

**SCS Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, March 3, 2021**  
**6:00PM**  
**171 Watson Road, Dover NH: Meeting conducted over Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Gretchen Carlson, Parent Member, Chair  
Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz, Parent Member, Treasurer  
Josh Roberge, Parent Member, Vice Chair  
Jessica Foster, Parent Member, Secretary  
Jessica Pine, Head of School, Ex Officio  
Mary Dellea, Teacher Member  
Kasey Bilodeau, Teacher Member  
Dan Bromberg, Parent Member  
Chad Roberge, Parent Member  
Peter Sweet, Community Member  
Theresa Lorvig, Facilities Director

**6:03PM Call to Order**

**Chair comments**

- **Thanks to staff who has been working so hard this week to get students back in the building.**
- **Public Comment will be held up front.**

**Approval of Minutes**

- **MOTION: Peter Sweet made a motion to approve minutes from Feb 9, 2021.**
  - Seconded by Chard Roberge
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes
    - Mary Dellea: Yes
    - Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
    - Dan Bromberg: Yes
    - Chad Roberge: Yes
    - Jessica Foster: Yes
    - Peter Sweet: Yes
    - Theresa Lorvig: Yes
    - Meghan Samson: Abstained

### **Board Correspondence**

- Two long correspondences. Will not be read in meeting.
- Jess Pine: Clarified that the correspondence from the anonymous staff member was from a single staff member.
- We currently do not have a rule around accepting or not accepting anonymous correspondence. Peter stated that we should have a policy to not accept anonymous correspondence.
- Josh agreed we should accept the correspondence in question this time but should create a policy about how to deal with it in the future.
- **Correspondence accepted into the minutes.**
- Dan Bromberg: there could be scenarios where someone may not feel comfortable having their name disclosed publicly, so we should consider those situations when we discuss this.

### **6:15 Public Comment:**

- No comments

### **BOT Chair Comments:**

- Board Retreat happening March 21, 2021.
  - Board Retreat draft agenda sent out.
  - This will be a public meeting.
  - Goals:
    - Review accountability report
    - Board Roles and Responsibilities (Facilitator lead discussion)
    - Committee assignments review
    - Discuss School Leadership model for 2021-2022
  - Meeting in person at the school
- Peter developed Suspension of Policies Policy
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- **MOTION: Peter Sweet made a motion to accept the Suspension of Policies policy.**
  - Seconded by Josh Roberge
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes
    - Mary Dellea: Yes
    - Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
    - Dan Bromberg: Yes
    - Chad Roberge: Yes
    - Jessica Foster: Yes

- Peter Sweet: Yes
- Theresa Lorvig: Yes
- Meghan Samson: Yes
- Head of School Review
  - Gretchen is taking point on drafting survey.
  - (LOOK at Notes from report)
  - Also need to look at general school survey.

### **6:25 Facilities Report (Theresa Lorvig)**

- When we went to the Remote model, we changed systems setting to bring in more fresh air. During that time, we are ahead of where we were this time last year in terms of efficiency. This is due to the improvements we have made.
- We are ahead of last years electrical usage by \$8,000 (meaning we have spent \$8K less so far)
- Capital improvement approach:
  - 3 prong approach
    - Facilities maintenance plan. Funded out of operating budget.
    - Mid-level projects. \$20-70K range.
    - Big projects – generally look for external funding sources.
  - Continuing to think about this structure as she develops the capital improvement plan.
- Next big item: final payment for new controls on HVAC system
- In the next two years we need to replace one of our air handler units
  - Cost for both: \$151,000.
- Two boiler plants also at end of life
  - Replacing one would be \$70,000.
- Researching switching to natural gas from oil
  - Talking to neighbors about sharing expense of bringing it in.
- Permanent Outdoor classroom (The Pavilion)
  - Estimate \$60,000
  - 25'x35', located where the shed is today.
  - Proposing we move forward the pavilion project.
    - Roof with open sides that could have tarps attached in cold/bad weather.
    - Ways to attach tarp would be built in (not duct-taping it on)
  - Could have multiple uses, especially as we plan for COVID-19.
  -
- Multi-purpose Room
  - WE have spoken with an architect.
  - Rough estimate from last year ~\$1.2MM
  - No impact to current parking plan
  - Josh – has heard from people that used to work in the building was that part of the reason they left was because they had a hard time getting permits to expand.

