

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102, and**

Available Streaming Online at www.spps.org/boe

**August 31, 2021
6:05 p.m.**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Jeanelle Foster, Chair.

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Foster, J. Brodrick, J. Vue,, J. Kopp, Y. Carrillo, Z. Ellis
Superintendent Gothard

C. Allen was absent.

C. Long, General Counsel

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Foster moved approval of the Order of the Main Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Vue.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Foster	Yes
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Absent
Director Kopp	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes

IV. SPPS STAFF REQUIRED VACCINATION: CONSIDERATIONS

Superintendent Gothard thanked everyone for the opportunity to present a draft resolution to give further directions and guidance regarding this issue. While the purpose is not to vote on this item at this meeting, it is an opportunity to discuss with the Board and community to provide feedback to Administration and to discuss publicly and in an open setting, which is an important part of the process. He also acknowledged

the comments and emails that have been submitted. He noted the many different perspectives in COVID-19 and ensuring we do this in the right way. As the school year starts on September 9th, it is his goal to open the doors to our students and families and to keep them open for a strong start to the school year. He noted the guidance from public health agencies, and the recent mask mandate for SPPS.

He also noted the need for further discussion if the Board does decide to bring back the resolution in a final form and the day in which to meet, including the currently held time of Friday, September 3rd at 8:00 a.m.

He then noted that the implementation timeline and further development of the process, and the various stakeholders and different perspectives, that this is substantial work to do and to ensure we can do it well to open our doors and keep them open for the upcoming school year.

A presentation including details on Ramsey County COVID-19 data was reviewed, as well as staff pulse survey results, potential process for Administration, HR/organizational considerations, and next steps.

He then read the resolution aloud into the record, and turned it over to the Chair for further questions and discussion.

V. RESOLUTION ADOPTING A SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESOLUTION REQUIRING ALL STAFF EITHER TO BE VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19 OR TO SUBMIT TO REGULARLY SCHEDULED COVID-19 TESTING

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 infection rate has risen during the summer of 2021 on a national, statewide, and local basis; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), "COVID-19 vaccination among all eligible students as well as teachers, staff, and household members is the most critical strategy to help schools safely resume full operations"; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, "[v]accination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to become infected and develop symptoms and are at substantially reduced risk from severe illness and death from COVID-19 compared with unvaccinated people"; and

WHEREAS, according to the State of Minnesota, "staff who access the workplace or provide public service outside of their homes on behalf of an agency without vaccination pose a particular risk of COVID-19 exposure to themselves, their colleagues, and to members of the public. Additionally, ongoing community transmission of the more transmissible Delta variant of COVID-19 in Minnesota, especially among unvaccinated individuals, presents a continuous risk of infection"; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, the State of Minnesota, and Ramsey County have all made the decision to require their employees to either be vaccinated against COVID-19 or submit to COVID-19 testing on a frequent, regularly scheduled basis; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, subd. 1, the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 625 has the “general charge of the business of the district, the school houses, and of the interests of the schools thereof”; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education concludes that requiring all staff either to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or to submit to regular COVID-19 testing is in the best interests of the School District, its students, its staff, and the communities it serves.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, Independent School District No. 625, Saint Paul Public Schools:

1. Requires either:
 - a. All current staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and to provide proof of full vaccination to Human Resources on or before October 15, 2021. All current staff shall also be required to provide proof of receipt of a booster vaccination shot on or before June 15, 2022.

or

- b. All staff who remain unvaccinated and/or have not provided proof of vaccination as detailed above to submit to mandatory COVID-19 testing at least one time per week. Satisfactory verification of compliance with the COVID-19 testing requirement will be designated by Human Resources. Designations will include no less than allowable testing options, testing resources, how to submit COVID-19 test results and what to do if results are negative or positive.
2. Staff will be provided two hours of paid time off for the day they receive their COVID-19 vaccine (travel and vaccine time) and the full next day off, if needed, due to any after affects. Staff must submit proof of vaccine; otherwise, time off will be considered as an unexcused absence.
3. Any staff member who does not comply with the requirements of either Paragraph 1a or Paragraph 1b will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
4. Any staff member who presents or submits a false, misleading, or inaccurate proof of COVID-19 vaccine card or record will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.
5. Definitions:
 - a. “Fully vaccinated” means either two (2) weeks after the second dose in a 2-dose COVID-19 vaccination (e.g., Pfizer or Moderna) or two (2) weeks after a single-dose COVID-19 vaccination (e.g., Johnson & Johnson). Staff who do not meet these requirements are not fully vaccinated. This definition shall include any vaccine that has been approved, fully, conditionally, or on an emergency basis, by the Food and Drug Administration or the World Health Organization.

