

WEBVTT

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00:00:06.960 --> 00:00:16.080

Tom Leonard: Good evening. If you're joining us now, or we always wait usually 30-40 seconds before we get going, because we know and if there's going to be. Oh.

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00:00:16.529 --> 00:00:26.490

Tom Leonard: We don't know how many people are going to join this webinar. But if there's gonna be a group, we want to make sure we give them time and you may be seeing Sean on the screen somewhere.

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00:00:28.290 --> 00:00:40.560

Tom Leonard: He's on my right. Well, actually, he's over there. But whatever side he is on your screen. He will be interpreting for those who I need his services tonight.

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00:00:41.190 --> 00:00:52.110

Tom Leonard: So I'm going to ask start getting ourselves set to get ready here and I am going to have a bit of a PowerPoint or actually keynote really

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00:00:52.740 --> 00:01:05.430

Tom Leonard: That I'm going to be showing tonight. So let me get that cued up and I will do that right now. So a little bit quickly just about the format that we're going to have tonight.

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00:01:06.510 --> 00:01:21.540

Tom Leonard: I have several staff members with me. I also have our new board president with me to say a few words at the beginning, but we'll go maybe 30 maybe 35 minutes and then we will go to questions, hopefully for 25

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00:01:22.770 --> 00:01:27.780

Tom Leonard: Minutes or so. And hopefully it will be informative and hopefully

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00:01:29.610 --> 00:01:38.250

Tom Leonard: We will have a good dialogue through the questions later. I would encourage you not to type questions right away. We probably will cover quite a few of your

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00:01:39.030 --> 00:01:50.070

Tom Leonard: Questions as you do the presentation but at some point maybe midway through or 20-30 minutes and if you feel like maybe 20 minutes and if you feel there's a question you want to get in there, start getting it in and

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00:01:51.210 --> 00:02:10.650

Tom Leonard: My communication director, she will be putting them together before I start, though, I would like to introduce our board president and John I know you're here somewhere. John was just reelected. He's been on the board for a while and as is common in our school district, we

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00:02:12.240 --> 00:02:23.820

Tom Leonard: Change board presidents every couple years. And so, Jen Champagne, who was the board president has now moved to Vice President and John has moved to President so John, would you like to say a few words.

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00:02:25.260 --> 00:02:26.790

John Havenstrite: Yeah thank Thank you Dr. Leonard

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00:02:27.660 --> 00:02:29.610

John Havenstrite: First, I'd like to say thank you to the

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00:02:30.240 --> 00:02:31.500

John Havenstrite: To the folks who have

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00:02:32.670 --> 00:02:42.630

John Havenstrite: Logged in this evening I i think that what what you're going to see is going to be interesting and reassuring and and I wanted to take a moment to

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00:02:42.810 --> 00:02:44.820

Tom Leonard: Thank the broader community for

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00:02:45.660 --> 00:02:59.280

John Havenstrite: For it support for for the support that that you have shown to the district. When you pass that penny swap, Dr Leonard going to talk a little bit about how how unusual and how significant that that thought was

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00:03:01.110 --> 00:03:11.670

John Havenstrite: I want to thank you for all the support that you have shown our teachers, there's been a great outpouring of both material aid and emotional support to

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00:03:12.450 --> 00:03:17.250

John Havenstrite: To our teachers, I want to, I want to thank you for continuing to support EEF.

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00:03:18.000 --> 00:03:28.050

John Havenstrite: our PTOs, all the various boosters to Chap club and and all the all the other organizations that support all the other groups of students that we have

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00:03:28.560 --> 00:03:41.790

John Havenstrite: Scattered around various extra and Co curricular activities and one of the thank you for supporting each other. This is, this is an extraordinarily challenging year. It doesn't look like it's going to get much easier anytime soon.

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00:03:43.110 --> 00:03:50.640

John Havenstrite: We have vaccines on the horizon. And I think we're all hopeful, but but we've got some rough waters ahead of

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00:03:50.640 --> 00:03:52.170

John Havenstrite: Us and I want to

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00:03:52.320 --> 00:03:58.710

John Havenstrite: I want to thank you for the support that you have show each other it is that is that sense of collaboration is that

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00:04:00.210 --> 00:04:01.710

John Havenstrite: That makes Eanes

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00:04:02.400 --> 00:04:14.730

John Havenstrite: Special it's a it's it's our it's our secret sauce. We're, we're better together and I am I am so grateful for all the hard work that everybody in this community does

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00:04:15.270 --> 00:04:29.220

John Havenstrite: To support our schools and our teachers and our kids. And lastly, I just like to say Happy Thanksgiving. I hope everybody will have the opportunity to go somewhere and do something fun and log off of social media for a while.

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00:04:30.660 --> 00:04:31.050

John Havenstrite: Thank you.

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00:04:31.980 --> 00:04:41.610

Tom Leonard: Thanks. John I appreciate that. I'm staying off of social media for sure, but, uh, so I did, you know I use this title for this.

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00:04:42.120 --> 00:04:54.300

Tom Leonard: Presentation or latest to get us started a school year like no other. You know, I, I've been in schools for a long time. You can tell by the age and my hair that I've been in schools, a long time and

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00:04:56.190 --> 00:05:07.950

Tom Leonard: There's not been one like this. And it's not just been for Eanes. This is a headline from early in the pandemic and when people were trying to open. And this was a national headlines.

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00:05:08.970 --> 00:05:18.420

Tom Leonard: With reopening looming public schools are struggling to prepare. And it wasn't just obviously it was all over the country, but all over the world.

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00:05:18.780 --> 00:05:28.200

Tom Leonard: But it was also in Texas, just a headline from the Texas Tribune, not necessarily connected us, but we were getting some local papers we were

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00:05:28.740 --> 00:05:39.090

Tom Leonard: Trying to get our kids on the campus, principals were challenged trying to balance class sizes. While, sustaining our learning and you know we had, I think,

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00:05:39.660 --> 00:05:45.540

Tom Leonard: I think my principals once told me it looked like we had like three or four openings. This year we had the opening of virtual

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00:05:46.020 --> 00:05:58.410

Tom Leonard: An august 18 or 19th or something like that, then we had the first group that we had come in and we had September 21 then October 13 and so it seemed like each couple of it was just a different year very different year

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00:05:58.860 --> 00:06:07.500

Tom Leonard: And then recently, we're seeing, you know, some schools across the country are opening and then are closing New York Public Schools just I think close today.

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00:06:09.420 --> 00:06:15.750

Tom Leonard: Many of my colleagues and superintendents, who are my friends in California, Illinois.

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00:06:17.580 --> 00:06:28.830

Tom Leonard: Are devastated that they in California, most of them haven't even opened and in Illinois some of the ones that open, closed, and it's really hard on a community. And you can see in Texas

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00:06:30.750 --> 00:06:39.120

Tom Leonard: school districts are closing for certain number of days. Some are closing, you know, for quite a while and summary even struggling to be at open

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00:06:40.020 --> 00:06:53.040

Tom Leonard: So it's been a year like no other. And it's been a year of trying to solve a lot of puzzles things that we never ever thought about trying to deal with contact tracing, quarantines

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00:06:54.270 --> 00:06:58.110

Tom Leonard: Re-selection processes every grading period, social distancing

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00:06:59.490 --> 00:07:09.810

Tom Leonard: Equitable class sizes, trying to keep things, even when some kids are remote and some are some are in person and teachers are trying to teach in these two modalities, trying to find time for them.

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00:07:10.560 --> 00:07:18.090

Tom Leonard: It's been a challenge for our staff definitely a challenge for our staff and we're working with blended learning and we have

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00:07:18.510 --> 00:07:36.570

Tom Leonard: All kinds of protocols that are connected to COVID 19 trying to keep people safe and keep sustained learning and keep us operational we've had to adapt assessments and adaptive curriculum and there's no doubt it's a challenge engaging students, some students thrive

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00:07:38.010 --> 00:07:43.590

Tom Leonard: In this current environment, but some are really struggling and there's no doubt about that. And some struggle with

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00:07:44.100 --> 00:07:49.620

Tom Leonard: Remote learning and some struggle with some of the protocols in place, even in person learning so

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00:07:50.130 --> 00:08:06.000

Tom Leonard: It had we've had a lot of challenges so tonight. What I really want to do is break this into three parts. I want to spend a little time just saying, what is our current stance. What's going on right now. Where are we, and then I want to move and I want to go to looking forward

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00:08:07.170 --> 00:08:14.220

Tom Leonard: Talk a little bit about what I anticipate happening in the next couple weeks into the next semester. And then finally,

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00:08:14.550 --> 00:08:24.510

Tom Leonard: I want to have some time for some questions and I will be here to answer questions. And again, you can type them in as the presentation goes, but I'm not going to do the questions alone.