- Theresa – we have not investigated that yet, but we will sooner than later.
- Could create larger facilities project with a few of these items (Multi-purpose, pavilion, new boiler, etc.)
  - Recommend creating a task force to investigate these options.
- Dan – with the proposal to replace carpet, should we be looking at replacing with hard surface.
  - Theresa – we have considered that but there are multiple reasons why carpet is still best.
    - Better for kids to sit on
    - Better for noise control and efficiency
    - Most cost-effective option
- Josh – are we also looking at other types of fuel besides Natural Gas.
  - Theresa – yes. WE have also looked at solar, but we need to replace the roof first.
- Dan – if we switch to natural gas, does that impact the systems we have (HVAC, Boiler, etc.)
  - Theresa – switching fuel would not impact the proposed set up for air handling and heat but it could be impacted by whether we add a multi-purpose room.
- Brianna – looking at trying to obtain a loan for more than the property is worth to add this space. Do we have leads on funding sources? Getting a loan might be difficult given the current value of the property.
  - Theresa – these are the types of immediate roadblocks that the task force would need to investigate at the start.
- Theresa will come back with a Pavilion design proposal to the next meeting.
- Theresa will be kicking off the task force as well and would welcome involvement from staff, parents, board, etc.

### **7:00 Head of School Report**

- Having kids back in the building is going well, but we are already having challenges with staffing. Hard to cover everything.
- Enrichment Programs: Proposals for social/emotional and academic enrichment programs
  - Story Camp with a woman who does story camps, puppetry etc. with kids in Colorado.
    - Need to work out insurance details.
    - Each session will have a max of 10 students each (possibly add a session if there is demand)
    - March – May
    - Jess will send out the teachers resume.
    - Current proposed schedule will serve up to 80 kids.
    - Cost to school: \$3,000.

- Still figuring out how kids will be added to the program. Priority will be given to students who need extra social/emotional support.
  - Extra tutoring help
- **MOTION: Peter made motion to approve up to \$6,000 spend for programs for Social-Emotional and academic support**
  - Seconded by Josh Roberge
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes
    - Mary Dellea: Yes
    - Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
    - Dan Bromberg: Yes
    - Chad Roberge: Yes
    - Jessica Foster: Yes
    - Peter Sweet: Yes
    - Theresa Lorvig: Yes
    - Meghan Samson: Yes
- Governor mandate to give students must have option to have up to 2 days of instruction in school (hybrid model). Speeds up our current plan to bring in 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. (Starting March 8)
- **MOTION: Brianna made motion that 7/8 shall be given the option to return to hybrid learning March 8<sup>th</sup>, per the Governors mandate.**
  - Seconded by Peter Sweet
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes
    - Mary Dellea: Yes
    - Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
    - Dan Bromberg: Yes
    - Chad Roberge: Yes
    - Jessica Foster: Yes
    - Peter Sweet: Yes

- Theresa Lorvig: Yes
  - Meghan Samson: Yes
- Rachel Del Greco
  - Grad student at UNH who is working on the needs assessment to get on track for strategic planning. Part of this is a Board self-assessment. Includes SWOT analysis.
  - Survey will be sent via email when it is finalized.
- Charter Renewal process going well and is on track. Jess will present a draft at the Board Retreat later this month.
- **MOTION: Peter Sweet made motion to approve the Duty to Report policy**
  - Seconded by Jessica Foster
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes
    - Mary Dellea: Yes
    - Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
    - Dan Bromberg: Yes
    - Chad Roberge: Yes
    - Jessica Foster: Yes
    - Peter Sweet: Yes
    - Theresa Lorvig: Yes
    - Meghan Samson: Yes
- Development Report
  - Ice Skating event went well.
  - Stages fundraising event is being planned now.
  - Online Art auction happening this year.
- School Calendar
  - Jess proposing that we keep 3/19 as a teacher workday. Especially needed as we transition into in-person learning.
  - We have only used two out of the 5 built in snow days so far.
- **MOTION: Dan Bromberg made a motion to keep March 19<sup>th</sup> as a teacher workday.**
  - Seconded by Meghan Samson
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes
    - Josh Roberge: Yes