- b. "Staff" means all full or part time Saint Paul Public Schools employees.
6. All Saint Paul Public Schools staff hired after the date of this resolution shall either provide proof of full vaccination within forty-five (45) days of hire pursuant to Paragraph 1a or submit to weekly testing pursuant to Paragraph 1b. All newly hired staff that do not provide proof of vaccination upon hire or remain unvaccinated must immediately submit to weekly testing until proof of vaccination is received by Human Resources.
 7. The requirements of Paragraphs 1a or 1b shall also apply to all onsite contractors, onsite vendors, onsite volunteers, and Saint Paul Public Schools leasees, and their employees, agents, and contractors.
 8. This Resolution shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until rescinded, superseded, or amended. Staff may be subject to additional attestation, vaccination, or testing requirements under federal, state, or local law. The Board of Education will review this resolution as necessary in light of changes to case rates, guidance from the CDC, guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and/or the Minnesota Department of Education, and any other applicable authorities and, minimally, prior to the start of each academic quarter.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Vue requested more information on rationale for the pulse survey being sent to staff only.
- Director Carrillo requested further information if the District is locked into testing one time per week, or if that can be adjusted based on current events, and if that may need to be adjusted or amended. Response: Testing one time per week is currently based on best practiced by the CDC and Department of Health, and there would be an opportunity to revise that if needed, especially with guidance by public health authorities.
- He also notes the new contractual agreements and conversations with bargaining units, and flexibility of testing or if we are locked into one time per week and may come back to adjust as numbers change. Response: The resolution does allow for flexibility as guidance changes, and gives the Board the ability to update should recommendations change.
- Director Vue noted a suggestion to add the sources to the references, including footnotes of sources of information.
- He also requested further clarification on the term "fully vaccinated" and its use throughout the resolution.
- He also requested if the percentage of staff who responded was a healthy response pool to move forward with the recommendation. Response: Yes, it is - generally anything above 30% is a healthy response.
- He also noted the pattern in Ramsey County case rates, and if we can anticipate a similar pattern into Fall 2021.
- He went on to note if the special meeting date would affect the feasibility of implementing should it be passed. Administration noted that if the Board votes to move forward with the resolution, that the concern is the implementation of the "go live" date, and the potential of more time to support the efforts of implementation. Superintendent Gothard also clarified that testing is still available in schools.
- Director Brodrick requested clarification if a further definition requiring a booster vaccination within the resolution is needed.
- It was noted that SPPS is hiring new staff every day of the year, and the rolling expectations for this resolution.

- He also requested further clarification on the timelines to ensure this requirement would not interfere with teachers or any staff to start as soon as needed.
- Director Carrillo offered the suggestion of changing to a number of days from the resolution approval for the implementation, as opposed to an effective date.
- There was further discussion on the potential to move the implementation and “go live” date to be further into the year, to allow for capacity for staff.
- Director Kopp proposed that since Friday, September 3 is the posted date of the next meeting, that the Board go forward with that meeting date in order to give maximum time for planning. Director Brodrick, Director Carrillo, Director Ellis, and Director Vue agreed.

MOTION: Director Kopp, seconded by Director Brodrick, moved to go forward with the Special Meeting of the Board of Education scheduled for Friday, September 3, 2021 beginning at 8:00 a.m. in Conference Room A of the District Administration Building located at 360 Colborne.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Foster	Yes
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Absent
Director Kopp	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes

•

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Director Foster moved to adjourn the meeting; Director Carrillo seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Foster	Yes
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Absent
Director Kopp	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the original Agenda and not necessarily the time during the meeting the items were discussed.

Prepared and submitted by:

Sarah Dahlke

Assistant Clerk, St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education