

Work Session June 7, 2021

Opening

Call to Order

At 6:04 p.m. School Board President Michael Marasco called the June 7, 2021, Caesar Rodney School District Work Session 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, and Executive Secretary Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald. Mr. P. Scott Wilson was not present.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Marelli made a motion to adopt the June 7, 2021 agenda as presented. Mr. Failing seconded the motion and after roll call, the motion carried 4-0 with one absent (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, and Denman).

Discussion Items

School Opening 2021-2022 SY

Dr. Fitzgerald invited Mrs. Tara Faircloth, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Mrs. Kim Judy, Director of Business and Finance, to join the meeting and give an update on ESSER Funding for the safe return to school plan. He explained there are specific timelines. The District may adjust at a later time if needed. This information will be posted on the district's website for additional feedback.

Mrs. Faircloth shared a presentation with the Board. The funding requires input from all stakeholders. They have met with parents, students, and staff. Their feedback has been incorporated. Health and safety guidelines were shared. Face coverings are still required. Gators used as face coverings are not accepted. Physical distancing remains at three feet. They will have cohort lunches allowing for better contact tracing. Hand washing, proper cleaning, specific health facilities, and better ventilation are included in the plan.

Contact tracing will continue to be done with the building nurses in cooperation with Dr. Tamara Toles-Torain, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent. We will hire an additional nurse and paraprofessional for more support. Screening and testing will be included. Dr. Toles-Torain stated there will be training for staff to allow them to test students. Equipment will be delivered and we can ship fast with electronic results. This allows us to have quicker results for contract tracing.

Accommodations for those students with specific needs will be met for students and staff. Academic needs, social-emotional health, and food services were addressed next. There are also various programs available this summer. Some are virtual and some are in-person. A staff member is available during the week for added support. CRHS will be offering camps. Child Nutrition will continue to provide meals during the summer. At the secondary level, students will keep their Chromebooks. We will have wifi buses available over the summer. Tutoring support is also offered. Mental health and wellness will be addressed for all students and staff. Each school will identify a staff member for assisting with social-emotional needs. ELL will provide those services during the summer. We will need to hire additional staff for social distancing. They are working with individual schools on this. Additional buses are needed to provide transportation.

President Marasco asked about providing lunches and the three-foot rule if students are in person. Mrs. Faircloth stated we can have 100% in-person with the current distancing requirement. Mr. Failing stated this has been made possible by a lot of behind-the-scenes planning and having our two new schools. Ms. Marelli asked about quarantine rules if they have been vaccinated. Dr. Fitzgerald stated our greatest challenge is at the elementary level since they have not been able to get vaccinated yet. But there is a two-week quarantine

period for those who test positive. He stated this may change, but we won't know for sure. Therefore, we encourage all to get the vaccine. Ms. Marelli asked about wearing face masks. Coming back to school in the fall, we are still planning to wear masks. For that rule to change, the Governor would need to change this rule. The Delaware Department of Public Health (DPA) is hopeful about this rule lifting for summer school. President Marasco asked about www.tutor.com and if there was a cap on users. Mrs. Faircloth stated no and it is free for all military families. We are offering it to all families and anyone can access it. We are running this for summer.

Mrs. Judy explained the timelines on the ESSER spending. The back-to-school plan needs to be ready and submitted by June 23rd.

Mrs. Faircloth discussed remote learning options. It is their recommendation to bring in 100% of our students in person for the 2021-2022 SY. If someone should have a medical reason they would follow homebound instruction protocol. Increased face time will be considered depending on the student's needs. Dr. Fitzgerald stated at next week's Board meeting there will be an action item to approve fully in-person instruction for the 2021-22 SY and any students with medical documentation will follow homebound instruction protocol. Ms. Marelli asked about those homebound students returning to in-person instruction throughout the year. Mrs. Faircloth stated this has no impact on numbers as we are planning for 100% of students attending in person. Dr. Denman stated the goal for homebound students is to get them back in school with an evaluation process. Mrs. Faircloth shared a doctor would release them. Mr. Kevin Thompson, Director of Student Services, stated homebound instruction requires medical documentation and we reserve the right to request that information at any time. Mr. Failing supports the plan to come back 100%.

Dr. Fitzgerald asked the Board if there were any other questions. Mr. Failing shared he is pleased with the direction we are going and we are going to follow the rules. Dr. Denman added she is proud of the team and the plan.

Executive Session

At 6:37 p.m. Ms. Marelli made a motion to go into executive session and to adjourn without coming back to open session. Mr. Failing seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0. (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, and Denman).

Adjournment

At 8:02 p.m., President Marasco adjourned the meeting.


Kevin R. Fitzgerald, Ed. D., Executive Secretary
6/16/21
Date