- Mary Dellea: Yes
- Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
- Dan Bromberg: Yes
- Chad Roberge: Yes
- Jessica Foster: Yes
- Peter Sweet: Yes
- Theresa Lorvig: Yes
- Meghan Samson: Yes
- A 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher who is on leave for this school year has chosen not to return.
  - We will review and accept the resignation in the next meeting.
- Starting next week, we will have K-2 doing dismissal at 3pm instead of 2:30
- Josh – Considering the Governor’s mandate and thinking ahead, do we need to do anything to prepare for the scenario in which he mandates full-time, in-school option.
  - Jess: Need to think about it. It will be challenging since many families may choose to go fully remote in that case. It’s unclear how much we could do in the short term.
- Dan – Agreed with Josh that we should be thinking about this. Is there anything from a funding standpoint that we could be doing? Maybe there are outside resources (SMEs) that we could outsource some of this planning work or other things to help offload some of the extra work being done by Jess Pine and the staff.
  - Part of being short staffed is having to support multiple learning models. She’s be open to using an external SME for planning or logistics, but not sure how many unexplored options there are.
- Chad – are we keeping track of who is vaccinated as part of our planning to come back in full?
  - Jess – we can do that, but the vaccinations are not the only factor.
- Gretchen – for staffing support can we get more subs or volunteers for non-academic tasks like lunch duty, recess, dismissal, etc.
  - Jess – we are actively trying to hire, but we have mostly been looking for teachers. Not just people to manage non-academic activities.
- Out social distancing goal is currently 6 feet. Other schools in Dover are doing 3 feet.
  - Theresa – the CDC guidance is 133 square feet per kid.
  - We are somewhat less than 6 feet.
  - Peter – can we look at shifting to 3 feet?
- **MOTION: Peter Sweet made motion to allow Jess Pine to access additional funds, outside of the current salary budget, at her discretion, to hire staff needed to meet current needs for the remainder of this school year.**
  - Seconded by Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz
  - Roll Call:
    - Gretchen Carlson: Yes
    - Briana Moynihan-Sienkiewicz: Yes

- Josh Roberge: Yes
- Mary Dellea: Yes
- Kasey Bilodeau: Yes
- Dan Bromberg: Yes
- Chad Roberge: Yes
- Jessica Foster: Yes
- Peter Sweet: Yes
- Theresa Lorvig: Yes
- Meghan Samson: Yes

Action Items:

- Revisit correspondence policy and propose new policy.
- Facilities update with more specifics on the Pavilion.
- Review and accept staff resignation.
- Send resume for the Katrina the Story Camp person
- Compile the list of all of the surveys planned right now.
  
- Retreat: March 21, 2021
- Next Board Meeting: April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

7:49 Meeting Adjourned.

(Correspondence attached below)



## Attachment 1: Correspondence

Dear Seacoast Charter School Board Members,

I'm writing to you today as a teacher at Seacoast Charter School and as a voice for many other teachers at our wonderful school. First, I'd like to say what a privilege it is to teach at

SCS. I truly feel that our philosophy is what our community needs and that we are in a very unique position in our area to service children and families in a child-focused way. I am also privileged to teach among some of the most amazing teachers that I have ever met; teachers that have chosen to perhaps make a bit less money to truly be able to focus on the needs of students in a way that allows them to express themselves without being confined to strict academics that don't allow students to be creative or be themselves. I am so grateful to be among them, especially this year.

We all know that this year has been exceedingly challenging for everyone:

administrators, teachers, caregivers, families, students, and beyond. The struggle to define what is "right," "great," "good enough," "sufficient," or "okay" has plagued everyone in multiple ways.

As teachers, we know when we sign up for the job that there is a significant weight on our shoulders to care for the whole child, please parents, keep our students academically challenged, and prepare them for the next year of their school career, all while keeping their social and emotional well-being at the forefront of our minds. One of the things that sets us apart from other schools is our focus on creating a community where everyone is valued, loved, heard, and accepted for who they are. We take on this weight simply because we love teaching and we love to help our students grow and understand the world around them. This year has proven just how true this is and just how much is expected of teachers.

This year, I have seen many of my fellow teachers cry, work through the weekend and until the late evening every day, neglect their own self-care or families to care for other teachers or students, work through any semblance of "break" times, while constantly battling with themselves to decide how to proceed: do I put myself/family at risk for the needs of my students? Both are important, as we know, and the internal struggle, especially for those at high risk or with high risk family members, adds to the immense pressure and exhaustion. While we have seen that schools do not seem to be "super spreaders," there are certainly cases of teachers contracting COVID-19, some fatally. While our school building sets us apart wonderfully in its uniqueness and non-conformity, it is also small and we lack any "extra" space to spread. We have brainstormed tirelessly and have had many meetings about remedying this, but in the short term it is extremely difficult to imagine a 100% "safe" solution by the standards set by the CDC.