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00:08:25.260 --> 00:08:35.790

Tom Leonard: Because I think it's important that you hear from other people, other than myself. We have three principals on this call, obviously, Steve Ramsey from the high school

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00:08:36.480 --> 00:08:48.000

Tom Leonard: And then we have Kathleen and Brad from Hill Country and

from Cedar Creek Molly May is on our chief Support officer. And I don't go anywhere without Jeff Arnett so

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00:08:49.260 --> 00:08:58.470

Tom Leonard: If you're thinking about questions. I may when I'm reading the questions hand off one of them to one of these individuals. If I believe they can answer it better than I

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00:08:59.340 --> 00:09:09.480

Tom Leonard: So let's get started then. And when I think about current status. I want to just talk about a couple things related to that. And those are the things I want to talk about initially

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00:09:10.470 --> 00:09:19.170

Tom Leonard: Enrollment percentages what's going on in our schools in terms of the virus. I'll just a quick look with some pictures a little talking about what's happening in the schools.

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00:09:19.470 --> 00:09:29.310

Tom Leonard: And also talking about some of the Community support some of the testing programs that we put together and some things that you will see coming up in the future. So enrollment percentages.

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00:09:30.360 --> 00:09:37.530

Tom Leonard: Those are. This is where we are and I, there's a lot of numbers on this screen. This is the last time people selected, whether they wanted to be remote

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00:09:37.980 --> 00:09:49.740

Tom Leonard: Or where they want to be in person high level. Right now we're about 60/40 about 40% of the kids in person answer 40% of the kids remote 60% of the kids in person.

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00:09:50.580 --> 00:10:00.990

Tom Leonard: There's no right or wrong certain things work for some kids and their parents certain things work for others. We just want to make it work for whatever those parents choose and hopefully they at the

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00:10:01.290 --> 00:10:22.770

Tom Leonard: Upper level that's a conversation between the parents and the child, but it ranges. If you look for example at the high school,

we're roughly around 50/50 we've got about 52% remote 50 48% just just about 50/50. And if you look at a school like Bridge Point, for example.

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00:10:23.910 --> 00:10:40.230

Tom Leonard: On October 19, 77% in person 23% remote. So we're making it work wherever those percentages go and those percentages could change in the next semester. So we'll talk about that too.

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00:10:41.730 --> 00:10:51.420

Tom Leonard: Next thing I wanted to talk about a little bit as the dashboard. You know, we would love to see absolutely zero positive cases well

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00:10:52.290 --> 00:11:07.860

Tom Leonard: This is a very contagious virus. So, that is not the case. The actual number of cases that we have this week. Wow, this is, this is from a day or so ago, but was at 12 is actually lower than it's been in past weeks we've had numbers higher than that in the past.

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00:11:09.030 --> 00:11:17.820

Tom Leonard: What we're finding and I think this is something that's important to make clear to people, most of our cases, you know,

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00:11:19.620 --> 00:11:32.340

Tom Leonard: Originate not in our schools and why why do I believe that the reason I believe that is in cases where we do have to quarantine. Some kids who were next to a positive case.

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00:11:32.760 --> 00:11:45.870

Tom Leonard: And the vast majority of situations because our protocols are good and because kids are wearing masks and because we're trying to social distance as much as possible, we are not getting spread to those kids in quarantine.

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00:11:46.950 --> 00:11:55.620

Tom Leonard: Now we're following the rules from CDC, which are aligned with TEA, which are aligned with Austin public health. So we are doing the quarantine piece.

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00:11:55.980 --> 00:12:04.590

Tom Leonard: But what we find out. Typically, is that the cases come from social gatherings that are happening outside the school and that are being brought in.

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00:12:05.610 --> 00:12:09.180

Tom Leonard: At one point, last week I think we had

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00:12:10.470 --> 00:12:29.610

Tom Leonard: Maybe off a little bit on the number, but maybe 16 students at the high school who were active cases. And it turned out, only one of those kids was doing was in person academic now some of those kids could have been in person for athletics, but they were remote for their learnings so

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00:12:30.630 --> 00:12:39.630

Tom Leonard: Sometimes you'll see a number and it says in person, but a lot of those kids are not in person in the schools. So this is a dashboard. That's updated daily

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00:12:40.110 --> 00:12:56.670

Tom Leonard: It will not be updated. Once we hit on Monday of next week, we are not in we won't necessarily getting the information. But as soon as thanksgivings over will update it as soon as possible. I also want to just, you know, we typically it's common to have parents and

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00:12:58.440 --> 00:13:08.550

Tom Leonard: Coming into our schools. But this year because of Covid 19 like every school district around we really limited visitors. But I can tell you when I walk into our schools.

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00:13:09.720 --> 00:13:11.400

Tom Leonard: There is a good energy

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00:13:14.100 --> 00:13:25.890

Tom Leonard: Yes, kids are wearing masks and they're doing a great job wearing masks. We're not really having to enforce that in any big way. The kids know what's going on, and even the little kids seem to be fine with it. I've seen such creativity and some of the masks.

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00:13:26.250 --> 00:13:31.350

Tom Leonard: We have plexiglass all over the place. And I'll mentioned

some of the work that rotary did to help make that happen.

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00:13:31.740 --> 00:13:43.290

Tom Leonard: We try to social distance as much as possible. It isn't always possible depending on how many kids are in a class, but we do everything we can to social distance and we're trying to provide technology for our

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00:13:44.220 --> 00:13:53.220

Tom Leonard: Teachers who are trying to that blended method where they have some students remote and we still do have some classes that are fully remote. We are upgrading our gig

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00:13:54.330 --> 00:13:59.700

Tom Leonard: Output significantly from one to six just over on

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00:14:01.590 --> 00:14:11.490

Tom Leonard: Just over the, over Thanksgiving break will actually go six times in terms of our bandwidth in our schools. So we're happy that we're gonna be able to make that happen.

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00:14:13.890 --> 00:14:17.130

Tom Leonard: Next, I just want to talk a little bit about some things and thank the community.

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00:14:17.910 --> 00:14:27.900

Tom Leonard: We do have a wonderful community. And yes, there are times where we don't all agree on everything. But when it comes to kids we get together and we want to make things right.

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00:14:28.680 --> 00:14:36.510

Tom Leonard: We have done some testing. In fact, this evening as might actually, it would be still going on right now we're testing at Valley view

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00:14:37.470 --> 00:14:53.880

Tom Leonard: Elementary. And this was a partnership that we created with Westlake chamber of commerce and family hospital systems. I was on a call last week with some of our community members who wanted to get this up and running and we weren't sure how many people would come

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00:14:55.290 --> 00:14:59.730

Tom Leonard: To know if there would be demand or not, the demand and thank you to Molly May we

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00:15:00.750 --> 00:15:10.710

Tom Leonard: We put it together sent out a flyer and I think it was probably a day or two ago all the spots filled up 400 spots filled up and so

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00:15:11.340 --> 00:15:22.140

Tom Leonard: Thursday was booked and they're finishing that now. And then we also will be doing that on Sunday. And now that we know that there's a demand and we can do it. And we can do a drive through, we will

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00:15:23.850 --> 00:15:26.160

Tom Leonard: We'll look for some other dates to do that in the future.

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00:15:27.720 --> 00:15:36.240

Tom Leonard: This morning, actually we tested TEA gave us 2000 antigen tests. So we have those in house. Those are the tests that

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00:15:37.740 --> 00:15:45.390

Tom Leonard: are about 98% accurate and they take about 15 minutes to get your results and we had a small group of

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00:15:45.750 --> 00:15:55.620

Tom Leonard: Staff go through that in fact I was I was out there. I just want to see how it worked and went through it myself. And wasn't that bad or pretty efficiently.

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00:15:56.100 --> 00:16:04.830

Tom Leonard: We'll get better at it and we plan on we asked for volunteers in the community and Molly May says we will have over 100 people in the community parents who volunteer to help us test.

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00:16:05.160 --> 00:16:14.100

Tom Leonard: And we'll be doing a course for those parents next starting will return from Thanksgiving to get them prepared because there's a few things you need to know how the whole system works.

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00:16:14.460 --> 00:16:19.440

Tom Leonard: And so we hope to have a team to do this. And at some point, this would be voluntary testing

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00:16:19.890 --> 00:16:36.090

Tom Leonard: For staff and students. So if somebody is experiencing symptoms and they want to come in and quickly be tested will be ready to go. And we want to do that as fast as possible because if somebody is ill. We want them to stay home. So we can control the virus as much as possible.

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00:16:38.640 --> 00:16:45.180

Tom Leonard: We're also partnering on December 10 you can mark this data in your calendar. We had a conversation with two

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00:16:45.570 --> 00:17:02.340

Tom Leonard: Doctors from Dell Children's Medical and some of my staff and those doctors will be talking about some things we talked about, even before the pandemic resiliency and social emotional health and trying to, you know, stay focused and stay

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00:17:03.360 --> 00:17:10.890

Tom Leonard: Take care of yourself during a pandemic. And during all the things that we're dealing with right now. It's not an easy time for some people.

