

**Work Session Meeting
January 4, 2021**

Opening

Call to Order

At 6:01 p.m. School Board President Michael Marasco called the January 4, 2021, Caesar Rodney School District Work Session Meeting to order.

Roll Call

Members present in addition to President Marasco were Vice President, Ms. Jessica Marelli, Board Members Mr. Dave Failing, Dr. Joyce Denman, Mr. P. Scott Wilson, and Executive Secretary Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Failing made a motion to adopt the January 4, 2021 agenda as presented. Ms. Marelli seconded the motion and after roll call, the motion carried 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Denman, and Wilson).

Update on School Re-Opening

President Marasco thanked everyone for attending this evening and ask the discussion to begin on reopening the schools.

Dr. Fitzgerald stated he attended a meeting with the Governor today. The Governor is encouraging the districts to open on the 11th in a hybrid learning format. The Governor also recommends this throughout the state. He also understands for operational reasons some districts may need to pause instruction. With the vaccines coming out, he is hopeful districts can provide the proper instruction for students.

Ms. Marelli stated she agrees with the Governor and understands the numbers are very high. Her suggestion is to start back in hybrid and close if needed at a later date. Dr. Denman asked for clarification on Ms. Marelli's statement. Mr. Wilson stated Ms. Marelli would like us to start back in hybrid. Dr. Denman continued and asked about giving notice to the staff. Dr. Fitzgerald stated the district would operate in hybrid and if a particular building had challenges, he would notify the Board of those challenges. Dr. Denman stated the data is the same as it was in March when we went to the full remote learning. She is concerned about the community spread. Ms. Marelli agreed with the data but stated the schools are safe and we are not spreading this within the schools.

Mr. Wilson asked for a vote.

President Marasco stated he would like to return in hybrid with the understanding of possibly shutting down individual schools if needed. Mr. Failing stated he thinks we need to get kids back in school as soon as possible. He understands this area is hot, but the vaccine is coming. He is in favor of returning to remote learning for an additional week. He mentioned the Thanksgiving break statistics. He stated we are not aware of the increases in cases until we return to school. We should look at things per building and make decisions on a case by case scenario. He would like to see an additional week added to remote learning for safety. Dr. Denman agreed with going an additional week in remote learning and starting back to hybrid on the 19th.

Dr. Fitzgerald clarified that we would open in a hybrid format and if there was an issue at a particular school we would pause that particular building.

Mr. Wilson continued and stated we can always go back to remote if needed. He stated the Governor would like for us to go back on the 11th. Dr. Denman shared she is afraid of staff getting sick. She understands the schools are safer than other environments. Mr. Wilson stated we should not keep pushing the return date back.

President Marasco asked about changing individual schools' statuses if we needed to do so. Dr. Fitzgerald shared the Governor's press conference is tomorrow. He sees no problem in changing the operation of individual schools as needed. He agrees to pause individual schools if we need to do this. He continued to

share that we have been assigned the 1B category for the vaccine. We are developing a plan once we receive more guidance.

Mr. Failing made a motion to return hybrid learning on Jan 11th. Ms. Marelli seconded the motion. Discussion took place. Mr. Failing would be in favor of adding a week but would like to see flexibility. Dr. Denman agreed. Dr. Fitzgerald explained the motion currently on the floor.

The motion carried 4-1. (Marelli, Marasco, Failing, and Wilson voting yes and Denman voting no).

President Marasco asked if there was any further discussion. Dr. Fitzgerald reminded the Board that we can pause individual buildings for operational purposes as needed.

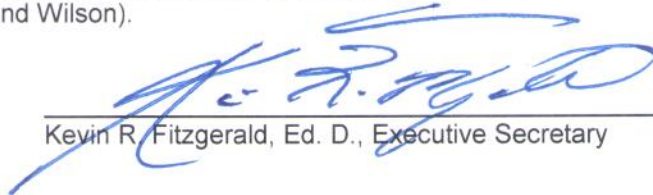
President Marasco asked if the Board would approve moving the work sessions to Tuesdays to coincide with the Governor's press conferences. The Board agreed. The next work session will be scheduled for Tuesday, January 12th.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

At 6:27 p.m. Mr. Failing made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Denman seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0. (Marelli, Marasco, Failing, Denman, and Wilson).


Kevin R. Fitzgerald, Ed. D., Executive Secretary
Date 1/5/2021

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