

Olentangy Schools Board of Education Meeting Recap August 27, 2020

Board President's Report

Mindy Patrick began by sharing Oak Creek principal, Julie Lather's, quote, "We are building this plane as we fly it." Mrs. Patrick asked the entire community to adjust expectations, knowing school will look different this year, and give grace where we can. Give grace to our teachers as they reinvent their teaching style, give grace to students facing new learning environments, and give grace to parents who are playing a larger role in their child's education. We are all students in this uncharted territory.

Mrs. Patrick and Dr. Lakesha Wyse met with Olentangy Schools' diversity and inclusion team, who shared their 3 – 5 year dynamic plan, and discussed the new Leadership Advisory Committee, representing various groups in the Olentangy community that share an innovative vision. Both the Board of Education and the District Leadership Team are partnering with this committee on upcoming related trainings and book studies.

Committed Distance Learning Update

Since the Committed Distance Learning program was first conceived, it has evolved to meet the needs of the Olentangy students and teachers that have opted for a remote learning alternative. Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jack Fette shared that yesterday they were able to identify more electives that can be added to course offerings, and satisfy the community's request for more elective options at the middle and high school level. There are currently 5300 students enrolled in Committed Distance Learning and 235 students on the wait list, which will decrease in the next 48 hours as they work through the complex process of placing more students into Committed Distance Learning classes.

Committed Distance Learning Lead Administrator Jennifer Furey has a dense background in quality virtual instruction, and has spent a great deal of time developing the vision for this new authentic Olentangy learning experience. She outlined key elements for the CDL program which include engaging students and monitoring screen time, prioritizing student mental and physical wellness, and caring for their online tools and technology.

Teachers have taken part in collaboration, planning and training for distance learning over the past two weeks. Specialized professional development focused on blended learning opportunities, understanding how to utilize digital tools to effectively transfer classroom lessons to an online format, looking at synchronous vs. asynchronous opportunities, and building community and relationships.

Committed Distance Learning Staff Best Practices and Committed Distance Learning Student and Parent Program Overviews have been well received as they provide guidance to families on what to expect this semester.

The first week of school will focus on connections and building a sense of belonging, before moving into synchronous lessons (live lessons, small group meetings) and asynchronous activities (recorded lessons, independent work). There will be obstacles, but Ms. Furey said they will maintain the One Olentangy spirit and a growth mindset.

Olentangy Schools Safe Return to Competition Update

Chief of Administrative Services, Randy Wright, reports that athletes have been participating in noncontact sports since August 5th, with contact competitions beginning last week and football kicking off this evening. Olentangy Schools is following the state of Ohio's Responsible Restart criteria for youth sports, OHSAA's guidance, and Ohio Capital Conference's return to play recommendations, all while working closely with the Delaware General Health District and complying within our district policies to operate effectively.

Athletic directors at the middle school and high school levels have worked to formulate processes and procedures for their individual schools. All components of competitions have been considered, including:

1. Logistics for spectators; where they park, how they enter, where they sit, etc.
2. Compliance officers will be at all home events, enforcing social distancing of spectators and face mask requirements.
3. Ticketing and decisions on who attends athletic events, while following the state's requirement to seat the lesser of 15% capacity or 1500 spectators in large arenas.
4. Live HD streaming of high school contests through our [technology department website](#), costing fans \$7/football contest and \$6 for all other sports.
5. No congregating before or after games; no tailgating, before/after contest meals, and no locker rooms.

All of these efforts culminate in the ultimate goal of allowing our Olentangy students to participate in extra-curriculars and athletic competitions for as long as possible.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Mark Raiff celebrated some of the "Living the Mission" moments happening across the district as teachers and students prepare to return to school. While Mindy Patrick spoke to adjusting expectations for a different kind of learning experience this year, Olentangy will not lower expectations. Our expectations for student performance remain high, and Mr. Raiff believes students will be successful in the Hybrid attendance model and in their Committed Distance Learning classrooms.

As we patiently navigate students' return to school, please first contact your child's teacher or school principal with questions.