

COVID-19 Task Force

Staff Subcommittee Meeting

May 13, 2021

Facilitator and Notetaker: Tom Avvakumovits, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Employee Development and Instruction; Cathleen Rodriguez, Coordinator of Special Services

Attendees: Anna Delgadillo, Ashley Hooper, Christine Mallery, Christy Heaton, Curtis Lee, Dan Amezcuita, Dara Alleyne-Levy, David Heinke, Jena Rajabally, John Burn, Maria Jackson, Muriel von Stein, Stacey Jaehnig, Stephanie Fan

The notes that follow are thoughts and comments that stood out during the discussion, this document is not meant to be a transcript. While prepared questions were utilized to structure the conversation, the direction was defined by staff input.

What have we learned in hybrid and distance learning? What do we want to keep? Are there some tech tools we should continue with? (This stakeholder feedback will also be used to update our learning continuity and attendance plan.)

- Technology, Schoology. Continue to use tech in class and make sure all students have a device. Will there be a 1:1 student:device ratio?
- Guidance perspective, guidance nights, numbers were good getting parents to attend remotely, need to pay attention to who is able to attend remotely and who is not. Keep Zoom so parents who cannot attend physically can still be able to access it.
- Can we create some kind of database so if a student doesn't understand a particular concept/topic, they can go to the database for reteaching (even if it's a different teacher)?
- Course alike meetings virtually across sites were a great way to use collaboration time without having to travel.

F/U Question: We intend to keep Zoom accounts for staff. Is it still necessary and prudent for students to have Zoom accounts?

- Meetings with teachers can happen without student accounts
- Might be helpful for students if they want to meet remotely for group projects, club meetings, etc.
- Students also use other virtual means for group work.
- 1:1 isn't ideal but can be pretty supportive. Group of four, hop on a Peardeck, etc. Can we still provide hotspots?
- How are we going to address the learning loss? Might be beneficial to keep accounts available to students for this purpose.
- A lot of learning loss is due to Zoom. When we get students back in front of teachers, it will help, as we are able to see if a student is paying attention, etc.
- What if a student gets COVID and has to quarantine? Are we going to give students perpetual access to their classes even if they are out sick? What is the district's philosophy moving forward? Could be hard to sustain.
- Having students continue with 1:1, can we keep subscriptions to Peardeck and other resources teachers were provided? We like the formal assessment aspects.

Tom: Expectation is hybrid lessons will not be offered when school starts in August.

In addition to our current methods, how might we communicate the safety protocols that our District employs?

- All info is on website but not everyone will go there to access. What strategies do we need to use so all feel safe?
- Be transparent about what we're doing right and what we're still working on. It's ok if we're not great at first on everything. We can control what we say/see in our classroom. Example: can't monitor all students at lunch, parents need to help reiterate expectations.
- Discussion with five students, despite safety protocols, situation leaves students feeling unsafe. When restrictions are eased, it might make more students feel unsafe (e.g., no masks). Students feel safe now but reluctant to be excited about getting everyone back.
- Had discussion in office today. If vaccinated, office staff feel they would continue to wear a mask because they can't control other factors around them. Will we reach the point someday that staff/students must have the vaccine to attend?
- Authorizations for vaccines at this point are under emergency situations which is one of the reasons stated as to why we cannot require of everyone.

Maria: Mask wearing in general, for those who do not get vaccinated, it will be strange if we have some people wearing masks and others not wearing masks. For consistency, she would expect that we would all need to wear masks for a while to not differentiate between those who have been vaccinated and those who have not.

F/U Questions: Sense that there was a heightened level of anxiousness prior to April 19. Now that staff have returned, has this eased?

- Not sure if it is because people came to work or because vaccination rates are up. It appears people are more comfortable talking 1:1, people are more open to having others in their rooms (eating lunch, etc.)
- When office staff returned in summer it was really scary, worked through it and then became comfortable in our bubbles and trusted that those in the bubble were following safety protocols. Closer we got to April and before talks of people coming back and vaccinations, became nervous again. The more time that goes by, the easier it becomes.
- Helped when all members of the household were able to receive the vaccine.
- Some people are comfortable telling others their boundaries but others are not. Important to stress to everyone that not everyone is assertive, kids too, need to find a way through this challenge.
- There are a lot of staff members with children under 12 who cannot get the vaccine right now so there will likely be anxiety around this. Needs to be part of the conversations with students - culture on campus and how it's changed.
- Own experience is anxiety level has gone down. Department figured out other's comfort level. Need to create space for these conversations to happen. Needs to happen with students as well.
- Steal an idea from colleges - received a weekly email from daughter's college with the number of cases, athlete testing, etc. Challenges with sports teams from other sites not complying. It's been very nice to have students fed. It's been quick, efficient, students are happy. Food has been very appreciated.
- Would feel that everybody should have to wear masks. Will be a lot of peer pressure amongst students and staff. Will teachers be given microphones? With full classes, trying to project through a mask can be a challenge.
- Uses a microphone. It's a smart thing to think about.