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00:17:11.340 --> 00:17:24.930

Tom Leonard: Very difficult for some others seem to be doing okay but we hope this will be a great program. And that'll be December 10 at 6pm you'll get more information on that later. And I have to say thank you for the support we've received

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00:17:25.980 --> 00:17:37.830

Tom Leonard: City of rollingwood you know the cares act money went to the cities and counties didn't come directly to us and rolling would was able to give us \$9,000 Westlake hills \$30,000

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00:17:38.220 --> 00:17:52.770

Tom Leonard: Westlake Rotary, which I don't remember. All they raised donations to you know quite a bit of money so that they could put plexiglass and many of our classrooms and they're still working on that project. If you're interested in

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00:17:53.760 --> 00:18:00.000

Tom Leonard: And contributing and John mentioned, you know, the voter, the tax

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00:18:00.840 --> 00:18:12.150

Tom Leonard: Rate election past 63% voted yes and you know there were 12 voter's that were being done throughout the whole state of Texas, and only five past

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00:18:12.600 --> 00:18:22.770

Tom Leonard: Seven failed and ours passed by the highest second highest percentage and all of Texas, and we see that as a some community support we have now.

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00:18:23.220 --> 00:18:36.150

Tom Leonard: An extra \$3 million, we will not be subject or recapture and that will stay in our district your tax dollars will stay in this district and I will. I just can't thank EEF enough

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00:18:38.610 --> 00:18:51.060

Tom Leonard: You know, every year they give us some money to help keep class sizes reasonable and to support our teachers and our programs. But last year was \$2.5 million. But as we started this year. They knew this year was different.

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00:18:51.990 --> 00:19:02.310

Tom Leonard: And they asked us what do we need and we said, you know, we need some bodies we need more people in there and I need people I can put here are put there if I need it and we're hiring teachers as fast as we can in certain situations. So

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00:19:02.790 --> 00:19:07.200

Tom Leonard: They were willing to find a permanent sub and every single one of our buildings. So that's a person who

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00:19:07.500 --> 00:19:20.550

Tom Leonard: May take five days in a class may take 14 days in the class. If we have a situation where someone goes out in quarantine. We can put them in right away and the relationships are always already there and it's so helpful. So thank you to EEF

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00:19:21.510 --> 00:19:29.490

Tom Leonard: You know, I know they're doing their teacher fund campaign. And I know there'll be other opportunities to get them, if you wish, in the future.

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00:19:30.420 --> 00:19:36.660

Tom Leonard: So that's a little bit of the current status. So I want to get to, looking forward, because everyone wants, where we going next, what's going to happen. I mean, I

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00:19:37.170 --> 00:19:46.800

Tom Leonard: Keep getting rumors, we're closing after Thanksgiving, we're never coming back. Don't believe everything you read on social media, please.

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00:19:47.820 --> 00:19:58.560

Tom Leonard: There are some things we are watching and we were paying attention to. And we'll talk those through. So what we talked about looking forward these other couple ideas. I want to focus on

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00:19:59.700 --> 00:20:14.610

Tom Leonard: County State City today we have a press conference where the governor. We had TEA made some statements Austin public health, the county talked about some things today. So this changes rapidly.

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00:20:15.090 --> 00:20:20.610

Tom Leonard: And I want to talk a little about Scott, some of the adjustments that we're making for our staff and our students. So

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00:20:21.030 --> 00:20:27.990

Tom Leonard: Let's just start off with where we are right now where we've been a little bit where we are. This is a slide we used in August.

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00:20:28.440 --> 00:20:40.050

Tom Leonard: And remember we had just come, we had just come off of our actual we're kind of in the midst of it. The numbers came up in July and in August, the numbers were getting pretty high, and

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00:20:41.100 --> 00:20:49.050

Tom Leonard: We were being told that my last in public health and by the county. We had to start virtual for three weeks, which we did

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00:20:49.860 --> 00:21:04.920

Tom Leonard: But we didn't know you know where the number is going to go down as well. They did come down. Thank goodness that's good for the whole community. Yes. Now they're coming back up. So this slide, saying that we may have waves that come at different times is proving itself to be true.

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00:21:07.230 --> 00:21:15.180

Tom Leonard: And we operate under quite a few guidelines and we've talked about that before. And if you look at our to our R2R website, you can see everything that's there and

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00:21:15.750 --> 00:21:22.170

Tom Leonard: They change a little bit. But for the most part, they've been pretty consistent. And there you know TEA and

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00:21:22.800 --> 00:21:33.690

Tom Leonard: Austin public health and the county Travis County and the city of Austin, they're pretty much all following CDC, as are all the school districts in the state of Texas. So we're all following pretty much the same.

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00:21:34.140 --> 00:21:41.460

Tom Leonard: Guidance and when those guidance change we change. So just want to let you know that that is what's out there and

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00:21:41.970 --> 00:21:53.190

Tom Leonard: Right now we are remote and we are in person, like I said about 40% remote and 60% in person and TEA says the parents can choose

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00:21:54.120 --> 00:21:59.940

Tom Leonard: So parents choose in person we're going to give them in person if they choose remote we're going to give them remote

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00:22:00.750 --> 00:22:04.050

Tom Leonard: Remote is not going away until our parents say they don't want it.

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00:22:04.980 --> 00:22:16.230

Tom Leonard: And right now, they are, what they we have 40% who want

it. I don't know what the next numbers will be. And so I'm just telling people out there who are worried, who may want remote badly

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00:22:17.160 --> 00:22:37.350

Tom Leonard: It's going to be here for a while, at least until we have a vaccine and we're past all this but so these two different worlds likely will continue to coexist. This is a graph, we used a long time ago. You know, we started in the summer, we were fully remote because of

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00:22:38.430 --> 00:22:49.470

Tom Leonard: The order from the county TEA gave us that eight week transition. Some of you knew that we started at 25% to get our protocols in place that was guidance from Austin public health

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00:22:49.800 --> 00:22:57.210

Tom Leonard: We bump that up on September 21 and since September 21 we pretty much have been, what do the parents want

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00:22:57.990 --> 00:23:05.010

Tom Leonard: And we've got 60% in some buildings 50% in some buildings and it's pretty much stayed the same when you

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00:23:05.820 --> 00:23:12.330

Tom Leonard: When you play that forward into the next area. You can see the other weeks, if we went from about 4852

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00:23:12.750 --> 00:23:21.900

Tom Leonard: To 4060. And so that was that the grading period with that change. And I don't know where it will change it. The next grading period because we haven't done the re-selection process yet

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00:23:22.560 --> 00:23:28.500

Tom Leonard: Once I do the ones who put that out there. We will then know and so that is coming

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00:23:29.430 --> 00:23:40.710

Tom Leonard: So when you come back on November 30. This is not timestamp. Do you don't need to get on there and keep hitting Enter, Enter, Enter. You just put in and it's going to be pretty simple again.

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00:23:41.640 --> 00:23:48.000

Tom Leonard: Do you want for the third grading period. Do you want remote, do you want in person.

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00:23:48.450 --> 00:23:57.090

Tom Leonard: And we'll open that up for one week and will open on Monday, November 30 it'll close December on Friday, December 4 and then that gives us

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00:23:57.420 --> 00:24:07.320

Tom Leonard: Two weeks for us to do whatever we might need to do to make any changes if needed between different classes, make sure we got things set. Try to keep the teacher relationships with the kids together.

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00:24:07.800 --> 00:24:17.370

Tom Leonard: And everyone will know what's going on, as we're going into winter break and then when we come back we'll be ready in that third quarter. So this will be happening on November 30

140

00:24:19.650 --> 00:24:22.740

Tom Leonard: But I want to make something extremely clear

141

00:24:24.060 --> 00:24:26.100

Tom Leonard: Our primary objective.

142

00:24:27.930 --> 00:24:32.460

Tom Leonard: My primary objective is to stay open.

143

00:24:35.760 --> 00:24:37.410

Tom Leonard: I want to stay open.

144

00:24:38.640 --> 00:24:53.160

Tom Leonard: We can do this. I really do believe we can do this. Yes, it's not perfect. Yes, we have quarantines yes, some people are getting the virus. I get that. But even if we were fully remote, there's a chance. Some people will get the buyers.

145

00:24:54.570 --> 00:25:04.140

Tom Leonard: But we need to do everything we can do and work as a

community to stay open because that's good for kids. And it's good for my staff and it's good for the community.

146

00:25:04.710 --> 00:25:17.190

Tom Leonard: So there are some adjustments we are making and we gave a survey to our staff and I'm not going to read all these questions. But, you know, how are they doing, and said to get some stress and

147

00:25:17.790 --> 00:25:26.940

Tom Leonard: One theme kept coming through and every question we asked, what would be the thing we can give to you. If there's one thing we could give to you, what would it be and it was additional time

148

00:25:27.690 --> 00:25:39.840

Tom Leonard: We need time whether it's for self care or whether it is for to get prepared for their lessons or whatever it might be, they're living in a whole nother world doing their job in a whole different way and they need time

149

00:25:40.710 --> 00:25:56.280

Tom Leonard: And so the trustees directed me to see what we could do. And what I did was I directed Dr Arnett to see what we could do, and I'm going to bring Dr our net on if that's okay. And Jeff, if you can

150

00:25:57.810 --> 00:26:05.340

Tom Leonard: walk them through what we worked with, with the district leadership team. And then how that then played with the board vote on Tuesday night.

