

Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting
April 26, 2021
6:00 p.m.

- 1) Topics of discussion.
 - Hybrid update
 - Look ahead to fall
 - Policy discussion

- 2) Hybrid Update.

Dr. Curry: Moved from A/B hybrid 4 days to some students in both A and B. Data assessments used to identify those who would benefit/catch up if in school both weeks. Fridays a day to work with smaller groups for targeted instruction. Maybe 2-5 kids per class, half-day, targeted instruction based on skill sets. Buses bring kids in for focused instruction. Middle school, then high schools – first Friday, 150 kids, extra prep for AP. High schools offering tutoring, extra help on Fridays and Saturdays. Still going to keep that up. And this is as far as CCPS is going to go for rest of the school year.

It is not everybody can come who wants to, because many kids so successful.

Graduation June 2-3. CCPS is not using the Equestrian Center, ceremonies planned outdoors for each high school, with some ceremony this time. 1/3 to ¼ of students at a time. Limit 2-4 guests. Rain plans are also in the works.

- 3) Look ahead to fall.

Intent is to be back in school full time. Students can also sign up for full virtual instruction. Hopefully just as normal as in the past – no hybrid/concurrent teaching. CCPS will need to know how many virtual students will sign up for the virtual academy. CCPS envisions a long-term commitment. Classes will be made up of students from the whole county, not per school. CCPS will put on a campaign to get home schoolers and private school students back. CCPS will follow Health Department guidance in the fall.

Q: Will the virtual academy pull classes from whole county, so less teachers will be needed? A: Yes. Teacher allocation is even now frequently calibrated.

A: Will there be teacher information sessions geared to full time in the fall? A: Administrators meet weekly to get updated guidance. We cannot describe all the rules, if any, that will be in place for the first day of school. Goal is minimal limitations. Q: MD last in the country for full time reopening because districts are waiting for guidance in the fall. CCPS should do better. Rather than spending time on virtual, CCPS needs to focus on what full time will look like. Suggest that the CAC form a planning committee to help assist with those plans.

Q (Sarah, CAC): How this would be helpful to school system? A (Melissa, CAC): Graduation plans, virtual academy. CAC can get Qs from community, get concerns from union, provide recommendations to the school system, so they can come up with the plan sooner. Q (Sarah, CAC): Doesn't CCPS need to know what health authorities will ask of full system? A (Melissa): Local authorities are giving guidance, not required restrictions. CCPS needs to look at other school systems in country. A (Dr. Curry): Most

schools that are open are in jurisdictions that are welcome to ignore CDC. A (Melissa): We can also make that decision.

Q: Echo previous commenter. What about sports? Are sports anticipated to go forward as usual? A: Full time school means CCPS is aiming for that. But, we cannot predict fall limitations. Q: Some districts are ignoring CDC guidelines. A: Look at FL. Schools are open, by direction from the Governor down.

Q: Why can't the virtual academy happen on a state level, not every county doing it on their own? A: Money is the reason. CCPS needs kids enrolled in Calvert County. We are looking at the academy as a menu item for the public schools. Several hundred students have signed up. A: It sounds like CCPS is reinventing the wheel. A: You'll learn more when we talk about the virtual academy.

Q: What are the legal ramifications of long-term commitment? What if a parent changes his or her mind? Can a school bar the student from in-person instruction? A: You may be right. But, we don't want it to be a frequent, back and forth event.

Q: The virtual academy sounds like a new program to address the needs of 5% of student population. What is rationale for putting forward this program? What impact is it likely to have on non-virtual school students? Will it be paid for by Federal money? A: Queen Anne County did this to bring homeschoolers underneath the tent. We'll give you our expertise if you're in our curriculum. This could be something that catches on. It has been an option for several years for parents of Maryland students who didn't do well in in-school environment. So, this is an alternative, and then the student counts as enrolled for funding purposes.

Q: What is the impact on non-virtual students? A: There will be some students not in the building.

Q: Will Federal money be used? A: No. Federal grants, but most of that is for summer school catching up kids.

