

**LA CAÑADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

January 13, 2021

The Special Meeting of the Governing Board of La Cañada Unified School District was called to order at 8:02 p.m. by Governing Board President Kaitzer Puglia on January 13, 2021, via Zoom. Present were Governing Board Members Kaitzer Puglia, Dan Jeffries, Joe Radabaugh, Caroline Anderson and Josh Epstein, Superintendent Wendy Sinnette, Associate Superintendent Anais Wenn, Associate Superintendent Mark Evans, Chief Technology Officer Jamie Lewsadder and Executive Assistant to the Superintendent Kim Bergner. Ms. Puglia asked Josh Epstein to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON AGENDIZED ITEMS

Public Comments will be addressed during the agenda item.

PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS

1. First Reading

***Action to Determine Whether to Suspend In-Person Instruction from January 19 – 29, 2021 Per “Strong recommendation: by County of Los Angeles Public Health, R87-20-21.** Ms. Sinnette reported that on Friday, January 8th the Department of Public Health sent a letter to all districts strongly recommending limiting in-person instruction for the month of January. Ms. Sinnette asked the Governing Board to engage in a review of the recommendation from the Department of Public Health and vote to determine whether the district will suspend its in-person instructional programs from January 19 – 29, 2021. The closures for discussion includes school sites as workplaces, athletic conditioning and skill building, LCHS 9-12, Athletic Fields, etc., SDC Preschool through 12h grade, RSP K-3, TK-2 Hybrid AM/PM Schedule, LCHS 7-12 Learning Pods (includes some RSP). Ms. Sinnette presented the data behind the recommendation from the Los Angeles Public Health. She reported that La Cañada has seen a significant increase in positive COVID cases within the last 14 days. Ms. Sinnette presented data regarding the increase in cases in La Cañada. She reported on the district’s exposure experience. Ms. Sinnette presented the current protocols in place for the recent reopening of TK-2 students and the 7-12 Learning Pods.

Ms. Puglia asked for input from each Governing Board member. The Governing Board discussed the potential closures. After Governing Board comments, Ms. Puglia opened the meeting to public comments. The following members of the public addressed the Governing Board on this agenda item:

Frances Delghatty, LCUSD Parent;
Diego Reyes, LCHS Student;
Greg and Alison Molinelli, LCHS Parents;
Riley Tibbits, LCUSD Staff Member;
Dr. John Haglund, LCUSD Substitute;
Concerned Parent, LCUSD Parent;
Holly Breckheimer, LCUSD Parent;
John Hicks, LCUSD Parent;
Joe Corrente, LCUSD Parent;
Kristin Gruaz, LCUSD Parent;
Dr. Shauna McManus, LCUSD Parent;
Chad Conwell, LCUSD Parent;

Jill Simonian, LCUSD Parent;
Anusha Ramanathan, LCUSD Parent;
Chris Erskine, LCUSD Parent;
Kendra Becker, LCUSD Parent;
Jennifer Searock, LCUSD Parent;
Christina Conwell LCUD Parent;
Helen Kerstein, LCUD Parent;
Kristine Kasumyan, LCUSD Parent;
Randy Villahermosa, CUSD Parent;
Brett Johnston, LCUD Parent;
Wen Reese, LCUD Parent;
Steven Kerstein, LCUSD Parent;
Jessica Loos, LCUSD Parent;
Argam DerHartunian, LCUSD Parent;
Lynette Avedikian, LCUSD Parent
Kelie Klein, LCUSD Parent;
Keisha Wilcox, LCUSD Parent;
James Marchetti, LCUSD Parent;
Justin Zoltzman, LCHS Student;
Sophie, LCUSD Parent;
Anonymous, LCUSD Parent;
Mark Kassabian, LCUSD Parent;
Summer Wiele, LCUSD Parent;
Julie Wood, LCUSD Parent;
Michael Williams, LCUSD Parent;
Sam Shrinsky, LCUSD Student;
Stella Shrinsky, LCUSD Student;
Priya Harder, MD, LCUSD Parent;
Melody and Chris Petrossian, LCUSD Parent;
Joe King, LCUSD Parent;
Dezin Delgatty, LCUSD Student;
Stacie De Armas, LCUSD Parent;
Katie Wilks, LCUSD Parent;
Jen Wainman, LCUSD Parent;
Emily Woods, LCUSD Parent;
Eddie Avedikian, LCUSD Parent;
Glen Mertens, LCUS Parent;
Helen Nam, LCUS Parent;
Razi Soltani, LCUSD Parent;
Eryn Seltzer, LCUD Parent;
Stephanie Sim, LCUSD Parent;
Ashley Labow, LCUS Parent;
Suzanne and Ru Jensen, LCUSD Parent;
Emily Shanas, LCUSD Parent;
Andrea Choi, LCUSD Parent;
Cole Stratton, LCUSD Student;
Ani Oganessian, LCUS Parent;
Sunghan Yoon, LCUSD Parent;
Kelsey Larson, LCUSD Parent;
Charles Ryan, Community Member;
Darren Loos, LCUSD Parent;
Justin Luthey, LCUSD Staff;
Yop Kang, LCUSD Parent;
Debra Barsom, LCUSD Parent;