We are constantly thinking of the needs of our students. We have put in countless hours in meetings, reaching out to families we see are struggling, doing whatever we can to connect with students and help them connect with each other. We've organized virtual pajama parties, weekly one-on-one Zoom meetings, remote show-and-tells, and small group social meetings. We've held live meetings, recorded them for those that can't attend, and made separate videos to help those that need it but cannot join live. We've brought our most struggling learners in to

help them, we've created new lists of targeted learners that need extra help, we've organized

special events (thanks Briana!). We try to balance enough emails to stay in touch without crossing over into too many emails. We try not to overwhelm parents and students while still attempting to keep them engaged and learning new material. The balance is delicate and is sometimes impossible, as the needs and desires of our families are so varied.

I, and many other teachers, have attended the board meetings this year and have been so disheartened by some of the statements made. If some think we don't hear the absolutely heartwrenching stories of children in terrible home situations, suffering due to the lack of social interaction, or losing their lives to suicide, they are gravely mistaken. These stories are amplified to us and are completely paralyzing. We truly care for our students and would never want them to be in situations that would drive them to be hurt or to hurt themselves. We have been doing everything in our power to forge connections safely. It's been stated over and over, but this time period is unprecedented. We are in a global pandemic. We are trying to meet so many expectations, including keeping ourselves, our families, and our communities safe, and to be asked how we would feel if a student lost their life to suicide feels like a cruel joke. We are doing everything in our power to help our students and if ANY teacher, especially any of the caring teachers we have at SCS, lost a student to suicide, the devastation and sorrow would be immense. We think about this often. This once again forces us to think of choosing between our health, our family's health, and the health of our students, and hefts another, particularly tremendous, weight onto our shoulders.

Everything we have done this year has been for our students. We have changed our models, switched classrooms, learned new technologies, tried new curriculum methods, sacrificed time with our families, and neglected our own mental health to try and keep our students sane and on track during this pandemic. To hear that some on the board feel that we have not done enough, that we don't have students in the forefront of our minds at all times, that

we have not come up with any solutions, is disheartening, demoralizing, and frankly infuriating. There is absolutely nothing that our teachers would like more than to be teaching our students in person. Remote teaching is not enjoyable for any of our teachers; it takes away the reason we got into teaching, the joy of witnessing a student have an "aha" moment, the ability to give them hands-on experiences. Our desire lies in keeping our community safe and healthy, especially in the hopes that next year we can have a more "normal" year if we can keep things controlled now.

We are moving forward with in-person learning now in a way that makes much of our staff feel comfortable and as safe as possible. We are accepting the risks, listening to the science and (albeit minimal) guidance we've received from the governing bodies, and doing our best to keep everyone healthy. Most are excited to be able to interact with students in person again while trying to keep their anxiety and worry at bay. We are coming up with the best solutions we can to the many roadblocks in our way and hoping that we can make it work smoothly.

I apologize that this letter is so long. I wanted it to be clear to the board how much work, sweat, and tears teachers have put into this year behind the scenes. One cannot say that it has

“nothing to do with the staff” and then turn around to say that we have done nothing in the name of students. I thank you so much for your time and all of the work you put in to make our school the amazing place that it is.

A Seacoast Charter School Teacher

## **Attachment 2: Correspondence**

**From:** Thomas Fontana <[fontanathomas@hotmail.com](mailto:fontanathomas@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** February 28, 2021 at 11:03:28 PM EST

**To:** [Board@seacoastcharterschool.org](mailto:Board@seacoastcharterschool.org)

**Subject: Comment regarding delivery of education for remainder of academic year 2020-2021**

Dear Board,

First, I apologize for the length of this email. There are many layers to your recent discussions and, after listening to them and some of their circular nature, wanted to contribute to it and put things down on paper perhaps for something tangible to refer to as an anchor. And, I know that “Public Comment” isn’t “Public Discussion” so wanted to get as many of my thoughts down in one fell swoop prior to your next meeting/retreat.

Second, thank you for all the work you do on behalf of SCS, especially during this past year. The COVID 19 pandemic has been the greatest existential threat to the school since being forced to change locations in 2015 and the greatest threat to its students, teachers and staff in the school’s existence. I do not envy the choices you have had to make.

All told, I am in full support of the decisions you, and the administration, have made in the interest of safety from shutting school down last Spring to choosing hybrid and remote options in the Fall and going completely remote last November. This was particularly prescient given the surge of infection that the region experienced over the past 4 months, and the limitations that our weather places on options. I also approve of the plan to gradually reintroduce students to in-person learning that is ongoing and will continue over the next few weeks.

