

Notes from the September 13th Orange County School Board meeting held at Gravelly Hill Middle School Media Center

- Took more than 1 ½ years to finally meet in person.
- The agenda for the meeting was given too close to the meeting. It is not enough time for parents to review for public comments. Needs to be changed.
- Also, public comments are only allowed for the current meeting agenda. This needs to be corrected too.
- The Board initially communicated only 5 people could be there in person. Once the meeting commenced, they let in ~20. A gross miscommunication by the Board.
- The Board members were escorted into the meeting by several Sheriff's deputies.
- No American flag or State flag was present at the presiding of the meeting. There were plenty of BLM and pride flags represented in the room.
- The Board was not going to open the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Board member Atherton proposed it, but Chairwoman MacKenzie wanted it to be added to the next meeting's agenda for consideration. The few folks in attendance eventually coaxed the Board to finally recite the Pledge.
- The Board held a moment of silence for the recognition of being on tribal lands.
- There was no moment of silence in recognition of the September 11th attacks – the worst terrorist attacks executed on the US mainland in America's history – with this year being the 20th remembrance of the terrorist attacks.
- The audio visual for most of the night for those who dialed in was extremely bad. Several parents complained about not hearing what was said and who the speaker was.
- There were several protestors outside of the school, peacefully protesting the mandates.
- A school volleyball team wanted to speak at the meeting but were denied by the Board.

- One of the agenda items was a report by a county employee whose part-time job now, it appears, is to ensure mask compliance on children and adults in the schools. He reported on his findings, and they discussed what the possible violations could be for non-compliance. This was not resolved at the meeting.
- A nurse reported on the lack of resources and the exhaustive process they must go through to report on and follow through on contract tracing of kids and teachers. She was visibly upset and exhausted! It is clear from her reporting that our schools are not set up to do this nor should they be.
- After the meeting it was found through several sources that both the Orange County School Board and the Chapel Hill School Board use the same source of medical advisement when it comes to COVID, namely the ABC Science Collaborative, a group that advises to vaccinate all our children and mask up everybody all the time. Even though the Boards both are advised by the same group they have different mandates! Chapel Hill is allowing outdoor sports with no masking and no fan limitations to games where Orange County is not. Orange County is limiting fans and are enforcing masks outside and inside! This does not appear to be science-based nor is it a consistent approach within the county.