

## **MANCELONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Board of Education Minutes of Special Meeting August 31, 2021**

**Present:** Ackler, Derrer, Thompson, MacQuarrie, Clark, Musselman, Ross

**Central Office Staff:** DiRosa, Phillips, Musall

President Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Middle School Media Center

Burt Thompson thanked all citizens that were in attendance. Mr. Thompson read a statement: This special meeting was called for the board to consider a plan that would help to mitigate the COVID-19 health risks to our students while doing our best to respect the wishes of all parents. Since the time this meeting was scheduled, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan issued a Public Health Order mandating mitigation measures and to require universal masking indoors, regardless of vaccination status, for all students, staff and visitors. We will be considering a policy that adopts the health department's order and help clarify how we will comply with it.

While that may not have been the policy direction we were initially planning, the Health Department has studied a variety of local data, factors and trends. As such, they have instituted this public health order for all educational institutions in our four-county area which includes Mancelona Public Schools. We have also heard from nearly two dozen of our area pediatricians urging such action.

As a school district in this jurisdiction, we are bound to follow this directive. Our overarching goal is to keep all our students, staff and teams healthy and in school with in-person learning and extra-curricular activities, ensuring the chance for our kids to be kids, grow, learn and thrive.

The Board of Education cannot ignore this order; it is not a choice. There could be legal ramifications if we intentionally choose not to follow it.

We are not here to debate the merits or the contents of the order, we are here strictly to adopt a policy that complies with the Public Health Order.

Mr. Thompson opened the floor for public comments.

**Citizens Comments:** Three members of the community expressed their opposition on masking and one member stated he was grateful that we will have in-person learning and asked that the teachers be comfortable with the masking decision so they can focus on student education.

**Approve 2021-2022 Return to School Policy**

Thompson/Ackler      Yes: 7  
                                 No: 0  
                                 Motion carried.

**Items for Future Consideration- no discussion**

Musselman/Clark      to adjourn at 4:44 p.m.  
  
                                 YES: 7  
                                 NO: 0  
                                 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Laurie Phillips, Recording Secretary

  
Kim Musselman, Secretary