However, while I agree that these were appropriate responses based on safety, I believe there were sacrifices to the children's education that went along with that. There have been discussions as to the benefit to health and safety (i.e., infection, serious illness to self, family, community) by closing the school but also the risks and unintended consequences to health and safety (i.e., food insecurity; potential for anxiety, depression, isolation and abuse) of that same decision, let alone the effects on students' education.

THE core tenet of the SCS philosophy and mission "is to provide excellence in core academics and the arts while cultivating the individual qualities and strengths of each child," and this is accomplished effectively at SCS because "arts and academics go hand in hand" and because "the arts bring us joy, and when we feel joy, we learn more deeply and effectively." So, it is actually this last part that is most near and dear—when we feel joy, we learn more deeply and effectively—and the arts are a means toward achieving this end.

I think more than one survey has been sent out asking how our children are doing. I'm sure I have the statistics wrong but I believe I heard that something like 35 students were identified as having particular difficulty/were at risk and outreach has been made to them. However, speaking from personal experience, though we have answered that our child is doing "fine," "fine" does not mean that she is excelling and it certainly does not mean she is experiencing joy. While remote learning, and hybrid before it, may satisfy "the three R's" and/or work toward core competencies, it is devoid of joy. As such, these models do not fully support the mission and core value of the school.

Teachers have tried valiantly to do all they can to teach and "be there" for their students and this is by no means an indictment of their effort, as a profession known for its time commitment has only asked more of them and stretched them beyond where they thought they could go, but it is an indictment of the technology as there is only so much that can be done virtually, as I think we have all experienced first-hand. While the arts surely give us joy, there is also a certain "je ne sais quoi" joyful multiplier we get simply by being in each other's presence and is irreplaceable. While it is not mentioned in our mission statement, because it was something we took for granted until a year ago, the value of interacting with each other and learning from each other is equally joy-inducing and valuable. It is in this spirit that I hope the board works with the administration to return to full in-person learning, for all those who want it and whose health allows for it, as soon as possible, particularly after April break. And, I believe that can be done responsibly and safely.

As we enter the second year of this pandemic, we now know more about the disease and how to manage it, the risks of infection and adverse health effects within our school population and the possible effects on teachers, and welcome the return of warmer weather and the rollout of vaccines.

I will not profess to having listened to all the board meetings nor read all of the minutes but the barriers to in-person learning seem related to two challenges: Logistics (space and/or wifi capability) and staffing.

In terms of physical space, as I understand it somewhere around 25%-33% of the students have chosen to be remote, and I would expect them to continue for the remainder of the year. If the school goes to a binary system—either all in-person or all remote—there may be other takers for full remote and that might solve the problem in and of itself for desirable space for safe in-person learning. However, these percentages may not be consistent across grades/classes so space challenges for advisable distancing are likely to remain.

Possible solutions (some of which I've heard discussed) are:

Renting additional indoor space elsewhere (though I'm sure there are numerous regulatory/logistical hurdles that that would create and perhaps there is neither the time nor the resources to pursue that in an efficient manner).

Renting tents outside on campus, similar to the Fall. I've heard that this presents problems for reliable wifi access but that seems like just a technical problem that a consultant could address.

In the event that neither additional indoor or outdoor space is achievable, it seems that the data on significant transmission between cohorts in this age group is not dire (data is mixed at best — the most recent article I could find on the subject, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7794615/>) while the data is far more robust that, in a worst-case scenario, the risk of devastating consequences with COVID infection in this population is thankfully rare.

The upgrades that have been made to air exchange and filtration should be helpful in the event advised distance cannot be maintained and, in May and June, windows should be able to be opened for additional fresh air. The most recent recommendation I could find, <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-19-education-faq.pdf>, seeks at least 6-foot separation as ideal, but it allows for distance as low as 3 feet (provided other mitigation strategies are used, principally mask wearing and hand washing are used).

If some classrooms with only this amount of distance seems too risky for you all to entertain, I don't know that that is solely the board's or administration's risk to bear. If there is a situation in which advisable distancing practices cannot be met, to the extent you would be allowed to operate this way by

law, let parents know that this is the case and let them decide if they want to proceed with an all in-person model or choose all remote.

