

Meeting Minutes

State Education Issue Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools – Update for Hempstead Reopening Task Force – Group A

July 23, 2020 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Regina Armstrong, James Clark, Bridgett Burroughs, Thurston O’Neal, Arlise Carson, Allan Wakefield, Carole Eason, Donna Teichner, Danna Raphael, Gary Rush, Juanita Diaz, Johnetta Hill, Janet Lovett, John Robinson, Jasmin Sowell, Beverly Barr, Richard Brown, Rozella Fibleuil, Reina Jovin, Sonia Hood, Sandra Powell, Susan Thompson, Galaxy S8, (718) 309-7763, Barbara Intrieri, Charlene, Rhonda Chung, Maria Cady, Stephanie Turner, Delmy Bermudez- Castillo, Desiree Maurice, Dorothy Butler-Crayton, Anita Reynolds, Nicole Brown, Yohana Arevalo, Robert Hodge

James Clark opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and for all the valuable input that has been offered in the last month of meetings. We are meeting today so we can update you as to our plans for reopening. He then turned the meeting over the Ms. Armstrong.

RA: Thank you all for coming. The purpose of this meeting is to keep as many members of our community involved in the reopening process. By the end of tomorrow, we will post our plans for September on our website. The governor says we must have a plan in place that will include some in-person instruction. He needs to have assurances that we have certain plans in place for that to happen. Thank you all for your valuable input, thus far. And thank you to Mr. Clark for organizing and running all the meetings. Hempstead feels the best approach is a hybrid model. It is impossible to bring all our students back at once and follow proper protocol.

There is some debate as to whether it is 6’ with a mask, or 6’ without a mask. That causes concern and we need clarification. Other districts in Nassau County were attempting to bring back all their elementary students. They didn’t realize that they had to face all their desks in the same direction, etc. They are now rethinking their strategies.

We are looking at two models. Cohort A and B, AM and PM sessions. Parents will have the option on sending them AM or PM. This plan is contingent on

bussing. For instance, at Joseph McNeil, we bus students in from the Rhodes catchment area. That will not be an issue after September 2021 when Rhodes reopens. Cohort A will be Monday and Tuesday, Cohort B – Thursday and Friday. Wednesday will be remote for all. This will allow for a deep cleaning in addition to the more frequent regular cleaning. Wednesday is also a staff meeting day, as well as CTE and PTSA. It can also be used for parent/teacher conferences. The middle and high school will be uniform throughout the district

CE: I met with the bus company this morning. I will send you an email

RA: I'm sure it's not good news. We are cash tight. We can't afford to add a lot of money to bussing. I would rather spend the money on staff, technology, PD, etc. We may have to go Cohort A and B, morning only.

CE: It works best for First Student to keep the schedule consistent

RA: The middle and high school are following the same plan. They are more complex and have Cohort A, B and C. They plan to have no more than 40% of their students in the building at any time. When kids are not in school, they will always have instruction. Specials, FLEX in elementary, assignments to complete, etc.

We are trying to bring Special Ed students into the building more. Self-contained will have 4 days of in-person instruction, although they will be abbreviated days. EL's as well. We will make sure they have adequate in-person instruction. Does anyone have any questions?

DBC: Will all students have devices?

RA: Yes. The order should have been placed today. We are also looking into getting internet access for \$1 per student/month through Altice. Some students don't have devices because the parents rejected it, either because they had their own or didn't want the responsibility. So, it is hard to keep track of who has a device. Smart Bond money will be used to acquire these devices.

DBC: When will we give these out?

RA: Before school starts. There is a supply and demand problem. We will survey the parents and start with those who have nothing to work with

DBC: Do we have a fully remote plan?

RA: Yes. We have that in place already but need to tweak it

MC: What about moving around in the building?

RA: All plans include limited mobility. The staff will move, not the students. Limited movement in the high school, as well, except for science labs, for example

MC: What about meals?

RA: We will be serving more cold lunches that are grab and go. Elementary students will eat in the classroom.

