

SAULT STE. MARIE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN 49783
SPECIAL MEETING, BOARD OF EDUCATION
Phone 906/635-6609

Minutes – Monday, July 27, 2020

24. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

President Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Sault Area High School Cafeteria or via Zoom at <https://eupschools.zoom.us/j/96851522137> or Dial In: +1 646 876 9923 Meeting ID: 968 5152 2137

President Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. ROLL CALL OF BOARD

Board Members Present: Jay D. Wilson, Martin R. Wolski, Lisa A. Young, Daniel L. Smith, Joseph A. Cochran, Christine M. Curtis, Melissa S. Pingatore

Absent: None

25. **B. OATH OF OFFICE BY NEWLY APPOINTED BOARD MEMBER**

President Smith administered the Oath of Office to Member Lisa Young.

26. **C. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Wolski, that the Board of Education move to adopt the agenda as presented.

Yeas: Wilson, Wolski, Young, Smith, Cochran, Curtis, Pingatore

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

27. **A. REPORTS TO BOARD**

1. Return to School Plan – Dr. Tim Hall

COVID-19 Sick Policy for School Year 2020-2021 – Mrs. Mary Michaels, RN, BSN

Mrs. Michaels reported the COVID-19 Sick Policy was developed in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. She noted the policy may change under new circumstances or public health orders, but its purpose is to outline a plan for sick students or staff who may present COVID-19 symptoms, has reported exposure, or has positive test results.

Mrs. Michaels reviewed the following COVID-19 high risk symptoms that would require immediate pickup of the student from school and recorded as an excused absence.

1. Fever (of 100.4 or per nurse or secretary's judgement with or without fatigue/body aches/chills)
2. Respiratory Symptoms (cough, congestion, runny nose, sore or scratchy throat, shortness of breath)
3. Gastrointestinal Symptoms (diarrhea or vomiting)
4. New unexplained loss of taste or smell
5. Has tested positive for COVID-19
6. Had a close exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case
7. Traveled out of state in the past two weeks

Mrs. Michaels reported she will work with teachers and staff in making judgement calls when students need to be sent home because of illness even if they may not be displaying COVID symptoms. She further explained each school will have an isolation room where students will wait and be monitored until their parent/guardian picks them up.

Mrs. Michaels reported students who have traveled out of state, will be asked to quarantine for two weeks prior to returning to school to ensure they do not contract symptoms of COVID-19.

Mrs. Michaels reviewed the protocol and the continuation of care given to students who have other health issues such as allergies, headaches, pink eye, and flu-type symptoms.

Mrs. Michaels reported an exposed student should be isolated and tested 3-5 days after the symptoms appeared in the person they were in contact with who tested positive with COVID so there are enough viral florals in their system to be picked up for an accurate test.

Mrs. Michaels reported students who are symptomatic with COVID-19 need to isolate at home for 10 days after symptoms begin and be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. She further confirmed that students who are

asymptomatic need to isolate at home for 10 days from the date of their first positive test prior to returning to school.

Mrs. Michaels reported a student who tests positive to COVID-19 but wants to return to school before the 10 days, needs to have 2 negative tests 24 hours apart and be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Mrs. Michaels confirmed the existing policy for students who have a high fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or more, but do not have COVID, need to be fever free and not on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Mrs. Michaels stated the overall goal is to have a slow if any infiltration of the disease and for no one to require hospitalization. She indicated the county is up to 27 positive COVID-19 cases and they have been spotty. She indicated the desire to not overwhelm our testing facilities, have the community work together and wear masks, and for the kids stay in their cohort groups for contact tracing if necessary.

Mrs. Michaels reported on the progress of understanding the coronavirus from April to the present and the Sofia antigen test that provides for rapid detection with 15 minutes.

Mrs. Michaels explained the district needs to have assigned seating because if a student or staff member tested positive with COVID-19, she would need to contact the health department and they would begin the act of tracing.

Member Curtis thanked Mrs. Michaels for putting in a lot of time outside of her normal routine to help plan for the pandemic.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Michaels indicated it has been difficult getting sick children picked up from school in the past, and that's why there is the need for an isolation room. She further explained parents need to know the signs and symptoms of COVID and take their children's temperature prior to sending them to school in case they are sick.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Michaels indicated she is aware that someone in the school needs to check on students who are in the isolation room. She stated it has been difficult trying to get N-95 masks for the schools, and if necessary, she would double mask and wear a shield if she had to care for someone who was sick and there wasn't any.

