, Director of Human Resources  
Dr. Gallagher, Director of Special Education  
Dr. Cheryl Horsey, Director of Student Services  
Mr. Teasdale, Director of Facilities

There were 111 attendees online for the virtual board meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Cheltenham Board member Ms. Haywood.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

A total of 15 public comments were received and read by Mr. Roos on agenda items and will be attached to these Board meeting minutes and entered into the public record.

APPROVAL TO SUSPEND THE REQUIREMENT OF BOARD POLICY 810 "TRANSPORTATION"

This motion was withdrawn from the agenda.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Marseille announced that all Fall sports are canceled due to the ongoing Pandemic. No action item is required on this agenda item.

PUBLIC COMMENT NON-AGENDA ITEMS

A total of 9 public comments were received on non-agenda items and they will be attached to these Board meeting minutes and entered into the public record.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Upon motion by Mr. Fishbein, seconded by Mr. Burdell-Williams and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

DocuSigned by:

*Crystal Mance*

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Secretary

DocuSigned by:

*Julie Haywood*

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President



**Public Comment on Agenda Item from August 20, 2020 Virtual Special Board Meeting**

Thank you very much for your reconsideration to provide transportation for our children. We really appreciate your sensitivity to our family's needs and are very grateful for your decision. We will do our utmost best to comply with the rules you put in place to keep the all parties safe and healthy.

Thank you again,  
Miriam Dachs

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I am writing to strongly advocate for our Private School children's right to busing for this upcoming school year. We pay exorbitant school taxes and yet choose to live in this community, despite not using the school. The least we expect is bus service for the small number of kids that need it.

I trust that the board will do the right thing and uphold the commitment to all children in the community.

Nissan Dachs  
Elkins Park

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As a mother of 5 children in the district, 2 of which participate in fall sports I am disappointed in this decision. I wish that there had been public discourse about the decision where we could've openly discussed concerns instead just sending emails. I do believe that emails versus the Q/A section has removed that type of discourse from these meeting.

With this decision I would like to ask that Coaches be allowed to work with player on their own time to help them during this time to try to help them moving forward. This decision will require athletes to find different ways to get what they need for the college process. Allowing the Coaches to help students outside of school hours does not involve the school.

Thank you,  
Novice Ezell - Glenside

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I think it was a smart and common sense idea to go virtual right now because we already see what's going on in the colleges and the camps And schools Haven't even really officially open yet. We need to listen to the doctors and other professionals so we can all be safe and when the time is right hopefully in the near future we can get back to our daily routines without worrying about get sick or affecting someone else God-bless you DR. Marseille for your leadership

Gerry Broe  
Lamott Pa.

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My daughter is on the girls tennis team which is a Fall sport. Will there be any consideration to letting them play in the spring? As you know we are blessed to have many outdoor courts in the township where both the boys and the girls could realistically and logistically play during the same season.

Thanks,  
Roberta Hickman  
Elkins Park

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Can fall sports be played in the spring?  
Jocelyn Hoffman  
Cheltenham

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I received the email from Dr. Marseille this morning regarding his announcement tonight to suspend all fall sports. While I understand all of the concerns about continuing fall athletics, I do not believe that this would be as Dr. Marseille states “contradictory to our current stance of opening school in a virtual environment.” This to me speaks more to a concern of perception, rather than an independent consideration of each individual sport and it’s risks, benefits, student dedication and compliance, and / or coaching staff’s ability to provide and enforce all the mitigation requirements to run a safe and healthy program. If, in fact, we cannot agree to allow interscholastic competition to proceed, can we at the very least allow practices / conditioning to continue in an organized program so that students can maintain the important team and mentor relationships with coaches and fellow players. To blanketly suspend “all CSD fall athletic activities, practices and competitions” may be the most expeditious thing to do, but I think we as a community can be more creative than that. I think that the district is obligated to provide some type of a fall program for these student athlete’s even if it does not look like a traditional one. I would ask that this be considered by both the Board & Dr. Marseille in conjunction with coaches, players, and families.

Jean DiBenedetto

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My name is Tameeka Banks- Jenkins and I am a parent of a football senior. I am disheartened that the football season will be cancelled. I am asking that since it is a small group of young men that they be allowed to practice following the social distance rules that were approved for the summer. There were no problems and the young men followed the rules. I am also asking that instead of cancelling the season altogether, that it be postponed as many other school districts are doing.

Please help these young men, football is very important to them and their mental health. It also helps many of them to do better academically. I wish that you could read the comments of these young men on their team app. I cried earlier as I read their comments. Especially those of the seniors. My son has been down all day. Please consider allowing them to practice, it will keep them in shape and help mentally.

