

I want to make a statement, and I want to begin by reading the mission of our PTA. The board collaborated on this statement at the start of this school year.

The mission of the Spring Glen Elementary School PTA is to enrich every child's learning experience by connecting the home, school, and community. We achieve this by:

- Building a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive community among parents, students, teachers, and staff.
- Strengthening communication between parents, the school, and the district.
- Supporting additional opportunities available to all students.
- Providing additional resources to the school.

Every decision we've made this year has been to further this mission. This includes coordinating afterschool programs to expand the opportunities available to students, organizing events like the Someone Special Dance and International Potluck, attending numerous Board of Education meetings, building a gaga pit, providing funding for classroom supplies, and other initiatives. All of this is made possible by countless volunteer hours. Without the contributions of those volunteers, there is very little the PTA could accomplish. This volunteer effort is not for the benefit of the parents. It is not for the benefit of the teachers, no matter how much we love them. It is not for the benefit of the administration, the district, or the Board of Education. It is for the benefit of the more than 400 children who attend Spring Glen Elementary.

It is clear that the second part of our mission, to strengthen communication, has a long way to go. I personally attend many Board of Education meetings, and I have occasionally spoken up. I attend meetings of the Hamden Diversity Advisory Council, I have met with our representative on the Legislative Council, with the Superintendent of Schools, and until school was closed I met each month with the Principal. I have offered the e-mail president@springglenpta.org to anyone who would listen. I still do not know everything that happens in the school or the district, and the PTA relies on many others to provide information. I will listen to what everyone here tonight has to say, and I will read any e-mails from those who cannot be here.

I also speak my mind in community forums. The school has the greatest impact on my children after their family. When school was in session they spent 9 hours a day there, and even now the school's impact is enormous. An institution so important cannot be

above criticism. I would not put my child in a car without thinking of its safety record, I would not have them eat at a restaurant without considering the nutrition, and I will not abdicate my responsibility as a parent to do what is best for my children's education. It is okay if others disagree.

Finally, I want to make clear that my issues with remote learning lie at the district level. I am objecting to things that are not within teachers' control. Therefore, my criticisms have been directed to the district. I have communicated these criticisms to the Superintendent's Office and by making public comment to the Board of Education. I love the relationship between my family and our teachers. I am not always great at expressing this, and so I was excited for kids to have the opportunity to tell teachers directly how they feel. I truly loved assembling their photos and videos into something that we could share with teachers.

Thank you all for listening. We will proceed with comments from board members, then committees, then general memberships. To the best of my ability, I will try to follow procedural rules, including keeping the discussion civil. I will unmute one person at a time and will continue until everyone has had a chance to speak, thus completing the agenda, or we have a motion to adjourn which is approved by $\frac{2}{3}$ of members present.

David Hiller

Spring Glen PTA President