

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING WRAP UP

January 4, 2022

Board Meeting Zoom Link ([Click Here](#))

Meeting Opening

- Meeting was called to order.
- Executive Session was held to discuss confidential staffing matters related to COVID-19.
- Meeting reconvened in Open Session.
- Agenda was unanimously approved.

New Business/Discussion

- Current Covid Numbers- District Administrator Weiss shared current numbers for the first couple of days back to school. On Monday 1/3, 13 staff were out due to Covid, on Tuesday 1/4, 10 staff were out. On Monday 1/3, we had 7 students out at Parkway and 19 students out at Glen Hills who tested positive for Covid. Our district nurse is still reviewing and catching up on voice mails, emails, etc. from winter break to confirm if any additional absences are due to Covid, so these numbers are based on the information we have as of Tuesday. We had no student cases reported to the school on Tuesday.
- Attendance numbers: District Administrator Weiss shared that on Monday, January 3rd, 145 students were out at Glen Hills, approximately 40 because of quarantine protocols. On Tuesday, January 4th, 103 were out at Glen Hills, again approximately 40 because of quarantine protocols. On Monday, January 3rd, 103 students were out at Parkway, approximately 40 because of quarantine protocols. And, on Tuesday, January 4th, 82 were out at parkway, again approximately 40 because of quarantine protocols.
- There was discussion around Family Choice to keep students home. Students are allotted up to ten (10) excused absences per year. Parents/Guardians who choose to keep their students home for various reasons, including exercising caution related to Covid & In Person learning, need to call in those absences to excuse them. Essentially, family choice = an excused absence.
- It was clarified that absences due to quarantine, health reasons, students experiencing symptoms etc. are tracked separately and are not counted towards the 10 excused absences.

- Current Status of ExtraCurriculars & Clubs - District Administrator Weiss informed the board that she is pausing extra curricular activities and clubs until January 18th. Upon examination, the administration learned that not all covid protocols were being adhered to consistently across extracurricular activities. The two week pause serves a couple purposes, one is to do a check in with each club and activity around protocols and enforcement of mitigation strategies and plans for moving forward, and another is to give the district time to collect data on in school transmission. Until now we have had very little, if any, in school transmission confirmed, and with Omicron being more contagious than past variants, the school wants to exercise caution and better understand the risks of extra curricular activities and its impact on in-school transmission. The district, the board, and community members engaged in discussion about how important extracurriculars are for students social and emotional well being. All tended to agree about the importance of these extracurriculars, some urged extracurriculars to resume immediately or sooner than two weeks, some urged for more caution and data. The board was not asked to take action on this item, but did ask for an update as discussions and planning in this area progress, and asked for a formal update at its next board meeting in two weeks.
- Learning Options - There was a robust discussion about the state of Covid in our schools, what we have done until now and what we are looking to do moving forward. No recommendation to return to virtual school was made by the Administration. It was asked about and discussed, the Administration feels at this time that we do not have the capacity with staff being stretched so thin as it is, to offer any virtual (asynchronous or synchronous options) outside of what we are already doing for students who must quarantine. Beyond preservation of staff mental health and capacity, the Administration does not believe that the quality of virtual learning has matched that of students being in person, and that the stress of teaching in a hybrid model ultimately impacts the quality of education, too, and that is a factor in wanting to keep as many kids learning in person, as possible.
- The goal of calling this meeting was to discuss the preparation measures being taken for transitioning to virtual should Covid impact our ability to operate and force classrooms or grade levels to close and go virtual - though closures would most likely only be for short periods of time. The administration does not want, nor foresee, needing to shut whole buildings down due to COVID-19, and is doing everything it can to be creative and keep staffing shortages covered, including increasing its layered mitigation strategies to keep everyone in our schools safe.
- Despite not offering a virtual option, any family who has a student who is high risk for health reasons can reach out to the administration and they will work with individual families to find accommodations, if possible. It must be the student with the health issues however, students who have high-risk family members are not able to be accommodated.
- The district is not setting a specific threshold for closures, because every situation is unique and there are variables to consider before closing a class or grade level, although it did say that if more than 50 percent of a classroom is absent, it will go virtual. Families and students will be given as much notice as possible. Students will have one day off of classes so that teachers can prepare to go virtual. We have 1:1 technology for all students in every grade level (except K4, but should be able to cover any classroom or grade level that needs it, barring both schools going fully virtual, which again is not anticipated nor desired by the administration).
- Any kids who have to quarantine can pick up their lunches for the week at the start of the week.
- Testing is available for students and their siblings (3 and older) and their family members in the household. K4 PM students who are not at school for the morning tests, could come to school during the testing periods to get tested.