151

00:26:06.330 --> 00:26:16.890

Jeff Arnett: Sure. Thanks Dr. Leonard each year. The district leadership team is responsible for developing our academic calendar and they then make that recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

152

00:26:17.250 --> 00:26:25.920

Jeff Arnett: So it has to go back to the district leadership team if we make any adjustments to the calendar and the board as Dr. Leonard said asked the DLT to

153

00:26:26.280 --> 00:26:36.360

Jeff Arnett: Take this up as a project and see if we might be able to

find time for our staff and our students, which will point out in just a moment. So Dr. Leonard, if you look at the next slide.

154

00:26:37.110 --> 00:26:42.330

Jeff Arnett: This talks about the concept that the district leadership team came up with and they

155

00:26:42.930 --> 00:26:53.310

Jeff Arnett: Would consider these breaks or our teachers and for our staff, we're going to be adding eight early release days to our calendar, beginning in December.

156

00:26:53.700 --> 00:27:02.400

Jeff Arnett: Most of these are going to be blocks of back to back early release days, two consecutive early release days on occasional Wednesdays and Thursdays.

157

00:27:02.760 --> 00:27:14.700

Jeff Arnett: But the whole purpose of these is not to give teachers and staff time off, but rather to give them time for their own mental health time when they can manage their classroom projects and responsibilities.

158

00:27:15.360 --> 00:27:25.380

Jeff Arnett: Their own schedules and plan for the next day or the upcoming weeks in our classroom. This is what the current calendar looks like as we go to the next slide.

159

00:27:26.070 --> 00:27:34.860

Jeff Arnett: This shows you where we have some early release days that were built into the current calendar, you'll see one of those right now on December the 18th

160

00:27:35.280 --> 00:27:46.080

Jeff Arnett: That's the traditional final day of the semester before everybody goes away for the winter vacation. There's a similar one on May the 26th at the end of the year before everybody goes into summer vacation.

161

00:27:46.500 --> 00:27:57.030

Jeff Arnett: Then we had a couple of other other early release days in March and April, but now the next calendar will show you what the

eight additional early release days will look like when we layer these in

162

00:27:57.480 --> 00:28:06.690

Jeff Arnett: So we're going to introduce one of these as a kind of standalone pilot on December the 10th that's going to be valuable to our teachers and our principals, because

163

00:28:07.140 --> 00:28:13.920

Jeff Arnett: We will have just completed the selection process that Dr. Leonard talked about a moment ago that will give our staff, the time when they can

164

00:28:14.160 --> 00:28:22.110

Jeff Arnett: See the results of that and plan for what their class lists will look like, who will be remote who will be in person when students return in January.

165

00:28:22.560 --> 00:28:32.850

Jeff Arnett: But then in February, March, April and May. You'll notice those kind of pink right triangle boxes, back to back on consecutive days. Those are the thought breaks

166

00:28:33.300 --> 00:28:40.830

Jeff Arnett: And those two consecutive days are strategically placed rather than doing random early release days throughout the month.

167

00:28:41.220 --> 00:28:54.540

Jeff Arnett: We know those are challenging for parents. And so we wanted to give you two consecutive days for the benefit of staff and students but also for parents so that you can plan ahead and these are already published on our calendar.

168

00:28:55.230 --> 00:29:00.720

Jeff Arnett: So the next slide talks about the benefits of doing the back to back early release days.

169

00:29:01.110 --> 00:29:10.590

Jeff Arnett: And those single early release days, as I said, if you just kind of sporadically place those through the calendar that interrupts instruction, you had these fragmented weeks.

170

00:29:11.100 --> 00:29:17.370

Jeff Arnett: And the district leadership team felt very strongly about preserving the quantity and the quality of instructional time

171

00:29:17.880 --> 00:29:22.650

Jeff Arnett: So two early release days on consecutive days create these thought blocks.

172

00:29:23.340 --> 00:29:32.580

Jeff Arnett: Where you can deliver instruction in longer concentrated blocks of time because on a typical early release day you have a compressed schedule the

173

00:29:33.000 --> 00:29:41.430

Jeff Arnett: Class periods at the middle schools and the high school or shorter teachers at the elementary level have less time to devote to students on an early release day

174

00:29:41.910 --> 00:29:47.010

Jeff Arnett: So the benefit of this for example would be that, let's say in the middle schools in the high school

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00:29:47.460 --> 00:29:54.810

Jeff Arnett: A teacher or students could have periods, one through four on the first early release day and then the very next day.

176

00:29:55.410 --> 00:30:01.710

Jeff Arnett: The students and teachers would return for periods five through eight so you're able to keep those days back to back.

177

00:30:02.430 --> 00:30:12.570

Jeff Arnett: And really have a focus on quality instructional time, even at the elementary level. If you have a child in Spanish immersion, for example, that would allow the English teacher to teach on the first day.

178

00:30:13.020 --> 00:30:22.830

Jeff Arnett: And then the Spanish teacher to teach on the second day and vice versa, or in grades four and five, where we have departmentalized subjects like math and science and social studies and language arts

179

00:30:23.370 --> 00:30:33.810

Jeff Arnett: They can have some subjects on the first day and then flip in the block on the second day and have the other subjects, back to back. So it preserves that continuity of instruction.

180

00:30:34.200 --> 00:30:40.770

Jeff Arnett: So that's what we're trying to achieve here and that's why we wanted to be thoughtful in the way we scheduled the early release days.

181

00:30:41.220 --> 00:30:54.240

Jeff Arnett: The next slide talks about the benefits for teachers. So for our staff, we wanted to provide these thought breaks for their mental health, give them time to manage their schedule and plan. It's not time off.

182

00:30:54.630 --> 00:30:58.920

Jeff Arnett: They're still going to be in the buildings working and planning, on behalf of the students

183

00:30:59.340 --> 00:31:05.730

Jeff Arnett: But for the students themselves. There's also a benefit because we think what is good for our teachers and for our staff.

184

00:31:06.090 --> 00:31:15.270

Jeff Arnett: Can be good for students to and they also need a little bit of a mental health break as well. Finally, for parents because we know that's who's primarily on tonight's webinar.

185

00:31:15.810 --> 00:31:23.940

Jeff Arnett: We understand that early release days are not always convenient. We know that childcare, especially if you have younger children can be a challenge.

186

00:31:24.450 --> 00:31:30.330

Jeff Arnett: So if your child is currently in one of our child care programs, whether it be easy care or CDC.

187

00:31:30.750 --> 00:31:37.050

Jeff Arnett: those options are still there for you, even on these

early release days we're making accommodations for children of our staff.

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00:31:37.380 --> 00:31:45.990

Jeff Arnett: We're also trying to work with some partners in the community so that they might be able to provide childcare on those early release days and get more options to families.

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00:31:46.470 --> 00:31:58.980

Jeff Arnett: And for families that depend on lunch. While there won't be meal service on those days, we are going to create a grab and go lunch option for children so that even as they're on their way out the door to the bus or to get in car with mom and dad.

190

00:31:59.280 --> 00:32:09.690

Jeff Arnett: Or whoever their caregiver might be that day, they can grab a lunch and still have a meal provided for them on those early release days. So the first one is coming up on December the 10th.

191

00:32:10.260 --> 00:32:22.530

Jeff Arnett: And we're going to try this. This year we think it'll be a great way for our staff to decompress as well as our students to benefit from a little bit of extra time off, because we know that it's been a really hard and challenging semester.

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00:32:22.890 --> 00:32:29.070

Jeff Arnett: And school year and we want to give them that time that we've heard that they so desperately need. Dr. Leonard.

193

00:32:29.700 --> 00:32:31.920

Tom Leonard: And speaking of decompressing

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00:32:33.600 --> 00:32:45.480

Tom Leonard: We are closed. Next week, and I mentioned to my staff yesterday. And then I got a bunch of emails from them saying, Please say this to the parents too

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00:32:46.320 --> 00:32:57.510

Tom Leonard: I told my staff get away from the computer screens and possible for one week just get away from them. You don't have to answer email every single day during a Thanksgiving break

196

00:32:57.870 --> 00:33:03.300

Tom Leonard: In fact, if somebody emails you. You can even email them and say, Dr. Leonard said I can't answer email but

197

00:33:04.200 --> 00:33:13.800

Tom Leonard: sort of joking, but we really want it to be a break for our staff. We also want to be a break for our kids and want to be a break for the parents and for the whole community.

198

00:33:14.670 --> 00:33:19.860

Tom Leonard: Take that time time off, is how you take care of yourself. Once in a while so

199

00:33:20.310 --> 00:33:29.700

Tom Leonard: Yes, this John Havenstrite said earlier, stay off social media, it will be okay or just do social media light and try to do things that are positive.

