

Public Speaks via WebEx Format June 13, 2020

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:06 AM

Q: Could someone explain how attendees can contribute in Public Speaks, both in written form and via voice/video?

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:06 AM

Q: Could you also post here in the comments for folks who are online?

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:07 AM

Q: Thank you

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:08 AM

Q: Could you post that link here? And just let people know to go to the Q&A section?

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:08 AM

Q: If I want to speak, how do I signal that and do it?

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:09 AM

Q: I see that I have a muted mic next to my name and no video camera.

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:12 AM

Q: Hello? For people who have joined, it's not clear what is meant by 'the website'. Could you please explain better?

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:12 AM

Q: And post information here.

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:12 AM

Q: Annemarie?

Priority: N/A

Kamaljit Zubieta - 10:13 AM

A: <https://www.somds.k12.nj.us/boequestions/>

Ronald Taylor - 10:22 AM

A: Hello and thank you, as with our previous distance methodology public speaks should be placed in this platform or the website form

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:15 AM

Q: That website just tells me that I'm logged in.

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:21 AM

Q: That's not great. I'm going to forward to Dr. Taylor my letter to the BOE to read.

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:22 AM

Q: Everyone is having trouble.

Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:22 AM

Q: Unacceptable!

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:23 AM

Q: No. Read it now.

Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:23 AM

Q: why not wait for the speaks now

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:23 AM

Q: I sent it

Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:23 AM

Q: people are on to hear about the speaks now

Priority: N/A

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Scott Sinkler (scott@publiceyeproductions.com) - 10:23 AM

Q: Please read it now.

Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:23 AM  
Q: Your own BOE member is having an issue  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:23 AM  
Q: Why not wait 5 more minutes?  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:23 AM  
Q: You set the precedence of being secretive again  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:24 AM  
Q: Thanks for waisting my time  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: I vote no  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: Vote no  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: someone  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: waste of my time!  
Priority: N/A

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Brad Schenker (bwschenker@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: voting you all out  
Priority: N/A

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marc handelman (balazeke@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM  
Q: Hi All - I am a parent of a CHS 11th grader and SOMS 7th grader. I would like to strongly support mandatory zoom classes if we are still remote in the Fall.  
Priority: N/A

**It is our understanding that members of the public were experiencing difficulty accessing the platform for public speaks. We apologize for the inconvenience. Below are the Superintendent's response to the following Public Speaks submissions.**

**Dear Annemarie, Shannon, Erin, Elizabeth, Robin, Thair, Tony, Johanna, and Kamal,**

**I'm writing about the task facing you tomorrow (Saturday) to write up the one-year evaluation of Dr. Taylor as Superintendent.**

**One third of you are members of the SOMa Families for Effective Teaching Facebook group, and so are familiar with the concerns of many of the more than 800 members—parents, students, teachers and other community members—who use the platform to share their experiences and to discuss how well their kids are learning in the district. To the six of you who haven't yet joined, I invite and encourage you to do so, as it will give you a lot of insight into the daily experiences of your constituents' lives and will help you best serve the SOMSD community. It also gives you the opportunity to contribute to the discussion as you feel appropriate and to educate us all on your activities and views. We have former BOE members as well who are extremely valuable contributors.**

**Our members hold a range of views on what's happening in the district, but I think these are the most pressing issues to focus on now:**

**SOMSD has been facing great challenges in regard to curriculum and instruction that long pre-date Dr. Taylor's tenure. On the one hand nobody expects him—or you—to fix them all immediately. On the other hand, families are anxious to see steady visible improvements, to receive a clear, strong impression that the district is headed in the right direction, and to get a sense of some of the possible concrete solutions that are under consideration. My personal view is that these things have been lacking.**

**The pandemic has added major obstacles to effective teaching through distance learning. On the one hand, families are eager to grant a lot of slack to everybody involved in coping with those challenges. On the other hand we have many members who either teach in or who have kids or friends in other nearby districts, and most of those who have shared those perspectives have been disappointed in our district's comparative ability to adapt. We *must* do much better.**

**As a 20-year resident of South Orange and a parent of two SOMSD kids for eleven years, as well as someone who has been trying to contribute a little to improving one aspect of education in our district— teaching effectiveness—I only ask of you one thing:**

**Please take seriously your responsibility to hold Dr. Taylor accountable for his performance in a frank and fair manner. As I posted on our group today, everyone who has met Dr. Taylor has liked him and everyone I've spoken with wants him to succeed. But success in any endeavor demands high expectations and rigorous accountability—particularly when it comes to leadership. Accountability in this context means: credit where credit is due, censure for preventable failures, a point-by-point check on the requirements and expectations listed for the job, and guidance and clear expectations for**

**future performance. There are so many areas for which the Superintendent is responsible. But if kids are not learning adequately and across the board, the other issues pale in significance.**

**SOMa is a community of friendly, empathetic people. We also have a culture of high expectations, deeply held values and strong opinions. I hope that these qualities can all be employed when you sit down tomorrow to discuss how your evaluation will be framed. With strong leadership and firm support we can surely succeed in turning the district around.**

**Thank you!**

**Scott Sinkler**

Response-

Your communique is acknowledged. Because you are commenting on the performance and evaluation of an employee no further response is available.

**marc handelman (balazeke@gmail.com) - 10:25 AM**

**Q: Hi All - I am a parent of a CHS 11th grader and SOMS 7th grader. I would like to strongly support mandatory zoom classes if we are still remote in the Fall.**

Thank you, we have committed to improving distance learning if it is indeed required for next year. Please see the linked communique below that the Superintendent sent to the community last Friday 6/12/20.

<https://www.somso.k12.nj.us/headlines/2020/06/12/somso-as-a-matter-of-fact-weekly-wrap-up-newsletter-updates-on-graduation-distance-learning-summer-food-support-and-more/>