

## Board Recap for Feb. 11, 2021

Last evening, I shared an update regarding our current attendance models, and presented our intended timeline for students to return to daily, in-person attendance. As I said in my email earlier this week, the district's goal has always been to have students attend school in-person five days a week. It has been through careful consideration, analyzing our key indicators which include case and quarantine data, continued conversations with our Associations, and our partnership with the Delaware Public Health District that has enabled us to plan for an intended return to daily in-person attendance for students in our hybrid attendance model beginning Monday, March 15.

Our staff's health and well-being are a top priority, which is why we are allocating over four weeks to make this transition. These upcoming weeks will allow time to adjust our systems and operations to maintain the health and safety we have worked to maintain this year, teachers to update lesson plans accordingly, and to prepare our hybrid attendance model students to return to our facilities every day.

When March 15 arrives, it will have been one year almost to the day since our students will have been in physical school full time. That day, and the weeks leading up to March 15, will be filled with a range of emotions for all of us. As we come together to make this shift, take a moment to reflect on how far we have come this year. The new things we have learned, the obstacles we have overcome, and how we have worked tirelessly to facilitate maximum learning for every student. I am confident in our intention to return to full-time, in-person learning for our hybrid attendance model students because of the dedication shown from each of you, and our work together as One Olentangy.

Proud to serve as your Superintendent,

Mark T. Raiff

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## OLENTANGY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATE

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2021

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## PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

Professional Learning Supervisor Vince DeTillio and Student Well-Being Coordinator Katherine Branson presented that through research and conversations with staff, parents and community members, Olentangy's curriculum team has expanded on facilitating maximum learning for every student and create life-long learners. The result is a guide called Portrait of a Learner, which outlines four dispositions (Purposeful, Resilient, Curious and Kind) as pillars for educating the whole child.

Staff members will receive professional development around Portrait of a Learner on Friday, February 12, and a message will be sent to the Olentangy community on what to expect from this exciting district initiative next week.

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## EQUITY & INCLUSION UPDATE

Dr. Jackie Merkle, Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion, reviewed the team's goals and their work towards the district's equity and inclusion drivers for change.

The first driver for change, measurement and accountability, creates a clear guidepost for accountability. The equity and inclusion team has reviewed Olentangy's digital resources to remove stereotypes and bias, donated materials to library media centers that ensure representation of each school's student population, and the panorama student surveys now include questions around equity and inclusion.

In collaboration with Olentangy's human resources department on the second driver for change, recruitment and retention, a member of the Equity and Inclusion team served on the hiring panel for the Elementary School 16 principal. Olentangy's administrators participated in implicit bias training, and Dr. Merkle reported growth and areas for opportunity in the district's diversity recruitment.

Training and education for staff members comprises the third driver for change. Teachers, counselors, athletic coaches, intervention aides, and transportation drivers have received a range of professional development, from bullying and harassment modules, sense of belonging and anti-racism modules, the history of race and racism, and training on implicit bias and microaggressions. Book studies have been a valuable resource for staff and the board, and the equity and inclusion team has provided heritage month resources for staff integration.

When discussing the last driver for change, stakeholder engagement, Dr. Merkle shared that the equity & inclusion newsletter has helped to generate awareness of their work across the community. The ONE Community Conference kicked off with a record-breaking MLK Day of Service, a virtual keynote that received a 91.9% satisfaction response, and the team developed [Elementary](#) and [Secondary](#) reading and activity calendars for the [February African American Read-In](#). The conference is a six-event series this year, with another community service opportunity in March.

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## BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Julie Wanger Feasel updated the community on House Bill 1, and her plan to arrange a virtual conversation with Representative Carfagna and the Olentangy community. She also shared that state testing is moving forward as planned.

Mrs. Wagner Feasel addressed rumors regarding school board members not reading public participation submissions and emails. She reviewed the board policy for public participation, which gives a five-minute limit to each public participation submission, and 30 minutes for public participation per meeting. Additionally, she shared that due to the State's requirement that no more than 10 people gather for an in-person meeting, public participation will continue to be submitted online for the Board's review. For full transparency, all public participation submissions are posted on the [district website](#).

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## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Mark Raiff walked through what the community can expect for the upcoming community redistricting forums. A pre-recorded video outlining attendance boundary options for elementary schools in the north and south, as well as middle school options, will be sent to the Olentangy community on Thursday, February 18. At the end of the video, viewers can submit feedback to the Redistricting Committee. On Saturday, February 20, there will be three 45-minute virtual sessions for community members to ask clarifying questions regarding the attendance boundary options presented for their population.

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Emily Hatfield gave an update on state funding items. The Governor's recent executive order changed Olentangy's foundation formula for this fiscal year, adding an additional \$500,000 to the funding Olentangy receives. Enrollment growth funding and student wellness and success funds are scheduled to continue through fiscal years 22 and 23, which comprises \$2.5 million of Olentangy's state funding.

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## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL #16 PROPOSED NAMES

Chief Communications Officer Krista Davis outlined board policy for naming schools and shared the history behind the names of Olentangy's 15 other elementary schools. The district received 125 submissions for name suggestions and five final name selections were presented for the Board's consideration. The name of Olentangy's 16<sup>th</sup> Elementary School is Shale Meadows Elementary School.

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## ATTENDANCE MODEL UPDATE

Superintendent Raiff began his update looking back to July of 2020, when the district shared two options for student attendance – in-person learning that could range from all day every day, hybrid or remote attendance depending on the COVID climate, or opt for the Committed Distance Learning program. The chart from July outlining the two learning models was not directly tied to the governor's color-coded COVID-19 Risk Level Guidelines by County, but used it as data point in determining the in-person attendance models.

In evaluating the district's readiness for transitioning from hybrid to daily attendance, Mr. Raiff walked through data on the district's infection and quarantine rates, how the virus has not been found to be transmitted inside schools, and local vs. county data. Staff receiving the COVID vaccine will help ensure continued high staff attendance, with the second DPHD clinic for school employees will be on March 6. Last, he addressed the need to follow all recommended health and safety protocols, but also provide increased student interaction for mental well-being.

**Mr. Raiff announced that Olentangy Schools intends to return to daily, in-person attendance for students learning in Olentangy's physical schools beginning Monday, March 15.**

This date allows staff to receive their second vaccine, provides two weeks before spring break to address any challenges and begin the fourth quarter and administer Ohio State Tests. Please note that this attendance model change does not affect students in the Committed Distance Learning program, as that program is a semester-

long commitment. Additionally, Olentangy kindergarten is a part time program and will remain on the existing [hybrid kindergarten schedule](#).

March 15 is over four weeks away, and it is possible that conditions may change. The district will continue to monitor key indicators, the impact of absences and substitute fill rates, and plan for the transition to a daily in-person attendance model for the hybrid attendance students. Mr. Raiff acknowledged that we are still experiencing a global pandemic, and Olentangy will continue to follow all precautions and health and safety standards.

To view the Board of Education meeting and the Attendance Model Update presentation, visit the district website [Board of Education meeting livestream](#).