200

00:33:30.150 --> 00:33:46.020

Tom Leonard: So I want to mention that. Now we're going to go into questions in a second. And so we're about right at that we go about to about 35 minutes of a presentation but there have been a couple things that have developed recently and I think it is important that I talked about them.

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00:33:48.120 --> 00:33:54.990

Tom Leonard: Many of you may know, if you don't know every Monday afternoon I'm on a call with several superintendents in the area.

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00:33:55.650 --> 00:34:05.520

Tom Leonard: And we are meeting also with officials from Austin public health from the county and from the city and city of Austin and Travis County.

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00:34:05.970 --> 00:34:13.380

Tom Leonard: And we get a report from Dr. Escott, he tells us what's going on with the numbers and he tells us what's going on in the community.

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00:34:13.860 --> 00:34:23.790

Tom Leonard: We also talked to him periodically when something's

happening in our schools and you know he did tell us numbers were going up our numbers are nowhere near like El Paso.

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00:34:25.350 --> 00:34:27.690

Tom Leonard: Thank goodness, where the numbers are really

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00:34:29.250 --> 00:34:35.700

Tom Leonard: Significant. In fact, when you look at Dallas, Houston, El Paso, Amarillo

207

00:34:36.300 --> 00:34:45.180

Tom Leonard: Our numbers are actually much lower. But what has happened is they are reallocating some of the medical personnel in Austin to some of those areas.

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00:34:45.780 --> 00:34:57.090

Tom Leonard: In addition, they are bringing patients and from some of those areas to Austin, because we have room and that has the potential if our numbers keep going up of stressing our system.

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00:34:57.690 --> 00:35:09.870

Tom Leonard: Dr. Escott's, the one who makes the call and they have moved us into phase four. And here's where people start getting a little confused if you're not watching it carefully, and what the rules are

210

00:35:10.530 --> 00:35:22.290

Tom Leonard: Back way back when, in August. We had these stages and it said, this happens here. This happens here. You may remember it in stage four, we could only be 25% and in stage three, we could only be 50%

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00:35:22.980 --> 00:35:31.530

Tom Leonard: Remember that was in that first eight weeks period of time. Once we got past that we were past TEAs window and that went out.

212

00:35:32.220 --> 00:35:39.150

Tom Leonard: We're now in a situation from this point forward with the parents that they want in there in if they want remote their remote

213

00:35:39.690 --> 00:35:48.630

Tom Leonard: And we're not at stage four going to 25% so we will stay at the percentages that we are at now and in the

214

00:35:49.560 --> 00:36:05.610

Tom Leonard: recommendations that came out from Austin public health, they did not tell us to go back to 25% even though they are going into stage four it does not save it. In addition, sometimes people ask about athletics. Our athletics will keep going.

215

00:36:06.870 --> 00:36:17.730

Tom Leonard: They still are restricting the percentage of people, we can have who view the games will keep it the current numbers that were out at right now in terms of what we've been doing thus far. So that will keep going.

216

00:36:18.330 --> 00:36:30.960

Tom Leonard: But it is everything I have in front of me now on Monday after Thanksgiving. We'll be back with the same number of kids in person and the same number of kids remote that we had today.

217

00:36:31.320 --> 00:36:43.530

Tom Leonard: And then once we get into that re selection process those percentages may change. Now, Yes, the governor could do this, the governor could do that. Remember in March. He made us all go remote

218

00:36:44.190 --> 00:36:51.570

Tom Leonard: He stated today that that was not his intent. I have to take him at his word. So right now we will not be going all remote on

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00:36:52.950 --> 00:36:53.730

Tom Leonard: In the near future.

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00:36:54.750 --> 00:37:10.560

Tom Leonard: So I just wanted to make sure I least mentioned that, because I know that's on a lot of people's minds. So as I go into the questions, again, these are some of the people who are going to be helping me and I'm going to really get away from this screen.

221

00:37:12.000 --> 00:37:22.560

Tom Leonard: And let many faces be seen for a second here. Okay, I think I got that. And I'm going to ask my principals to show their

faces and

222

00:37:23.910 --> 00:37:27.810

Tom Leonard: I'd like Molly May if you can kind of come in and

223

00:37:29.430 --> 00:37:30.600

Tom Leonard: Help me out here a little bit.

224

00:37:32.250 --> 00:37:38.910

Tom Leonard: And Jeff, you can even show your camera, if you don't mind. Okay, so here we go. I have seen several

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00:37:39.930 --> 00:37:45.960

Tom Leonard: questions come in one question. It says, can you can you share the PowerPoint. Yes.

226

00:37:48.060 --> 00:37:59.730

Tom Leonard: Claudia tells me that our communications director tells me we record the presentation and we'll post it online tomorrow. So if you missed it, or you want to link you can go show it to somebody and

227

00:38:01.380 --> 00:38:09.000

Tom Leonard: If they weren't able to be here tonight. That's fine. We'll also she says post a link on social media. So both of those things will happen. Okay.

228

00:38:10.800 --> 00:38:18.090

Tom Leonard: There's a couple questions related to quarantine and related to the dashboard. I think I'm going to start

229

00:38:18.660 --> 00:38:30.390

Tom Leonard: Jeff Arnett. I know you were Jeff and Molly You both work a little bit with our team working on that dashboard. Let's start kind of global. And then there's a question specifically connected to the high school so

230

00:38:32.160 --> 00:38:42.810

Tom Leonard: Jeff. The question is in the future. Can we get the current number of students quarantine per campus on the dashboard. Can you you know we've talked about that multiple times in

231

00:38:44.820 --> 00:38:46.710

Tom Leonard: Please share where we landed.

232

00:38:47.040 --> 00:38:55.830

Jeff Arnett: Yeah, that's a continual topic of conversation if not debate internally. If you look at a lot of school districts that have similar dashboards.

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00:38:56.490 --> 00:39:05.070

Jeff Arnett: The vast majority of them do not report that number. There are a handful that do, but we're one of the districts that has chosen not to report it. And there are

234

00:39:05.880 --> 00:39:19.560

Jeff Arnett: Various reasons for that. We're not hiding anything we really do want to be transparent, but people are naturally curious about how many students are affected or in quarantine maybe an isolation because of some of the positive cases.

235

00:39:20.100 --> 00:39:25.230

Jeff Arnett: And the reason why we don't post it is because that number is larger. As you would imagine.

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00:39:25.590 --> 00:39:32.280

Jeff Arnett: If you have a student and you do the contact tracing because that student is positive, there may be a handful. There may be several students

237

00:39:32.700 --> 00:39:41.280

Jeff Arnett: Who are affected, and then have to go into quarantine and that's according to CDC guidelines that 14 day quarantine is not something that we made up.

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00:39:41.760 --> 00:39:46.290

Jeff Arnett: That's something that is prescribed by the CDC and other agencies and we want to adhere to that.

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00:39:46.680 --> 00:39:55.920

Jeff Arnett: But most of the quarantines if you look at them are students who are healthy. It's the positive cases those students who are actually ill or affected with the virus.

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00:39:56.250 --> 00:39:59.940

Jeff Arnett: Those are the ones that we want to focus on and report on our website.

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00:40:00.420 --> 00:40:08.130

Jeff Arnett: The vast majority of students who go into quarantine. They come back out of quarantine, and they never contract the virus. They're there as a precaution.

242

00:40:08.400 --> 00:40:19.470

Jeff Arnett: It's a safety measure to protect them and to potentially protect other students. So yes, it's an inconvenience to those students because they're not in school. It's an it's an inconvenience to teachers.

243

00:40:20.010 --> 00:40:25.980

Jeff Arnett: But we know that they're going to return to us at some point, and they're going to return healthy so we don't focus on the number in quarantine.

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00:40:26.370 --> 00:40:37.290

Jeff Arnett: That's also a number that changes literally every day, sometimes even every hour, you've got students who are moving in and out of quarantine, depending upon when close or contact tracing occurred.

245

00:40:37.890 --> 00:40:49.320

Jeff Arnett: And it becomes very difficult to track and trace that number of students and to provide an accurate number on our website. And we know that accuracy is very important to our community.

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00:40:49.620 --> 00:41:01.080

Jeff Arnett: We can be assured of the accuracy of the positive cases, but that number of quarantines is changing constantly and we want that website to be as up to date as possible which we maintain on a daily basis.

247

00:41:01.680 --> 00:41:17.550

Jeff Arnett: And finally, many of the quarantines are unrelated to a positive case of school. It may be a relative that may be another friend outside of school. And that's why they're in quarantine. So not

all of those students who are in quarantine are there because of a positive case in our schools.

248

00:41:18.090 --> 00:41:23.430

Tom Leonard: And we did, we are having some conversations on our communication when we send things out.

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00:41:23.820 --> 00:41:30.360

Tom Leonard: In terms of our letters and communicate, most of that has been copied from TEAs guidelines in terms of how we should be communicating

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00:41:30.810 --> 00:41:41.280

Tom Leonard: But we have had some seeds to give suggestions from the community that we plan on looking at as soon as we get back from break. Steve, I'm going to get to you, you want to share, Steve. The question.