Liam McGuinness, LCUS Parent;
 Meghan Stoll, LCUS Parent;
 Melissa Lechner, LCUSD Parent;
 Debra Barsom, LCUSD Parent;
 Siena Angell, LCUSD Student;
 Anonymous LCUSD Parent;
 Liam McGuinness, LCUSD Parent;
 Anonymous, LCUSD Parent;
 Dana Kang, LCUSD Parent;
 Gina Hoffman, LCUSD Parent;
 Emily Woods, LCUSD Parent;
 Sofia Angell, LCUSD Student;
 Helga Van Herle, LCUD Parent;
 Eric Fan, LCUSD Parent;
 Madeleine Kay, Community Member;
 Reli Sengul, LCUSD Parent;
 Ann, LCUSD Parent;
 Eric Fan, LCUSD Parent;
 Jenny Kazak, LCUSD Staff Member;
 Chelsea Compton, LCUSD Parent;
 Dennis Hubbard, LCUSD Parent;
 Jessica Mulhelm, LCUSD Parent;
 Sophia Garcia, LCUS Staff Member;
 Melissa Paulding, LCUSD Parent;
 Krisjan Kay, Community Member;
 Jamie Abrahamian, LCUS Parent;
 Dr. Hannes Kraus, LCUSD Parent;
 Chriselda Fernando, LCUSD Parent;
 Jamie Abrahamian, LCUSD Parent;
 Michael McHenry, LCUSD Parent;
 Staff member, LCUSD Staff Member;
 Anne DePies, LCUSD Parent; and
 Anonymous Parent, LCUSD Parent.

After hearing public comments, the Governing Board engaged in discussion regarding the temporary closures. Ms. Sinnette recommended keeping TK-2 open, closing the 7-12 pods and using the substitutes currently working for that program to support TK-2 teachers that are uncomfortable working in-person. Additionally, she recommended keeping SDC Preschool through 12th grade and RSP K-3 open.

It was moved and seconded (Jeffries/Radabaugh) to extend the meeting to midnight. The motion to extend the meeting to midnight was approved unanimously.

The Governing Board recognized the pressure on student athletes to attend conditioning even if they are uncomfortable. It was suggested that athletic components be closed until January 19, 2021 to see what the CIF recommendation is going to be. Campus security for the athletic fields was discussed.

Ms. Puglia clarified the current recommendation, which is to keep TK-2 hybrid open with teacher support; maintaining RSP K-3; maintain SDC K-12; pausing 7-12 learning pods for the nine instructional days remaining in January with a solid reopening on February 1st. Athletics will be suspended until further direction from CIF on January 19th.

Ms. Sinnette reported on the collaboration with Verdugo Hills Hospital to provide the vaccine to district staff.

Third grade reopening was discussed. Ms. Sinnette stated that while we will continue to monitor the surge, she has asked principals to be ready to bring back third graders in February.

Mr. Jeffries clarified and reiterated why the district is partially following the recommendation of the Department of Public Health. He stated that the district has done its due diligence and has been following all protocols as set out by the state and the county. The county has approved the district's protocols. The district has been providing in-person learning for a number of months and has been able to follow and maintain the protocols in place. The county recommendation is a recommendation and not an order. Positive cases in La Cañada have been lower than the Los Angeles County cases in general. The district has found that continuing with in-person learning significantly benefits our students. Lastly, that families and teachers have been given the opportunity to decide whether to participate in in-person instruction or virtually.

It was moved and seconded (Radabaugh/Anderson) to adopt the Department of Public Health recommendations by restricting and reducing the on campus presence, and reducing those activities to the level most possible to support our needy learners but also accomplishing the district's community goal of reducing exposure by limiting the activity on our campuses. The Governing Board agreed to maintain operation of TK-2 providing teacher support, maintaining RSP K-3, continuing with SDC services K-12, pausing 7-12 learning pods for nine instructional days with a reopening on February 1st. Athletics will pause until further direction from CIF on January 19, 2021. School sites will remain open as a workplace. The motion was adopted unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 p.m. The Next Regular Meeting of the Governing Board will be held on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California.

Wendy K. Sinnette, Superintendent
Secretary to the Governing Board

MINUTES APPROVED

Joe Radabaugh, Clerk

Date