



Ford Administration  
1620 E. Elza, Hazel Park, MI 48030 | 248-658-5200 | F: 248-544-5223  
www.hazelparkschools.org

**Agenda**

**Special Board of Education Meeting**

Ford Administration Building

1620 E Elza Avenue

Hazel Park, MI 48030

August 31, 2020

6:00 PM

In accordance with Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-154 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Hazel Park Schools Board of Education will be conducting a Special Board of Education Meeting via video conference.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://hazelparkschools.zoom.us/j/85798564621?pwd=U2NyMTUvWThvN3lOS01tMTRaQ1dzQT09>

Meeting ID: 85798564621

Call into the meeting by phone (312) 626-6799 enter 85798564621 941343

You may email your questions or comments to Board President, Laura Adkins

[laura.adkins@hazelparkschools.org](mailto:laura.adkins@hazelparkschools.org)

ROLL CALL

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC COMMENT

NEW BUSINESS

A. Learning Pods

B. Return to School Plans Discussion

CLOSED SESSION

Motion to recess into closed session (h) attorney client privilege to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute; which is exempt from disclosure pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act.

BOARD MEMBER AND ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Any person with a disability who needs accommodation for participation in this meeting should contact the Superintendent's office at (248) 658-5220 at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting to request assistance.

All Official minutes of school board meetings are stored and available for inspection in the Ford Administration office at the above address.

This notice is given in compliance with Act No. 267 of the Public Acts Michigan, 1976

Dear Board Members,

I am a lead teacher in the GSRP program at Webster Early Childhood Center, new to the district this year, but not to the field. I have been an early childhood educator for 14 years, holding two degrees in Child Development with my third in progress. I am writing to ask you to honor your first decision to allow for small pods of children to attend the pre-kindergarten program face to face, at the very least for a couple of hours each day.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one hour of total screen time for preschool age children each day. To expect young children to sit in front of a screen for an extended amount of time for school is not only unrealistic, it is also not developmentally appropriate. Children learn best through hands on play and exploration, and they do not have access to the learning environments or materials that we have here at school when they are at home. We can read and do some things virtually, but it will never truly replace in person, classroom learning. Social-emotional learning will be greatly impacted if children are not able to be in peer groups. Young children who are learning virtually will also need a higher level of assistance from an adult at home, and that time and attention may not be equitable and available for each child.

The Great Start Readiness Program services children who are considered at-risk for multiple factors to qualify for the program. These are children who come from families who have lower incomes, single parent homes, lower educational attainment, and other challenges in the home and family. For many, school is literally their safe place, as their homes and/or neighborhoods may be unsafe. There are also children who rely on school for some of their meals each day. It shouldn't be that way, but it is a reality for some of the children we work with. Every child has the right to a fair and equal education, and unless each family has internet access and proper devices for their needs, then it will not be fair or equitable.

Last, but certainly not least is the need to interact with the children in order to truly meet their needs and also to identify possible red flags in development. Early intervention is critical for providing services to children who have special needs. It is also the law to provide those services to children who have Individual Educational Plans. If we are not working with children daily and in person, those subtle signs may be missed and the process for starting services for children who truly need them will be delayed.

I sincerely hope that you recognize the need for the children who are at-risk to come to school for face-to-face instruction in the GSRP programs.

Sincerely,

Janice Larente  
Lead GSRP Teacher  
Webster Early Childhood Center



Sunday, August 30, 2020

Hazel Park Schools Administration Building  
1620 E Elza Ave,  
Hazel Park, MI 48030

Dear Hazel Park Schools Board Of Education,  
(Laura Adkins, Rachel Noth, Chuck Hemple, Rose Mary Hammonds, Beverly Hinton, Kristy Schlak and Sue Hemple.)

I am currently a GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) teacher at Webster Elementary. This will be my second year teaching in the Hazel Park community and I have enjoyed being able to experience how the school community gives me the home away from home feeling as a teacher that I have always wanted. In my opinion the Webster Staff truly meets the parent's needs by making connections with families, understanding what the families are struggling with and being able to direct them to the right people that can help them and at the same time, teaching and educating young children.

When in-person learning was shut down in March and moved to virtual learning, it was an extremely hard transition for students, their families and teachers. We forget how difficult it was for a four or five year old to understand that they were being uprooted from a place where they felt safe, never to see their fellow classmates or teachers in person again. As an educator, I tried my very best to meet state standards and to also assess every child during every interaction. As the virtual learning became less chaotic, the parents voiced to me how difficult it was to get their child to sit in front of the screen, how their child just wanted to go back to school, how they couldn't hear, there were bad internet connections, etc. I also began to notice that attendance on the calls was starting to decline. I did my very best to switch up how I was teaching, to try and make it more interactive, to have guest speakers, etc. Unfortunately, from my experience, I strongly think virtual education is not a good fit for all children. I believe if there is an option to in-person teach we should try it, of course with proper safety protocols in place to keep both the staff and students safe.

Students aged 2 -5 years old learn through their environment. As an educator, the classroom is filled with exploration opportunities. Our programs tend to involve the basics of living: how to dress, how to eat, and how to be safe. Our school offers numerous opportunities to help young children learn reading concepts, writing concepts, and basic facts in areas they find interesting. We sing songs, create art, and explore nature. In the classroom, children are able to form friendships which is an important part of the social development of a child. The teachers of the early learning programs supervise the children as they practice interactions with their peers. Many children can resolve conflicts in a fair way, without bullying, if they are given the chance to do so. That

is one of the biggest advantages a preschool is able to provide. These experiences are often activities that most parents would be unable to provide at home, which helps the child continue their path of development.

I strongly feel that in person learning is very beneficial and crucial for children at this age. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Katherine Wimmer  
Classroom #23  
Webster Elementary