251

00:41:42.510 --> 00:41:45.030

Tom Leonard: Connected. Another question kind of connected to this.

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00:41:47.880 --> 00:41:57.930

Tom Leonard: So over time, we've had quite, you know, we don't have a lot of cases, we have about 12 cases. I think at the high school, a couple days ago, there were active cases of COVID

253

00:41:58.800 --> 00:42:04.320

Tom Leonard: But if you add it up over time from when we first started first started, it's it's it's north of 50

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00:42:05.160 --> 00:42:17.700

Tom Leonard: And so the question is when you have those cases. How many roughly what does that mean when you get a case. How many kids are quarantined and I know it varies, but I want you to I want them to hear your voice in terms of explaining that and not mine.

255

00:42:18.750 --> 00:42:24.810

Steven Ramsey: So the word there is definitely varies. It's a we get asked by staff by students by parents like

256

00:42:25.320 --> 00:42:34.680

Steven Ramsey: From one case, what's the average. Well, that's pretty difficult and even changes with levels. I know I talked to Mrs Sullivan and Miss Carter a lot and they have more kids on campus and

257

00:42:35.100 --> 00:42:44.550

Steven Ramsey: Then the high school so their numbers may actually be a little bit higher per average when it comes to quarantine. But the high school, depending on what program, it is and if they are remote or in person.

258

00:42:45.780 --> 00:42:54.570

Steven Ramsey: And depending what the directors and coaches have done with their ability to space out and in each and every classroom, we've had, you know, I'd say around 400 quarantines it's about that.

259

00:42:55.080 --> 00:43:11.910

Steven Ramsey: High was about 66-68 cases. Some students may quarantine unfortunately, you know, 35-40 some students will have zero quarantines attached to them and to kind of go along with Dr. Our next point. Sometimes I can get real difficult to explain on a tracker.

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00:43:13.260 --> 00:43:18.990

Steven Ramsey: And then each case is very, very, very independent and one thing we've noticed with our staff.

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00:43:20.190 --> 00:43:28.050

Steven Ramsey: You know, working with them when they see a number like 8 on a sheet or four on a sheet is one thing I would say is our communities we feel is being very honest.

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00:43:29.340 --> 00:43:37.710

Steven Ramsey: They're being very upfront about what's going on. And we have some fantastic kids a lot of the kids who tested positive or asymptomatic, who were involved with different kids.

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00:43:38.100 --> 00:43:42.990

Steven Ramsey: Either on campus, mainly off campus and felt like for the, you know, for the health of their family

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00:43:43.410 --> 00:43:51.210

Steven Ramsey: I need to go get tested as well. And so there's a story behind each and every one. I think that's where it gets difficult. I

looked at Southlake Carol's

265

00:43:51.480 --> 00:43:58.290

Steven Ramsey: Over the weekend, and they try to explain each one and it gets very jumbled up rather quickly. And they all kind of read the same after a while.

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00:43:58.920 --> 00:44:06.510

Steven Ramsey: But, you know, there's all kinds of reasons why kids going to quarantine. We have had students in quarantine who have tested positive who were

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00:44:07.080 --> 00:44:20.880

Steven Ramsey: Involved with some of the students who were positive outside of campus. And, you know, Halloween, with Homecoming different things we kind of saw an uptick there for about seven or eight days that seemed like we were sending you know pretty large numbers out each and every day.

268

00:44:22.080 --> 00:44:27.840

Steven Ramsey: And so that's just kind of expected and it's very difficult because we don't know when we go into classrooms. How many students

269

00:44:28.170 --> 00:44:43.050

Steven Ramsey: May be quarantined or not. And remarkably enough as you guys know, as parents, kids who are in classes together sit by their friends. They sit at lunch with their friends. They're usually involved in the same activity with their friends. And so we had a group of kids in the same grade.

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00:44:44.520 --> 00:44:54.030

Steven Ramsey: Earlier in September, we went in a quarantine and because they had done a lot of things and sports outside of our campus as well as socially.

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00:44:54.540 --> 00:44:58.710

Steven Ramsey: They tested positive and quarantine and we didn't have any more students so

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00:44:58.950 --> 00:45:09.240

Steven Ramsey: It gets a little and I'm rambling, a little bit here,

but it's very if you wanted to, you could sit down and each and every case we have students who tested positive because the siblings who came from, from college for labor day weekend.

273

00:45:09.810 --> 00:45:19.680

Steven Ramsey: We have students who test positive because their parents test positive first. And one thing we tried to do. And I think the community has been very good about this. And one thing we stress the high school all the time is

274

00:45:20.430 --> 00:45:32.760

Steven Ramsey: It's a virus. People get viruses and we've tried to alleviate any kind of shame attached to that. And we've actually when we go into rooms, you'll see the assistant principals go in there with homemade six foot sticks.

275

00:45:33.150 --> 00:45:39.510

Steven Ramsey: That kids understand this is a process, they understand that this is how life is. It actually sometimes gets kind of

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00:45:40.200 --> 00:45:44.790

Steven Ramsey: Turbulent a little dependent what's going on with kids lives outside when they do get quarantined.

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00:45:45.390 --> 00:45:51.330

Steven Ramsey: But we feel like it's a pretty good process. It's very fair. And most of the time it's done right there in front of everybody.

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00:45:51.660 --> 00:45:58.500

Steven Ramsey: And so it's not like we go measure things at 11:05 in the PM, to see how many students, we could not have come back to the high school

279

00:45:58.860 --> 00:46:13.470

Steven Ramsey: As I said way back when, in August. They give us time to get it going. And once we get it going. Let's get this thing going all the way through the year. So that's kind of where we're at with things. But it's a it's an amazing thing and that each one is its own individual case so

280

00:46:13.770 --> 00:46:26.550

Tom Leonard: And you know Steve and I'll talk in general to mornings ago at about five in the morning. I got a tick. I got a text from the Liberty Hill Superintendent who told me he was shutting down as middle school.

281

00:46:27.390 --> 00:46:35.160

Tom Leonard: And in the text that said, I've got 50 active cases in the school and they were spread was in the school and he had three 400

282

00:46:35.610 --> 00:46:44.280

Tom Leonard: Quarantine so he just felt he needed to pull back, you know, we've been in Scituate and then new Stony Point, you've got asked and highest taken off a couple of days.

283

00:46:45.270 --> 00:46:54.360

Tom Leonard: You know, to claim, but they're coming back and we're actually playing them tomorrow night and football. They've been practicing while that's been going on. Football. Interesting.

284

00:46:55.410 --> 00:47:01.860

Tom Leonard: You know we wheel each of these cases, the superintendent's are looking to their staff to their principals, having conversations

285

00:47:02.070 --> 00:47:12.060

Tom Leonard: having conversations with Austin, public health, some of you know there was a point during the year were awesome public health was concerned about some cases on our varsity they asked us to

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00:47:12.450 --> 00:47:27.630

Tom Leonard: They requested that we take a one week pause, which we did. Now, interestingly enough, we have roughly 90 kids who are on the freshman football team 90 kids on the freshman football team. They didn't practice for a week because we honor that request.

287

00:47:29.280 --> 00:47:31.950

Tom Leonard: We had zero kids at the beginning of that week

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00:47:33.090 --> 00:47:35.460

Tom Leonard: On that team that had Covid 19

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00:47:37.830 --> 00:47:44.910

Tom Leonard: At the end of the week when we test fit we have zero kids on that team that had covid 19 but they were out for a week and so

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00:47:45.090 --> 00:47:52.590

Tom Leonard: These numbers when you start reporting them in different ways can be very misleading. Now, we did have some cases on the varsity we did have some cases on the JV

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00:47:53.520 --> 00:48:03.150

Tom Leonard: But we got back up and running. And that's always our goal. We want to keep kids in school. And if we do have to quarantine kids. We want to support them while they're in remote

292

00:48:03.450 --> 00:48:14.700

Tom Leonard: And get them back if they want to be in person as soon as possible. I will say one other thing to this, you know, there's a question here. When would I close a campus one what I propose a grade level when when I do that.

293

00:48:15.300 --> 00:48:19.620

Tom Leonard: It's the same thing. I've said for quite a while. And I'll say it one more time.

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00:48:21.570 --> 00:48:31.470

Tom Leonard: If we were under the governor says you are closing and going remote all schools in Texas, like that was said in March. Yes, I'll probably go remote

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00:48:31.830 --> 00:48:43.680

Tom Leonard: Because if the governor tells us to do that. He's the he's the legal authority, we would go remote. I don't think that's happening. The other thing I've said is I would close a school if

296

00:48:45.240 --> 00:48:53.100

Tom Leonard: I didn't have enough staff to man that school due to quarantines or due to the virus spread among the staff.

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00:48:55.230 --> 00:49:07.200

Tom Leonard: To keep the school safe with the kids in person or to effectively teach the kids in person. So if I didn't have the staff in the building to do it. I would have to close for a period of time.