Mrs. Michaels stated parents need to know not to send their children to school sick and to pick them up as soon as they are contacted.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Michaels reported she will be training staff on how to wear PPEs going in and out of the isolation room.

Upon inquiry from Member Wilson, Mrs. Michaels indicated N-95 masks are not allowed to be worn by just anyone and she is having a hard time getting those masks.

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Mrs. Michaels explained a 6 foot distance and 15 minute exposure time as being as a determination for possible exposure, and she would refer a possible “Domino effect” over to the health department so they would know how far out to seek testing.

Superintendent Hall reported just walking down the hall would probably not be a concern for possible exposure because of the time involved. Mrs. Michaels clarified if someone in a classroom came down with the virus, a quarantine would then be sought for those within the 6 foot and 15 minute radius.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Superintendent Hall indicated that not all of the lower classrooms would probably be able to place students 6 feet apart, but staff has been asked to remove as many extra items from the classrooms to open it up.

A community member commented on her concern for younger students being capable of staying 6 feet apart. Mrs. Michaels indicated students will need to learn social distancing from home and the staff will need to reinforce it.

Member Cochran reported on his concern for young students bringing the coronavirus to their grandparents or home. President Smith responded that parents and guardians will need to consider all of the options before deciding how they want their children to be educated.

Member Wilson spoke on his concern for teachers who may test positive for the virus, how it may affect other students and staff, and what considerations will be made for quarantine. President Smith indicated that staff procedures are being considered, and he appreciates all of what our teachers do.

Dr. Hall indicated the need for a brief minute while 118 people were logging into the meeting.

Virtual Blue – Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported on the full online program known as Virtual Blue for the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer presented 14 frequently asked questions and answers coming in from families and students surrounding the Virtual Blue program.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the district has offered an online program to students who had a Seat Time Waiver over the past 12 years, but it had been

mostly utilized by Malcolm students who had health issues. She indicated that program is now being expanded to include all elementary students and the name is now called Virtual Blue.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer presented a diagram of houses representing the different programs and criteria needed for students to enter each one. She reported the online program requires students to comply with being a full time student, 100% on line per semester and does not supplement a blended part time commitment.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the Kindergarten through grade 7 programs will be connected to and supported by local employees of the district.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported teacher certification for grades 8 through 12 dictates which of our local teachers can develop a particular online program. She noted some course shells may need to come from another vendor or program, but all students will have a person employed by the district to support their learning. She referenced the similarity of the purchased programs to that of the district's ALEKS and Odysseyware programs.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer thanked the parents for their questions and stressed the need to keep an open two-way communication with the district and teachers in order for the program to be successful.

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported once the Board approves the plan, the district will move forward with collecting sensitive data and working with interested parents and students on what the process is for enrolling in Virtual Blue.

Upon inquiry from Member Young, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported students who are enrolled in Virtual Blue that have a 504 plan or English as a second language, will need to take district and state tests, but will have a tutor.

Upon inquiry from Member Cochran, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer confirmed that students who are enrolled in Virtual Blue will be tested online unless the state requires something else at the time.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported district teachers who develop a course will communicate twice a week with the students.

Upon inquiry from Member Curtis, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported parents will have an August 15 deadline to enroll their students in Virtual Blue so the district will have time to secure certain teachers, courses, and platforms for the start of school.

Member Curtis indicated she liked having local teachers develop programs for our children. She thanked Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer for her on the virtual online and afterschool program.

Upon inquiry from Member Cochran, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer responded the building counselors would be monitoring students to ensure they are working toward their graduation requirements.

Upon inquiry from Member Young, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported online students would be given the same opportunity to walk during graduation as well as any in person student.

Upon inquiry from President Smith, Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported some career center classes will have to be offered via blended learning, as not all can be taught 100% online.

Dr. Hall acknowledged 33 parents, teachers, staff and Karen Senkus from the Chippewa County Health Department for their tireless work in developing the Return to School Plan. He noted the state provided the roadmap for the plan, but decisions had to be made on how best to develop it for our area.

Sault Area Public Schools Return to School Plan – Mr. Carl McCready

Mr. McCready thanked Mrs. Anne White for designing the masked devil used in his presentation and for all those involved in the two large committees that helped develop the culmination of the full plan.

Mr. McCready reported the committees consisted of building level administrators, teachers, the school nurse, bus drivers, parents, secretarial staff, central administration and maintenance staff.