Q: What does a successful reopening look like? Also, what would happen if CCPS ignored the CDC guidelines? Will parents have to consent if CCPS doesn't complying with CDC guidelines. Can principals have more stringent guidelines? Can some schools have less flexible protections than what the county requires? A: We don't know what guidance will be. We can express intent that everyone who wants to come can be in school. What that will look like 4 months from now? CCPS will follow that guidance. That's the reason we aren't there. Maryland has been interested in being compliant. The CDC issues guidance, which is not the law. There are a variety of approaches, and it is not breaking the law to not follow CDC. CCPS will consult with local Health Department and the MD Dept. of Health and the State Superintendent. It will be a collaborative effort. Asking what the fall will look like now would be asking for a long-term commitment with little information. CCPS is worried about parents committing to in school and then wanting to go virtual.

Q: Surveys went out, and we don't know what fall will look like. Commenter is appreciative of having restrictions in place, and commenter's kids prefer virtual. Commenter appreciates CCPS efforts. A: Thank you.

Q: This is a no-win situation, and CCPS is trying to walk the middle and everyone needs to compromise. We won't ever go back to the way we were exactly – it will take 2-3 years. We will be held accountable for years to come for the decisions we are making now. Work together. A: Thank you.

Q: Echo last two commenters. CCPS is doing a good job, making hard decisions. CCPS puts children first, and looks in best interest of children and teachers. It is a fluid situation. It is good for some to be home, those with health issues. But then some students are being neglected or abused at home. What is being done with ventilation systems at CCPS schools? A: Fluidity of the situation is the key. With regard to the ventilation – it has been evaluated at every classroom in the district. The fresh air capacity exchange of HVAC systems at the newest schools is top notch. Other schools, even some older ones with roof units are better than the old boiler systems. In classrooms with insufficient exchange, air scrubbers have been installed. Q: Commenter has heard of teachers purchasing air purifiers. Is there a fund for that so teachers don't have to pay for those? A: We don't let them buy with school funds what we don't think they need.

4) Virtual academy.

Workman (Assistant Superintendent). Jacobs (Supervisor, Dept. of Instruction). We began this work before covid, looking at what the virtual program would look like. When covid arrived, that work ceased. We are now continuing to look at the virtual program. Many students are able to be very successful in the virtual environment. CCPS does need to look at meeting the needs of every student. We drafted a mission statement, including tech-based learning. We developed goals/outcomes.

Pre-K to grade 2 will be face to face only. We need to build the positive relationship between adults and children. School teaches children how to take turns, compromise, be independent. Student can't do that in front of a computer.

Elementary, 3rd-5th – The same courses would be offered. A proposed schedule was laid out.

Secondary schools:

Middle school. Virtual academy will be unable to offer everything offered in school building. For example, for world languages, only Spanish I and II will be offered. Club sessions will be offered to build connections. There will also be a mentoring period – students will be assigned a teacher mentor. Students will work with their mentor on social/emotional learning, “habits of mind”, and goal setting.

High school. The virtual academy can't offer everything being offered in school. All graduation-required courses will be offered, along with some AP, select electives. CTA students would be half day face to face but then could choose virtual. Mentoring would occur 2-3 times per week, and the mentor would follow the student through the high school years. CTA transition time would also be built into the schedule.

Special ed. Virtual academy would be open to those with IEPs to the maximum extent appropriate for those students to be educated in general environment. Some instruction may need to be provided in face to face setting.

The application process discussed in evening sessions. CCPS is looking for a long-term commitment, and is really looking to find families truly interested in virtual academy. The academy would go past covid.

Q: Can there be part-time students in the academy? A: Yes, students attending CTA. Part-time virtual when not at CTA. Also, CCPS has been running online program for years – financial literature, musical appreciation, etc. These classes could be either within or outside of current schedule, online.

CCPS survey results indicated 851 interested initially in virtual, then a total of 919 students. CCPS expects that once parents get info about what courses and activities are offered, numbers could change. The virtual academy is expected to have a staffing of 50 teachers and a school counselor. The interest survey was circulated in March, then CCPS made its proposal to the Board of Education in April. The application process is expected to start May 10-28, with info provided in information sessions. CCPS would notify parents of acceptance by end of June.

Q: Is part-time virtual academy attendance only for high school? A: Yes.

Q: CTA and virtual – when they come to school, would they do virtual in separate classroom? Some students don't have cars – will there be buses? A: CTA is only for 11th and 12th graders. CCPS is still looking at what transportation might look like.