298

00:49:07.440 --> 00:49:15.870

Tom Leonard: And you're seeing that happen del Valle a high school is closed for two weeks. I'm trying to think of a couple others but you have seen that happen.

299

00:49:16.380 --> 00:49:26.850

Tom Leonard: Our protocols are good and we have not had to do that. And I don't think we will have to do that. I'm hoping we never have to do it. Interestingly enough, TEA today.

300

00:49:27.300 --> 00:49:39.330

Tom Leonard: Said, one of the reasons you can close as if you can't get enough staff, I said that months ago. If you don't have enough staff to safely monitor all the kids, then yes, close for 14 days.

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00:49:39.810 --> 00:49:56.910

Tom Leonard: But again, we do not want to do that. And that's not our intent. And if you work with us if we keep with the mass we're careful out in the community. I think we can keep this thing going. I really do. Um, I'm going to look at another question.

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00:49:59.490 --> 00:50:02.040

Tom Leonard: Will district parents traveling

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00:50:03.180 --> 00:50:04.770

Tom Leonard: Remote for a week.

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00:50:07.740 --> 00:50:22.530

Tom Leonard: Or will they have to. Will they have to stay remote when they get back after the holiday. The answer is that conversation. And that was what a lot of states were saying, and a lot of schools are saying, way back at the very beginning of all this. That's not the situation right now

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00:50:24.330 --> 00:50:40.260

Tom Leonard: We want you to be smart, you know, if you've been in contact with someone who has covid, please don't come to school. Tell us self quarantine. If you have any doubts, get a test, please get a test. But the reality is

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00:50:41.460 --> 00:50:47.550

Tom Leonard: You could go to San Antonio and get the virus, you could stay in Austin and get the virus, you could

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00:50:48.480 --> 00:50:57.930

Tom Leonard: You want to limit the travel as much as possible, where a mask, wash your hands do all the things that they're telling you to do. Avoid large social gatherings, but

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00:50:58.530 --> 00:51:09.960

Tom Leonard: Right now there is no requirement that you would stay remote if you're out. We don't know where everyone is going. We just it's impossible for us to monitor that completely um

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00:51:12.330 --> 00:51:20.370

Tom Leonard: Why do you expect all the teachers to come back in person, um, right now we take take each teacher situation

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00:51:21.570 --> 00:51:39.480

Tom Leonard: on a case by case basis, and some of them have significant medical concerns and they really should remain remote. And so as the numbers change as the selection process changes our principals navigate that. And we make adjustments, where we believe those adjustments are necessary.

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00:51:41.100 --> 00:51:45.510

Tom Leonard: Steve one for you. Will there be any changes to finals at the high school

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00:51:46.650 --> 00:51:54.330

Steven Ramsey: The one change that we did make is, we went ahead and branded one more exemption and the fall. So instead of having to opportunities to be exempt from exam, we

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00:51:54.330 --> 00:51:56.040

Steven Ramsey: Did want that to three.

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00:51:57.750 --> 00:51:58.470

Steven Ramsey: Felt like

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00:51:59.250 --> 00:52:14.490

Steven Ramsey: Just from I'm in a consortium group of folks around Central Texas principals. And I think the one thing that I gathered from that group going back to our teachers department chairs. We had a talk, was it. Our kids are doing an amazing job of showing up either in person or on zoom

316

00:52:16.740 --> 00:52:18.330

Steven Ramsey: We're doing a great job with attendance.

317

00:52:18.630 --> 00:52:20.250

Steven Ramsey: And we have some kids that are flourishing on

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00:52:20.250 --> 00:52:20.820

Steven Ramsey: Campus.

319

00:52:20.850 --> 00:52:22.200

Tom Leonard: Flourishing off campus.

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00:52:22.470 --> 00:52:23.160

Steven Ramsey: And we wanted to

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00:52:23.190 --> 00:52:25.020

Tom Leonard: respect those kids work.

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00:52:25.380 --> 00:52:33.840

Steven Ramsey: As much as possible. I still having exams like giving the students ability to exempt from one more exam, which for us. Doesn't sound like a whole lot, but when I made that

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00:52:33.840 --> 00:52:35.010

Steven Ramsey: Announcement there was a lot of happy.

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00:52:35.010 --> 00:52:35.610

Steven Ramsey: Kids in

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00:52:35.670 --> 00:52:40.560

Steven Ramsey: The zoom world as it gets called, and also in the building. So in the teachers were pretty happy to. So

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00:52:41.250 --> 00:52:51.330

Steven Ramsey: They'll pretty good. And we've kind of told teachers to hopefully that's an opportunity to benefit a student as opposed to be in that punitive when it comes to the final exam. So we're moving forward with that.

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00:52:52.200 --> 00:52:57.090

Tom Leonard: So we're going to wrap up on a little bit, but I want to hear a couple more voices and then I'll finish this up and

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00:52:57.360 --> 00:53:12.030

Tom Leonard: There's still a couple of questions. I haven't completely got into the. Remember, you can always email those questions and there is that frequently asked and will work as hard as we can get those answered. Molly May. I'm gonna, I'm gonna give you, I'm gonna let you unmute your

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00:53:13.440 --> 00:53:23.700

Tom Leonard: First of all, there are teachers deserve metals are principals deserve metals, they really do our custodians our bus drivers cooks everybody Molly May deserves a metal

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00:53:26.490 --> 00:53:31.800

Tom Leonard: She was out there early this morning with her hand me that Q tip and

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00:53:32.940 --> 00:53:43.200

Tom Leonard: We made it through Molly, but you've done a lot with this and I know you you know you oversee student services, but you've been in terms of special ed and that's a vulnerable population.

332

00:53:43.500 --> 00:53:48.270

Tom Leonard: I'm just giving you a minute or so to say whatever you think you'd like to say that might be of help.

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00:53:49.170 --> 00:53:58.140

Molly May: Thank you, Dr. Leonard, I just really want to thank the community. It's, it's, you know, definitely being it's been a trying time and I know as Dr. Leonard alluded to.

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00:53:58.380 --> 00:54:02.490

Molly May: You know, most of my work previously in the district had

been with special education.

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00:54:02.850 --> 00:54:14.430

Molly May: And I know that there are a lot of tough decisions that all parents have to make. But some of our students know with really significant disabilities and those with health conditions, they've had to make make some hard choices.

336

00:54:14.880 --> 00:54:24.660

Molly May: And we've also struggled. You know, it's not just Eanes ISD, but getting our staff in place this year. And we've had, you know, less opportunities.

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00:54:25.020 --> 00:54:34.350

Molly May: to hire staff. We've had some you know retirements and some resignations that our staff are working so hard for our students and the community has been very supportive.

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00:54:34.650 --> 00:54:45.750

Molly May: And I will tell you, I am so proud of our students. There was a lot of discussion about them being able to come in and how are they going to deal with, you know, social distancing and wearing masks and

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00:54:46.230 --> 00:54:52.770

Molly May: Our parents did a fabulous job getting these kids ready. This is what it's going to look like. Here's how you can practice wearing a mask so

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00:54:53.100 --> 00:54:59.700

Molly May: It these times are very challenging. And I don't want to diminish that in the work is very, very hard.

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00:55:00.570 --> 00:55:11.640

Molly May: But the Community's been very supportive and we appreciate that and we will continue to work on our safety protocols and, you know, try to keep everybody safe as possible and keep school open

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00:55:12.300 --> 00:55:15.300

Tom Leonard: Yeah, Molly. Be sure you take a thought break for yourself.

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00:55:16.740 --> 00:55:35.070

Molly May: Oh, I will. I will be remiss if I do not do a shout out to the nurses because they have worked tirelessly all summer, all year, every day or every day. This year, making sure that kids are safe and protocols are followed, so thank you also to our nurses

344

00:55:35.730 --> 00:55:45.150

Tom Leonard: great and uh Brad. I think it was. I can't remember when I called you, Brad. I said, You're coming out of retirement and you said, No, I'm not. I said, You're coming out of retirement. I need a

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00:55:45.540 --> 00:55:59.220

Tom Leonard: I need a principal over there at Cedar Creek and thank you for doing that, you know, you were Bridge Point for many years, elementary anything you'd like to say, on behalf of the elementary principals or to the parents right now.

346

00:55:59.340 --> 00:56:10.320

Brad Wirht: Just a couple things. First of all, what Molly said every bit of it what Molly said, especially our nurses, they are making some tough phone calls and they are

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00:56:11.040 --> 00:56:22.740

Brad Wirht: They are a fierce line of safety for our schools and I have been so impressed with the hard work they've had to do the decisions they've had to make and the way they talk with parents. I was interested in

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00:56:23.460 --> 00:56:32.190

Brad Wirht: Steve's talking about the stigma that students may have and this goes straight to the parents because every time Sherry my

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00:56:32.850 --> 00:56:40.320

Brad Wirht: Nurse gives a call home or we have to tell somebody some bad news. We're not sure what's up. Will you take your child home.