Thank you for your time and everything you do for our children in Cheltenham.

Tameeka Banks- Jenkins  
Cheltenham Village

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Once able to resume in class teaching who will be consider first K-5 or 6-12. The reason for my question is that child can becomes a issue along with trying to maintain employment. I am hoping that K-5 is consider first by utilizing other schools. Opposed to 6-12 where log in virtually is not difficult and doesn't require so much supervisor versus a kindergartner.

Michael Jones

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Will fall sports be able to be played in winter or spring ? Why is decision being made before the PIAA ?

Laura justice  
Glenside

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Is it possible seasons will be moved to the spring? And will counselors be available to help identify colleges of interest and contact college coaches?

Thank you,  
Linda Musumeci  
Cheltenham Village

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Could you please address/review the COVID-19 capacities for each bus as well as the planned cleaning protocols? e.g. will there be hand sanitizers for students to use as they board? Will buses be cleaned after each route or only once a day? We know this is very difficult, extremely hard work, and we appreciate all efforts.

Thank you.  
Tara Stasik  
Glenside, PA

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Thank you for taking our concerns into consideration by providing transportation for our children for the school year of 2020/2021. We are greatly appreciative!

Sincerely,  
Wesel Family  
Cheltenham resident

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Public Comment on Non - Agenda Item from August 20, 2020 Virtual Special Board Meeting

I find it disrespected that one of the board members compared their freshman daughter playing tennis to all of our SENIOR seasons, his daughter still has three more years of high school and this was our last year, our last shot, those two do not compare, at all.

Amani Ezell

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Just wondering if any Board member has a Senior playing fall sports. A freshman hoping to play tennis is different than a senior trying to get into college based on his senior playing. Yet we do have a Board member with a private school student and the transportation cancellation was removed. This just an observation.

Novice Ezell - Glenside

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I'm pleasantly joyous over your decision to provide transportation for the private sector while our own children cannot even attend school, but I would really like to hear how you envision providing sound education with accountability to make sure our children of Cheltenham will not fall behind in their education. Please discuss why you are not returning to school and why there is no supervision or proper continuing education. I would like to be reimbursed my taxes if you cannot educate our children in a proper manner

Dr. Eugene Gross  
Melrose Park, PA

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Thank you in advance for taking the time to hear my formal complaint and issue in full.

I am a resident of Cheltenham, PA, I moved here from the West coast to provide my children better schooling opportunities. I heard today that CSD has made a decision to deny transportation to my children. This choice, which I believe to be unethical, will cause tremendous hardship in my family. I understand the difficulty in making these decisions amid Covid but please understand the legal requirement of the school district and the position your decision will place each of our families in. Personally, we are a one income family, and we have but one vehicle which is needed for work. We are very dependent on the CSD transportation which our tax dollars budget for. Without the CSD transportation our children will in fact be forced into a virtual classroom because they will not be able to physically get to their classes. Our nonpublic school will be opening with in-person instruction, with strict health and safety guidelines being followed. Denying transportation causes undue hardship on our family and our school district is required to provide this service to nonpublic school students. I hope you will take immediate action to reverse this unlawful decision.

Kind regards,  
B. Herskowitz

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From the CHS Football Parents Association...

On behalf of the Cheltenham Panther Football Parents Association we would like to thank Coach Nase and the entire football staff for supporting our players during this difficult time. They all have been fine examples to our boys on and off the field and we are grateful.

Jocelyn Hoffman

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When will our kids know if the elective classes, they are taking are virtual or not? For example my daughter chose unified gym. How can that be virtual ?

Laura justice  
Glenside

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What is the District's plan on how they will support families who do not have the necessary tools, or skills needed to successfully help their child navigate online learning? What is the role and responsibility of the parent? Will there be trainings made available? What is the District's plan to help and support families who depended on lunch and child care that the districted offered?

Rachel King  
Elkins Park

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What is the CES position on Special Ed teachers returning to the classroom?

Sharon Marzocco  
Glenside

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I know it has been decided we will use Google Meet as the instruction platform this year. However, I was concerned about this, despite security reasons, due to the lagging and somewhat slow nature of the platform. Fellow students I know have expressed the same concerns. Are there other, higher quality, platforms we could use (i.e. Skype)? I appreciate all the hard work you all are doing, I just wanted to express this as one of my foremost concerns.

Thank you very much.  
Sincerely,  
River Somerville co '23