- Some additional mitigation measures include: An additional mid-day disinfectant spray in classrooms, cohorting for lunches in classrooms at Parkway again, changes to Glen Hills lunch procedure to reduce traffic in the lunch room, and more.
- The district will be sending out updated covid information around testing, around mask wearing (as the CDC is saying cloth masks are less effective and recommending higher quality masks, like KN95, to protect against Omicron) in Thursday folders and will be updating our Covid Page on the website, as well as, including any classroom or grade level closure information on our district dashboard. Until now, only families in affected classrooms have been notified of closures.
- The district desires to follow updated CDC guidance around quarantine times and test to stay, but the local health department has advised schools to follow DPI's recommendations for now, as they anticipate updated CDC guidance for schools specifically. DPI has advised schools to continue with their current quarantine protocols for now. The district has a meeting with North Shore Health Department to discuss whether shortened quarantine for adults is advisable. The district is also in talks with the company that is doing testing for our district to learn if "Test to stay" is an option, giving the testing shortages that are being experienced recently, and must also assess how test to stay would work with the shortened quarantine recommendations, should we implement those. More information will be forthcoming from the district soon on this topic.

Visitor Participation

Visitor Participation covered the following topics generally:

- The PTO received comments ahead of the meeting it wanted to communicate to the board, mostly in support of in person learning, and they would be reporting back to families that reached out about the outcome of this meeting, was that we will continue to focus and support in person learning as the priority.
- A question was asked around mitigation measures such as splitting classes/combining classes. The district said it considered but decided against splitting classes, so that it could keep cohorts from mixing.
- A question was asked about how the district is handling staff shortages and whether administrators were stepping in to help cover. District Administrator Weiss stated that it was all hands on deck every day when they receive notice of which classes need coverage, and that Principals and Administrators were stepping in when needed.
- A question was asked around criteria for closing classes and grades. The district doesn't have specific thresholds for closures, as each situation is unique, other than if more than 50% of a class is going to be absent, that class will go virtual.
- A comment was made around District communication. Some items discussed at tonight's meeting , around testing or accommodations for high risk students, while not new information, were new to some attending the meeting, and the district was asked to increase its communications effort so that information like this would be more readily known and accessible. The district discussed some of its ongoing efforts to ramp up communication, including a Communication Survey that will be going out soon that is part of our strategic planning around Communications. District Administrator Weiss mentioned that all district communications also live on our website on a page called "District Communications" so if you ever want to find anything that has been sent out by the district you can

look there (as well as Infinite Campus). The Board also discussed the addition of the board meeting wrap up (this little document right here) that it plans to start as another tool the district is using to get important information to our community.

-A comment was made on the importance of extra curricular and encouraging the district to resume asap and allow families to choose whether to participate.

-A question around protocols for subs with the new CDC symptoms. District Administrator Weiss stated that our District Nurse recently sent out guidance to teachers about the updated symptom list for staff, but she would work to have the information posted or made available to subs, as well.

-A plug for the upcoming compassion resiliency workshop this Spring being organized by Carla Pennington Cross and Denise Davis, our District Social Worker, more information to be sent out to families

-A questions was asked about teacher resiliency and how we are supporting teachers, and whether we were offering masks to teachers, for example. District Administrator Weiss stated that staff mental health and resilience was very important to her, and referenced the asynchronous days the district recently instituted in an effort to support staff mental health. Business Administrator Johnson discussed the WAC membership as another outlet that has been supporting staff wellness. Buildings and Grounds Director Beckman stated that we do have KN95 masks for staff if they want them, and they are available in the nurses office.

- A comment was made asking the district to be even more creative where it could to help keep kids in classrooms.

ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned.

Board Meeting Wrap Ups

***Please note this wrap up is meant to be an overview of the school board meeting. It is intended to offer more substantive information than what is generally contained in Board Meeting Minutes. It will not cover every point made or discussion had; it is accurate to the best of my knowledge; and, it is an effort being made on behalf of the board to get relevant information out to our community. Comments and questions are always welcome.**

Sincerely,

Danielle Bailey,

School Board Member, Communications Chair

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