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00:56:40.890 --> 00:56:53.130

Brad Wirht: Find out if or not your child has covid or if it's strep or the doctor gives the clearance, that's pressure on parents, they're going oh my gosh 10 days of quarantining and I'm worried about

351

00:56:54.330 --> 00:57:10.650

Brad Wirht: Almost to a person for four months. Parents have risen, even for the inconvenience it might cause to them. They are cooperative helpful and as a entire school district, we cannot thank you enough parents for your

352

00:57:11.730 --> 00:57:23.040

Brad Wirht: Playing along with us. It's a, it's a big deal and things could really get tied up for us, you send your kids to school. We thought maybe it'd be easier for the high school to

353

00:57:24.030 --> 00:57:38.220

Brad Wirht: Keep their masks on, and keep their distance. Kids are fantastic. It is not an issue. And if a kid ever as a mask. It's not over his nose or forgets. Well, they never forget it. It's always with them. They're always wearing them at the right time.

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00:57:39.420 --> 00:57:49.350

Brad Wirht: They're kind of like us. They are very comfortable in their masks I come home. I put on my shorts, My slaps in my favorite t shirt and it's all been wearing

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00:57:50.100 --> 00:58:04.650

Brad Wirht: masks are kind of getting that way too. And some of them are sagging, a little bit. So what an opportunity for the holiday season to get a pack of fun, happy goopy masks that are fresh and fit well for them to

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00:58:05.400 --> 00:58:16.020

Brad Wirht: Finally, one last last short word. It's more global I'm just the interim principal I'm leaving here in mid June, no matter what. I have nothing.

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00:58:17.160 --> 00:58:24.540

Brad Wirht: There's nothing good coming my way, but I am really grateful for this community that you have had a leadership team.

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00:58:24.990 --> 00:58:34.500

Brad Wirht: Especially at the upper administration and also the tough calls the board has had to make through this time. I mean, tough calls they've had to make. But Dr. Leonard

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00:58:34.890 --> 00:58:46.560

Brad Wirht: Was the man for the job. And he has put the person in the right place for the job and everyone is carrying equal weight and pulling all in the same direction and

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00:58:46.980 --> 00:59:01.830

Brad Wirht: When we are all writing our book about this in 2035 about 2020 we have to have a chapter about Tom Leonard's leadership and the people who have supported him and how he has glued us together so

361

00:59:02.910 --> 00:59:05.400

Brad Wirht: That's all I'll say there and you know get to respond Tom.

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00:59:05.880 --> 00:59:20.550

Tom Leonard: I'm not gonna but I can read you if I need to, and I decide when your contracts up. So not only were teasing you know I but thank you for giving us this year, we really needed an experienced person at that building. Uh Kathleen we haven't heard your voice.

363

00:59:22.050 --> 00:59:24.870

Tom Leonard: And I, and we should go ahead. Anything you'd like to say

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00:59:27.480 --> 00:59:48.990

Kathleen Sullivan: Just want to reiterate what Brad has said and Steve has said and Mollys said in terms of parents and the support the thing that I have been very appreciative of is the grace that we have been given. I had to make a number of phone calls the other night that were unpopular

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00:59:50.280 --> 00:59:54.120

Kathleen Sullivan: Talking to parents about their kiddos needing to go into quarantine and

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00:59:55.170 --> 01:00:13.410

Kathleen Sullivan: The majority of the conversations, then segue into thank you so much for everything you're doing your teachers are doing an amazing job. My child is happy. It's been a great experience. And so, you know, here the phone calls, but I was dreading making honestly

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01:00:14.850 --> 01:00:21.570

Kathleen Sullivan: You all as a community turned around and you've just shown us such good support. It's what keeps us going.

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01:00:22.680 --> 01:00:33.300

Kathleen Sullivan: And that makes a real difference. The other thing I want to say is thank you to your kiddos because, boy, you want to talk about resilience

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01:00:34.050 --> 01:00:45.720

Kathleen Sullivan: They have had to just go with the flow and be flexible and oh whoops, I can only have three people sitting here. Okay, I'll get up and move. Oh wait, you mean we can't do that anymore.

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01:00:46.200 --> 01:00:52.770

Kathleen Sullivan: Okay, Mrs Sullivan what do we have to do. They just have been such troopers and it's made things a lot easier

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01:00:53.730 --> 01:01:05.490

Kathleen Sullivan: For us as the adults. In fact, I think they have been a lot more resilient and have handled a lot of the changes, much more adept labor than we have. So I just really appreciate

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01:01:06.330 --> 01:01:18.090

Kathleen Sullivan: Your support and how you've sent your kids to us with such great attitudes and I'm just hoping that you guys have a great break and send them back for the next three weeks with the same great attitude.

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01:01:19.830 --> 01:01:24.600

Tom Leonard: Steve, we heard from you before. But anything else you can say something positive something happy.

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01:01:26.370 --> 01:01:29.340

Steven Ramsey: And enjoy the nine days. I don't think

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01:01:30.990 --> 01:01:33.510

Steven Ramsey: People realize, other people on this call, how

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01:01:34.950 --> 01:01:43.530

Steven Ramsey: Interesting, the time period has been for some of us in schools and then you magnify that with the kids, not knowing the parents, not knowing all summer.

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01:01:44.010 --> 01:01:51.330

Steven Ramsey: And then we really have four starts to a school year, which is completely insane. As we all know, if there was ever a time

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01:01:51.900 --> 01:02:05.970

Steven Ramsey: To just enjoy whatever you enjoy doing with your family, do it these nine days that has been an order for our staff, Dr. Leonard echoed that last last night to everybody take these nine days and enjoy them.

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01:02:07.140 --> 01:02:15.030

Steven Ramsey: And cherish them for sure. We started the year the high school talk about one day at a time, one week at a time. This is going to be pretty special week

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01:02:15.570 --> 01:02:22.710

Steven Ramsey: You could feel yesterday, people had not too much energy because people are pretty exhausted but you there's something to look forward to. Besides,

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01:02:23.460 --> 01:02:34.290

Steven Ramsey: Being with our kids at school and in the zoom world. It was really basically Let's all have a good break and enjoy it and come back and get after it for three more weeks so y'all enjoy the time with your children.

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01:02:35.850 --> 01:02:37.530

Tom Leonard: Jeff anything to add.

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01:02:40.350 --> 01:02:40.860

Tom Leonard: Yeah.

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01:02:41.880 --> 01:02:47.160

Jeff Arnett: No, I don't think I could add any more to what's already been said. So thank you again for the opportunity to visit with you this evening.

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01:02:47.940 --> 01:02:55.530

Tom Leonard: And jack you you've done a fabulous job through this. So I'll say a couple words and we're going to add very shortly, because I

can smell my lasagna burning

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01:02:56.700 --> 01:02:57.240

Tom Leonard: And

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01:02:58.530 --> 01:03:04.530

Tom Leonard: One thing, a guy from Chicago doesn't like is Burnt lasagna. So I got to get to that pretty quickly. But nonetheless,

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01:03:06.270 --> 01:03:06.960

Tom Leonard: Thank you.

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01:03:09.180 --> 01:03:15.690

Tom Leonard: This has been hard on everybody, it's not been the easiest school year. This is, I think we're all going to remember 2020

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01:03:16.410 --> 01:03:30.450

Tom Leonard: Right, just for all the things and I wrote a little bit of the newsletter, all the things that have happened this year, but we've got a great community. And yeah, it hasn't always been perfect here and some people haven't all agreed. Sure.

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01:03:32.010 --> 01:03:45.150

Tom Leonard: There's a lot of communities where it's a lot worse right now and schools are not open at all. We're open, we're running our kids are doing athletics. Our kids are doing band or kids are doing chorus. They're doing it.

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01:03:46.110 --> 01:03:56.640

Tom Leonard: Staff is staying healthy we're making it work. And we're going to continue to make it work. Our main objective is to stay open because we're in this for the kids. And we need your support.

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01:03:57.210 --> 01:04:08.790

Tom Leonard: We need you to be smart during Thanksgiving break. Take a break, but be smart. Please keep the virus as much as possible, out of our community and out of our schools.

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01:04:10.140 --> 01:04:13.800

Tom Leonard: And I need you to one plug for EEF, please.

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01:04:14.850 --> 01:04:16.620

Tom Leonard: Boy, without that support.

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01:04:17.880 --> 01:04:38.520

Tom Leonard: Without the money they gave us last year we would be in a world of hurt right now. And so anything you can do with that will help us as we as we hopefully get this vaccine as we hopefully get past this. And as we hopefully reunite because there's no use.

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01:04:39.690 --> 01:04:44.010

Tom Leonard: In us being divided because that only hurts the kids.

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01:04:45.960 --> 01:04:47.370

Tom Leonard: And only hurts the kids.

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01:04:48.900 --> 01:04:49.560

Tom Leonard: So,

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01:04:50.640 --> 01:04:56.010

Tom Leonard: Let's just stay focused. Let's stay healthy and have a great Thanksgiving.

401

01:04:57.060 --> 01:04:57.600

Tom Leonard: Be well

402

01:04:58.740 --> 01:04:59.130

Tom Leonard: Good night.