Q (Sarah, CAC): Is there a motion ready with details? A (Melissa, CAC): Want to note that pediatricians and mental health experts disagree with screen time. Q (Sarah, CAC): Is there a motion? A (Melissa): The CAC has the ability to do ad hoc committees to support planning for CCPS and the BOE. A planning committee could work with teachers and CCPS, and require CCPS to look at busing, room capacity, etc., to put a plan in place to notify community what full time would look like. A (Sarah, CAC): Where in policy 12-10 do you see authorization to create ad hoc committees? [Karen to email procedures to Sarah.]

Q (Sarah, CAC): The CAC procedures state that the CAC can provide members for ad hoc meetings, when there are established committees that need public members. The CAC would give members to those committees. Why would CAC create our own ad hoc committees? A (Melissa, CAC): The school board could utilize the CAC to create an ad hoc committee. The CAC could request the school board to create a committee.

Q: Could some members of the CAC get together to develop plan? A (Sarah, CAC): Not prohibited, but not authorized.

Q: In CAC member's experience, the CAC went to the community to talk, went to talk to parents, neighbors, and brought it back to committee. The CAC did not form its own committees. The CAC works at the permission of BOE.

Q (Sarah, CAC): Is there a motion on the floor? The CAC can provide recommendations to BOE in areas the CAC believes are lacking. There are very different opinions within the CAC on where things are. Please state for us a motion. A (Melissa, CAC): Would like CAC to be members of ad hoc committee that includes teachers and CCPS central administration, to form plans to support full reopening in the fall. Second.

Q: What is motion? I thought CCPS stated that it would reopen full time. A (Melissa, CAC): That is the intent, but there is no plan/commitment. Things like the number of people allowed in classroom need to be figured out. Without a plan, CCPS could be unsuccessful and forced to go back to concurrent teaching. Q: We need to understand that this is a fluid situation, and CCPS needs to go by what CDC and Health Dept. tell CCPS to do. We do not have enough information. A variant may explode. Commenter trusts CCPS's intention to go back and suggests that CCPS wait until June/July to forecast. A (Melissa, CAC): CCPS is already making a promise for the virtual academy, but has no plans for the 95 percent who

don't thrive in a virtual or hybrid environment. CCPS lost one of our own children to suicide just this month. If CCPS were acting based on current CDC guidelines, we would be back full time.

Q: If the CAC does a study or forms an advisory group, the CAC should not appear to be partisan or particular in recommendations it is advancing. I am not against doing a study, but have a concern regarding the political aspect. Would this activity be welcomed by BOE, or redundancy? A (Pam Cousins, BOE): Defer to Dr. Curry and staff. Recommendations from the CAC would be welcome; opinions and comments are always welcome, though CCPS has staff capable of preparing plans on which reopening decisions are made. The decisions are based on facts, not on personal agendas, and take into account every child. I care about 100% -- support each student.

Q: Do we necessarily need a committee for us to come together as the CAC to provide recommendations? We have done this in the past on policy. A (Sarah, CAC): I think we can discuss and offer recommendations. The CAC doesn't have to send formal recommendations. We have BOE members and CCPS administration officials at our meeting tonight. If we want CAC backing behind a particular view, we don't need ad hoc committee. There is nothing currently on the CAC's May agenda. I believe there is sufficient opportunity in meetings for members to share concerns. Functionally, we have had the time and space to do so, and we could discuss further at the May meeting.

Dr. Curry: Right now, CCPS is planning on opening on 8/31. We also realize that there are things that could come up to change things.

Q (Melissa, CAC): It is one thing to say that CCPS intends to have full time opening. This is great, and we hope no restrictions. Right now, we are at 6' distancing, every other seat on bus. A planning committee could consider what 3' would look like, assuming that this is what we are in the fall as a worst-case scenario. That's more what I would like to hear about. CCPS needs to support kids who want to come back in full time environment as well.

Q (Melissa, CAC): There should be considerations about what a commitment to full time would look like, so parents can make decision. I would like to keep the motion.

Vote:

Yes. 4

No. 13

Abstention. 1

Motion fails.

Will there be discussion regarding our own recommendations as a group on the fall reopening? A: Yes.

5) Hiring policy – We will talk about this next month, at our last regularly scheduled meeting.

Meeting Adjourned.