

Special Meeting September 8, 2021

Opening

Call to Order

At 7:37 p.m. School Board President Michael Marasco called the September 8, 2021, Caesar Rodney School District special 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 September 8, 2021 agenda as presented. Ms. Marelli seconded the motion and after roll call, the motion carried 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Wilson, and Denman).

Discussion Items

School Opening 2021-2022 SY

Dr. Fitzgerald gave an update on Covid statistics in the district. This information is posted on the district website. He shared we are pleased with our current numbers. Our major concern continues to be transportation. The shortage of bus drivers is causing delays with bus travel, etc. He thanked the parents for their ongoing patience. He shares we have learned some contractors have just turned over their athletic contracts. This continues to be a state-wide issue. The district is hoping to have another job fair to recruit staff including bus and van drivers.

Dr. Fitzgerald continued to say we are pleased with our school opening and we will continue to have students in our classroom learning in person. We are encouraging mask-wearing as this keeps people from being quarantined. This only benefits the community if we continue mask-wearing. Dr. Fitzgerald asks that parents keep students home if they are not feeling well. Our nurses are doing a great job with all things required of them in treating our students, providing medications, contact tracing, etc. The district has hired additional nurses and they will start over the next few months. Our nursing responsibilities continue to grow.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released a memo regarding Covid staff leave. Dr. Fitzgerald stated there are more questions than answers with this document. The memo has misleading information and more clarification is needed. He shared that school boards are asked to approve Covid leave. There is the responsibility of the district to cover the local funding amount. The state would only pay substitute costs. This means classroom coverage utilizing other teachers may be required. Dr. Fitzgerald continued to state we understand there are different cases and individual quarantine situations. We are working with OMB to make this equitable for all.

Dr. Fitzgerald continued to share our in-person instruction continues and our positivity rate is below the average. He is glad to see students back in school. Mr. Failing shared his student is happy to be back. President Marasco added his daughter is extremely happy as well.

President Marasco inquired about middle school sports. Dr. Fitzgerald explained Air Base Middle School (ABM) and Magnolia Middle School (MMS) have submitted a waiver asking to combine their students due to lack of interested students to make up a full team. The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (DIAA) did not grant this request to play as a combined team. They stated this is a violation of the eligibility requirements. DIAA also will not hear the case until October which is the end of the fall season. Dr. Fitzgerald

shared we are allowed to transport students back and forth to practice. The schools can play against other CR schools. Administrative transfers to MMS will be considered. School Choice is not open at the middle school level and you can't school choice for athletic advantage. Dr. Denman asked for the regulation specifics. Dr. Fitzgerald explained the current regulation. Mr. Wilson stated there are not enough students to fill a team. Dr. Fitzgerald added ABMS has no fields available. The discussion continued on how we can allow the students to play athletics at both schools. Dr. Fitzgerald concluded by stating we will continue to work on this. The DIAA middle school regulation needs to change.

President Marasco asked about middle school lunches. Dr. Fitzgerald stated we are not quite there yet. We are hoping to add a pole building to Fred Fifer III Middle and F. Neil Postlethwait Middle Schools allowing for additional space for lunches. The principals are monitoring all lunches. Tent rentals are not available due to this time being wedding season. All areas of the buildings are being utilized for extra space. Our students are complying with Covid requirements. He shared the elementary schools have really stepped up with how they handle lunches.

Dr. Fitzgerald ended by stating we have had super openings in all schools and we are going to have a great year. He added that bus drivers are desperately needed.

Executive Session

At 7:58 p.m. Ms. Marelli made a motion to go into Executive Session to conduct interviews for the Director of Human Resources. Mr. Failing seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Wilson, and Denman).

At 10:15 p.m. Ms. Marelli made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Mr. Failing seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Wilson, and Denman).

Action Items

Appointment of the Human Resources Director

The Board appointed Candidate #003 as the Human Resources Director with an effective date to be determined.

Ms. Marelli made a motion to appoint Candidate #003 as the Human Resources Director with an effective date to be determined. Mr. Failing seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Wilson, and Denman).

Adjournment

At 10:18 p.m. Ms. Marelli made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Denman seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0 (Marasco, Marelli, Failing, Wilson, and Denman).

Kevin R. Fitzgerald, Ed. D., Executive Secretary

Date