Regarding staffing, there may be some teachers whose situations (e.g., their own health status, health status of dependent loved ones, etc.) may prohibit them from returning. I don't have a sense of whether this is a small minority, a large minority or even a majority of teachers, though I hope this was anticipated when divvying who would be all-remote teachers for the year and those with health concerns prioritized for remote instruction. No teacher should be asked to place their health or a loved one's health at risk if they are in a particularly vulnerable situation.

For teachers who do not have specific health risk factors, they still may have concerns related to safe proximity to their students. Obviously, the recommendations above for additional space to allow sufficient distancing would ameliorate those concerns, along with sufficient mitigation practices. In the event that there is no additional space to be had, even if rooms cannot be set up to ensure students are 6-feet apart, the rooms could be set up to ensure that teachers are more than 6 feet from students. Additional air exchange from open windows would help mitigate risk. If the concern is about unmasked time during lunch, if lunch cannot be taken outside then perhaps lunch monitors can be found (I know some parents have expressed a willingness to do this and, since they are not having to eat at the same time, they could stay masked and distant from the kids) and teachers can leave the room.

By early May, it is also likely that many teachers will have had the opportunity to begin the vaccination process or potentially complete it, especially with one-dose J&J vaccine getting approved.

I am hopeful that some, or all, of the above measures would be sufficient to address the concerns of lower-risk people and the administration and board that feels obligated to protect them. However, it is still possible that someone would not be totally comfortable with the situation. In that event, I have to ask those people whether they consider the service they are delivering as an "essential service." I would argue that delivering quality education is. Coming to work in less-than-ideal situations is unfortunately what "essential" workers have to do sometimes. While not on the same levels as essential police, fire and medical personnel, other professions such as meat processors, grocery store workers, allied health professionals and teachers are essential and that means living up to the responsibilities that that entails. I am in a profession deemed "essential" and have had to work with people less than 6 feet away. That has included working with some patients with jaw complaints where they had to be unmasked. This was not the safest practice for my personal safety but it was what was necessary to offer an essential service and I protected myself as best I could. Yes, we offered some services via telemedicine and for some people and some conditions this filled patient needs. But, as a business we recognized that for some patients this was inadequate and we needed to offer in-person treatment, often at the risk to our personal safety. That's just part of the job. For the administration and/or board to ask the staff to do that, if they are reluctant, would not be a popular decision. However, the task of the board, or the administration, is not to be popular but to act in the way that fulfills the mission of the school—to

maximize learning in an environment that brings joy and that's in-person learning. According to the SCS bylaws, Article IV, 2 (b) "The Board's role is one of strategic leadership in defining and maintaining fidelity to the vision, mission and core values of the Corporation." Clearly, in doing so, treating the administrative staff and teachers well is important as "adopt policies to ensure the effective stewardship and management of the Corporation's human and financial resources" is the sentence immediately following. However, the concerns of the Corporation's human resources should not be above the mission and core values of the Corporation.

If it seems untenable to compel teachers to come to work, I have heard it suggested to hire substitute teachers who will come to work (though I understand that is nearly impossible given the current climate no matter how much you offer in wages). Since this is likely fantasy, perhaps find proctors who can supervise the room while teachers teach remotely. Again, there may be parents who would be willing to perform in this capacity or perhaps people that could be hired for this role even if they don't have actual teaching experience.

If there are staffing difficulties because teachers' own children are at home learning remotely, again, this is the challenge for many essential workers and arrangements need to be made.

As an observer listening to several months of meetings, it seems the approach is "because we don't have the space or the staffing" that hybrid/remote instruction is the answer, which is putting the cart before the horse. I am hopeful that this gets turned on its head and the approach is "we must teach in person" so the answer is fixing the space and staffing challenges.

If these arguments, or your own, are not enough to carry the day for being able to offer full in-person for all after April break, I would respectfully ask that you to make special consideration for 8th graders (which I know likely means for the entire 7th/8th cohort). This is entirely self-serving as a parent of an 8th grader but they are a special class of student since "waiting to return to normal next Fall" at SCS is not an option for them. Last year's class was robbed of their final semester and all the typical rituals of concluding their SCS experience, but at least they had 60% of a typical year. This group has had 0% of a typical year and, while 6 weeks of in-person won't undo everything, it would at least provide a morsel of satisfaction as these students conclude their journeys at SCS, for many of them years in the making.

Once again, thank you for all your hard work, time commitment, careful consideration for all constituencies and trying to do what's right.

Respectfully,

Tom Fontana

Parent, former SCS board member 2015-2017, board chair 2015-2017