How do we support student social-emotional learning and make meaning out of the 1.5 years of the pandemic?

- When do we start making hiring more School Based Therapists a priority? More kids now with mental health challenges. Student population has increased but ratio of students to SBTs has not.
- We've spent the past 15 months giving everybody a wide berth. Conflicting sense of being isolated. This year has been a lesson in how to try to get stuff done when isolated. Rush of more people than some will be comfortable with. This is going to be a weird thing that is going to take some effort to work through.

- Teachers love the Wednesday schedule for students to decompress and get caught up. Don't want to see it go away quickly. Having all advisories being integrated into the schedule we have before is not really possible. Office hours give opportunities to catch students.
- Something that came up recently regarding a summer bridge person for incoming students - need to train students again to focus and pay attention throughout a class period. How to be a student in the classroom, how to collaborate with others (especially if there is anxiety about being around others)? Need to revamp curriculum to include this. How do we develop and build in curriculum to address this?
- Feels like we need a "Pioneers Day" for all students, bringing a class back to walk through campus and go over expectations. First week will likely be challenging. Need the whole school to use the first week to set/review norms and expectations. Could all of us working together do a better job of this?

F/U Question: Importance of building community, warm up activities to get to know students, mixed feelings for some, how would it be received if we spent one session on staff days to discuss strategies to address?

- A reminder about the dreaded ice breakers would be great. Students feel like they can opt-out easily now and they will continue to feel they can opt-out in person. Need to teach students how to talk to each other again. Needs to be a whole school effort.
- Not a team builder person but it will be very necessary to do this. As someone not comfortable with these, would appreciate training before school starts on how to teacher students how to interact with others, be a student, build community, etc.
- Really important. Want to be cautious pushing it every period for every student, same thing in every class. Ice breakers might be too much for some students, especially if it's going on all day.
- Be strategic, have a menu of options, and have different departments "adopt" particular topics. Have some kind of calendar. Have schools address social-emotional as a whole. Teachers need to be trained.
- Different staff members have been trained in trauma-informed care but it has not been made available to everyone. Is there a place where people can access it? Don't know if we have enough staff with the skills.
- To piggy back on Dan, would be sad to see some kind of advisory go away. Would be good to have a foundation of something that everyone is getting.
- How do I react to a student who checked out this year and then returns to repeat the class next year?

What are appropriate, valid reasons why students would ask for a remote learning accommodation for next year?

- One of the things we really haven't talked about, it depends on what the situation will be in August. We're assuming that it will all continue to move in the right direction and all tiers will be gone. What if they are not? What would then be an appropriate reason for a student to remain remote. If tiers are gone, don't think there is a reason for students to remain remote.

For staff, 95% back. Those with medical needed to meet with HR and have documentation. What do we do about students who do not want to come back even if it's deemed safe?

- Can they go to PAC to present case and have PAC come up with solutions?
- Has been talking to a lot of students and pushing them to come back if they are not doing well. Will there be certain teachers who are only teaching Zoom classes? Is this something that can/should be addressed only for the fall semester?
- Is there Ed Code around this? Is it up to us?

Tom: Law currently states we MUST provide a distance learning option during this emergency. This might go away. Even if 5% of students don't want to come back, it's 500 students. Pre-pandemic there were a couple of exceptions (home teaching, Olympic level athletes)

- Shouldn't be easy, needs to be a way to apply and have reviewed. Should maybe only offer grad requirements. If students want more than grad requirements, need to come in person. Will need to be parameters such as cameras on at all times, etc.
- Don't we need to be deciding now while we're master scheduling?
- Has been bringing up the lack of surveying families on a regular basis. Was brought up in the first meeting that we should be surveying regularly but this has not happened. Could be asking families now about their comfort level if everything stays the course.
- Don't always reach everyone when we survey families. This has been a challenge.
- How questions are framed in a survey is very important. Where we are now is different than where we were just a short time ago.

Cathleen: If looking at compelling reasons, need to look at the data - were students more or less successful in remote vs in person?

Maria: Community expects a high level of education. Not sure what would be possible to put together in four months to offer a rigorous curriculum. If offered, would prefer it be our teachers but not sure how we'd be able to do it.

- We're all aggressively pruning our curriculum, in no way do I expect it to go back to normal but we won't be pruning as aggressively. Would up the virtual expectations. What they think remote is will be based on current experience. Otherwise, we're completing tow systems/levels of rigor.
- Virtual music cannot be at the same level. Anything virtual would need to be basic grad requirements.