Mr. McCready reviewed the 6 phases the Governor developed for our state back in April based on the condition the 8 regions could be in based on the coronavirus pandemic. He noted our region is currently in Phase 5, but several regions downstate are in Phase 3 or 4. He indicated a district's regions would have to be in Phase 6 in order reopen school without restraints.

Mr. McCready reported the district's plan includes everything the state listed as strongly recommended for each phase.

Dr. Hall reported Mr. McCready is presenting what the state is requiring, not working to implement what doctors have suggested.

Mr. McCready reported on the district wide learning management system where district teachers will implement a Google Classroom for students in grades Kindergarten through 12 to work through their homework on a district provided Chromebook.

Mr. McCready reported on the preparedness and response plan according to the following phases: Phase 6 “Normal-post pandemic”, Phase 5 “Strongly Recommended”, Phase 4 “Required”, and the culmination of Phases 1 to 3 “All Buildings Closed”.

Mr. McCready reviewed the following subsections by grade level and phase: Personal Hygiene and Protectives, Social Distancing, Procedures on When Someone Develops Symptoms of Covid-19, Serving Food, Procedures for Indoor and Outdoor Spectator Events, Disinfecting Equipment, the use of student water bottles, disinfecting buildings, outside structures, athletic equipment, and the storage of the cleaning products, sanitization rules and precautions for transporting students on the bus, the systematic review of all IEP, 504 or other care plans, Identifying students and staff who are high risk for severe illness, review of a traditional daily schedule for sanitizing buildings, parent and student preparation for school, entering and exiting the classrooms, buildings, hallways, lobbies, offices, bathrooms, cafeteria, locker rooms, and how they will handle events such as cookouts and birthday celebrations.

Mr. McCready reported the high school will be offering 3 lunch times so students can sit on one side of the tables and practice social distancing during lunch.

Mr. McCready reported he had received 53 questions from parents over the last week and a half and most all of the questions were addressed in his presentation.

Upon inquiry, Mr. McCready reported he is aware of and procedures are in place for student insubordination, but 90% of the students behave the way they are expected to, and as long as the staff approaches a situation with a positive attitude, we will work through it.

Mr. McCready reported he believes a lot of our teachers are anxious to get back in the classroom and teach students.

Dr. Hall reported the district’s plan is to open school back up on September 8 providing the regions remains in Phase 5, and noted the past few months have been a learning experience with how to present access for student learning on short notice.

Superintendent Hall reported there will be a team training on August 6 to consider the psychological effects the pandemic has had on our children.

Upon inquiry, Dr. Hall confirmed a Seat Time Waiver would be available for a student with a doctor’s note.

Superintendent Hall reported the district will continue to offer specials (music, physical education, art, and recess) at the elementary level according to the phase the region is in.

Member Pingatore sought clarification on if the district would require a face mask over a face covering. Mr. McCready reported the district will comply with what the Governor's executive order is.

Dr. Hall confirmed that students will use a Lysol-type wipe that is appropriate for their use to assist with disinfecting their desks.

Member Curtis raised concern on who would be disinfecting the classrooms throughout the day and every four hours in the high-traffic areas. She further questioned how the school will decide which 50 people would be allowed in attendance at student athletic events given that is the maximum allowable for an audience.

Mr. McCready indicated he understood Mrs. Curtis' concerns, and stated it was very disheartening to have to resort to tickets for the graduation ceremony. He noted grandmas and grandpas are often the most affected by the restrictions.

Member Cochran raised concern for in person instruction as it relates to the mechanics for students to use the restrooms during class time, sanitizing the classrooms before and after each class period, the amount of actual instruction time with all of the sanitizing provisions that have to take place, and his concern for MHSAA allowing athletes to have more contact than what is allowed in the classroom.

Dr. Hall reported MHSAA is responsible for the athletic guidelines and if we want our students to participate in state tournaments and events, we have to allow our students to move forward with a plan.

Member Wilson noted he agrees with Member Cochran on the possible Covid exposure concerns and understands what the district is up against.

Member Wolski thanked the committees for all their hard work on the plan.

Mrs. Young sought communication on if the requirement for face masks for students in Kindergarten through grade 8 changes between now and the start of school, to please publicize it as soon as possible.

Ms. Rondeau reported students in grades Kindergarten through 5 are expected to pretty much stay with the same cohort and classroom so as long as we are in Phase 5, face masks should only be needed if they leave that setting.

President Smith confirmed there were no other questions or comments.

