

MILLVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Millville Area School Board Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2020

The Millville Area School Board held a special meeting on Wednesday, August 5, 2020, in the high school library with public participation via Zoom and Facebook. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The following Board members answered roll call: William Berger, Brynn Clark, Susan Farr, Michael Farrell, Greg Hemsarh, Heather Mausteller, Susan Myers, Deborah Price, and Jessica Whitmoyer.

Also present were Joseph Rasmus, Superintendent; Alycia Differ, Secondary Principal; Ed Sanders, Elementary Principal; Dee Davis, Supervisor of Student Services; Hannah Sherwood, Business Manager; and Kathy Musselman, Board Secretary Assistant. Joining via Zoom were Jim Hess, Technology Coordinator and Brent Crispell, Buildings and Grounds.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS

Susan Myers stated an executive session was held on Thursday to discuss personnel matters and study the survey results and options of the Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan.

Sue Farr:

Millville having nine cases of COVID is not a true picture of our student population. District-wide encompasses student addresses to include Orangeville, sixty cases; Benton, ten cases; and Bloomsburg, 136 cases. She resides in Millville School District with an Orangeville address and her neighbors have had COVID.

Stated safety first. Her favored school opening option is a hybrid plan; however, as she observed on a website, "no one size fits all".

Michael Farrell:

Questioned the total cases, as WNEP has reported cases being down.

Favored a school opening option to allow parents to choose the opening model that works best for their family.

Heather Mausteller:

Felt this is a serious matter but had confidence in the extra cleaning procedures.

Deborah Price:

Favored the hybrid plan for school opening.

Questioned the effects of the cleaning product usage and air quality.

Mr. Rasmus:

Fullsan, the cleaning products used, are CDC appropriate. We have been using this product before COVID. Ventilation at the elementary school will not be a problem with the new HVAC system. At the high school, air filters will be replaced often. Sanitation misters will be used daily and sneeze guards will be installed.

Brynn Clark:

Favored a school opening option to allow parents to choose the opening model that works best for their family.

William Berger:

How would the model of choice work?

Mr. Rasmus:

A determination letter of school enrollment choice will be issued to parents. Once a choice is made no changes for the 45-day marking period.

Teacher training and professional development will be provided and increased prep time.

Michael Farrell:

Was not in favor of a rotation model stating childcare is limited in the Millville area.

Susan Farr:

Stated there are in-home daycares available.

Susan Myers:

Stated she was on the fence and weighing all options. Not an easy decision. Rely on the Administration team recommendations as they see the background and make a decision as best as we can to keep kids the priority. Is afraid offering all three options would be hard to implement.

Jessica Whitmoyer:

Favored a school opening option to allow parents to make a choice between the three models.

Susan Myers:

May need to revisit depending on the pandemic outcome and government changes.

Mr. Rasmus:

Provided a slide presentation of high school and elementary parent survey results for all three learning models; traditional, online, and blended.

Stated outside online learning is very costly to the district, costing \$13,000 to \$14,000, per traditional student and \$20,000 and above for a student with special needs. If a parent is considering online learning, Millville Virtual Academy is an option.

Greg Hemsarth:

Favored children back in school. Wear masks, use sneeze guards, sanitize, pay attention. If there is an uptick, have a back-up plan. Was in favor of parent choice, also.

GUEST RECOGNITION AND COMMENTS

Ted McCaffery:

Appreciated the efforts of the Board and Administration. Would like to be back in the classroom.

Rachel Kusnerick:

Both she and her husband are essential personnel and work outside the home. The hybrid plan would not work for her family. If this is the chosen model, they may move from the district. Favored parent choice.

Robin Andrews:

Was concerned with special needs students and their families. She herself is high risk. Said she knew the school would do all they could to keep students safe but was concerned with interactions of students on the bus and elsewhere. Mrs. Davis stated the district would do all they could to keep special needs students safe and would be addressing issues on a case-by-case basis.

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Carol Troisi:

Appreciates the efforts of the Administration and Board. Favors the hybrid phased opening rotation option; 1, 3, 5, 2, 4, 6. Reassess after the first month with the possibility of the traditional model if there is improvement. If not, and we need to close the school, she would like to see on-line instruction.

Amanda Staskiel:

Appreciates the Board and the community. Her family loves the school and hopes to be back in school as soon as possible with the teachers and friends.

Devin Wolf:

Thank you...this is not an easy decision. Had concerns that many are asymptomatic. His wife has an autoimmune disease and he is concerned about infecting her with the virus. Asked for consideration of distance learning to protect the students and families.

Robin Andrews:

Was in agreement with Mr. Wolf.

UNTABLE THE PHASED SCHOOL REOPENING HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

A motion by Heather Mausteller and seconded by Greg Hemsarth that the Millville Area School Board untable the Millville Area School District's Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan. The motion carried by roll call vote. 9 Yes; 0 No; 0 Absent

PHASED SCHOOL REOPENING HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN-HYBRID MODEL

A motion by Susan Farr and seconded by Deborah Price that the Millville Area School Board approve the Millville Area School District's Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan to include the hybrid model, presented by MASD administration, to include in-school and online education with a rotation of days 1, 3, 5 and 2, 4, 6. The motion failed by roll call vote. 3 Yes; 6 No (William Berger, Brynn Clark, Michael Farrell, Greg Hemsarth, Heather Mausteller, Jessica Whitmoyer); 0 Absent

PHASED SCHOOL REOPENING HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN-FREE CHOICE MODEL

A motion by Jessica Whitmoyer and seconded by Michael Farrell that the Millville Area School Board approve the Millville Area School District's Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan to include the free choice model, to include traditional in-school, hybrid in-school and online education with a rotation of days 1, 3, 5 and 2, 4, 6, or online synchronous and asynchronous, with a commitment to the choice for at least a nine-week marking period. The motion carried by roll call vote. 6 Yes; 3 No (Susan Farr, Susan Myers, Deborah Price); 0 Absent

CLOSING STATEMENT

Mr. Rasmus: School-reopening details will be posted on the website.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Heather Mausteller and seconded by Brynn Clark to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Hannah Sherwood
Board Secretary