President Smith reported he agrees with the majority of the plan which is basically mandated by the state, and any opinions need to be voiced with the state.

President Smith reported pre-pandemic, districts in the area were faced with excessive illness due to the flu, but our district worked hard to disinfect and wipe things down and it never had to close. He noted with that in mind, it should give some confidence that the district will again do everything possible to keep the students and staff safe.

28. **B. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

President Smith and Dr. Hall sought questions.

Upon inquiry from Heidi Lehmkuhle, Dr. Hall reported that the Return to School Plan did not require districts to provide how substitute employees would be notified of its procedures, and because most all of substitutes are employed through EduStaff, he will make sure there is a plan to get the information out to them.

Upon inquiry, Dr. Hall reported the district would have a small quantity of masks available if a student doesn't have a mask to wear at school, but he would like to seek some washable home-made masks from the community to supply the children with.

Upon inquiry from Chris Olson, Dr. Hall reported the CDC guidelines need to be followed and with the region being in Phase 5, social distancing is highly recommended. He noted that if the Governor reduces the phase, our students will go to the hybrid approach for education to ensure there is a 6 foot distance between the children.

There were no further questions.

III. ACTION ITEMS

29. **A. REPORTS TO SCHOOL PLAN – Administration**

It was moved by Member Curtis, supported by Member Wolski, that the Board of Education approve the Return to School Plan as presented.

Member Wilson indicated he would like the plan to go out to all the staff to see if there was opposition and to confirm that it is sustainable and obtainable.

Superintendent Hall reported the plan was based off the state’s roadmap for the return to school plan, the committees had a broad range of members, the teacher union representatives have agreed to it, it was posted to the district site prior to the meeting for questions and comments, and the required time to seek full employee review and feedback, would not be possible due to its deadline and funding tied to it.

Member Wilson indicated he had received comment from people over the weekend and was asked not to comment, 5% of the teaching staff was not enough to be equitable, and he would have liked a better vetting process.

President Smith indicated the plan allows for the district to operate as mandated, and if the plan is not approved, the district will not receive its funding.

Member Wilson stated he doesn’t want to set the staff up for failure if the plan is not obtainable.

President Smith indicated he understood, Member Wilson’s concern, but a plan needs to be approved for the reopening of school and this is what the committee is proposing.

Upon inquiry from Member Pingatore, Dr. Hall reported if things change, the plan will be adjusted, but it already has the flexibility built in to adjust to whatever phase the Governor places our region in. He noted the district may have to adjust on the fly again, but we need a plan.

In reference to teachers, Members Wilson and Curtis acknowledged there are only so many hours in a day. Dr. Hall acknowledged there was a segment of teachers who sat on the committee and provided good input for development of the plan. He confirmed the teachers were very helpful with giving input and the district is very cognizant of their expertise.

President Smith reported the plan was posted on the district web on Friday.

Yeas: Wolski, Young, Smith, Curtis, Pingatore

Nays: Wilson, Cochran

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

30. ***B. INDIAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (IPPs) – Mrs. Amy Scott-Kronemeyer***

Mrs. Scott-Kronemeyer reported the revision to the IPPs was to clarify that a full program evaluation would be done to ensure all our Native American students are being integrated into every program.

President Smith confirmed there were no questions.

It was moved by Member Wilson, supported by Member Pingatore, that the Board of Education approve the revised Indian Policies and Procedures as presented.

Yeas: Wilson, Wolski, Young, Smith, Cochran, Curtis, Pingatore
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

31. **IV. BOARD GOVERNANCE & BOARD POLICY ISSUES**

Member Wolski thanked everyone who were involved in developing the Return to School Plan.

President Smith stated a lot of extra work was asked of those involved in the Return to School Plan and all involved with making changes surrounding the pandemic. He stated he hopes this type of obstacle never has to happen again.

President Smith confirmed there were no other comments.

32. **V. FUTURE PLANNING**

President Smith reviewed the following events.

August 10, 2020 – Regular Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
September 14, 2020 – Regular Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Hall confirmed the locations and mode for holding the meetings will be determined closer to the meeting dates.

33. **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at 9:28 p.m., it was moved by Member Cochran, supported by Member Wilson, that the meeting be adjourned.

Yeas: Wilson, Wolski, Young, Smith, Cochran, Curtis, Pingatore
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Daniel L. Smith, President

Melissa S. Pingatore, Board Secretary

Judy L. Sirk, Recording Secretary