DM: Why do we only deal with one transportation company?

RA: We have a contract with First Student. We were lucky. With our negotiations, our price will only increase 2% this year. Other districts are going up as much as 30%. Also, supply and demand. Two bus companies have gone out of business. And all districts have the same issue regarding additional busses this year.

JH: Will the bus company do temperature checks?

RA: No. The responsibility is placed upon the parents. It will be based on an honor system. Staff and students will need to take temperature and answer a series of questions. Have you been in close contact with anyone with COVID? Do you have cough or shortness of breath? A fever of over 100? Recent loss of taste or smell? If yes, to any of these questions, you will not be permitted to report to school. We will also be doing random checks. The staff will use an app on the phone. Green light, OK to come. Red light, stay home

DBC: How often will this be done? And we know that not everyone is honest

RA: Everyday and we realize that

BBarr: What about the Special Ed component? We have a very large number. Are we still doing the bussing? How will we keep them socially distant on the bus?

RA: This high school students will not leave for BOCES. We will bring the sources to them. Bus companies are not allowed to do the temperature check. Masks are required. It is impossible to socially distance them on the bus. There are not enough busses and if there was, it would triple the cost. We have 280 Special Ed students. First Student will put 50 students on a 66-seat bus

JH: In upstate districts, students from the same family can sit together on the bus

RA: For the Rhodes catchment area, that might be possible. But unlikely in Pre-K, K or Special Ed

BBarr: Thank you

DBC: As far as Kindergarten meeting at their home school. Doesn't that expose them to more germs?

RA: We are going to do bus stops, not the home school

CE: For kindergarten, there will be no curb to curb. They will go to home school. The volume is too great. We are going from 66 to 44 kids per bus. We can't go to the Pre-K stops. We also share a bus route with another district. They are in the process of acquiring more busses and coming up with additional guidelines to keep the students and bus monitors safe

NB: At Jackson Annex, kids are dropped in the building. A TA watches over them until the bus comes

RA: We need to revisit that. We are going to have to establish a bus stop. They can't come into the school anymore. The parent must wait with them

NB: Will the nurse still be doing temperature checks at the door or is it just an honor system

RA: There will still be random checks for students and staff

NB: What if they haven't done the screening? Will they be let in?

RA: The state says that we must have a policy in place. They are required to do this. Staff you will know (red light/green light). Students will be an issue. One may get in without a screening

DBC: What about masks? Will all students be required to wear them?

RA: Medical documentation must be provided in order for a student to not wear a mask

DM: The app you spoke of earlier. Is that for iPhone only?

RA: The app is for staff only, not students. Parents will do it online. It will be monitored by each individual building. Each building has a COVID-19 Coordinator, maybe more than one, to look at the data. We still need to solidify who that will be in each building.

RA to AW: Can you give us a brief update on facilities?

AW: We have a stockpile of PPE. Disposable and cloth masks, gloves, face shields for all our staff. We have enough for students that don't bring them. All our cleaners and disinfectants are here. Working with Bridgett Burroughs. We are looking at protective barriers for each building for high traffic areas. Staff has been trained to clean and disinfect. We have always had that in place, for example, pink eye outbreaks, etc. With COVID, we will be doing it with more frequency and have to hit more touch points. We are getting auto hand sanitizer pumps for all building entrances. We have procured Electrostatic Sprayers for expedite the disinfectant process. We are reviewing our HVAC

systems. We will be doing filter changes 3 times a year and using anti-microbial filters. The CDC recommends that fresh air be increased in all buildings. We need to open doors and windows.

YA: I have 12 hand sanitizer units that I will not be using if anyone needs them. I ordered them before I knew they were eating in the classroom. They were meant for student use

ST: At the elementary level, we have many window air conditioners. Are there special filters we can use in them or do we go without AC?

AW: There are two settings on every AC. One recirculates air, the other brings in fresh air. Recirculation saves money, and is normally the preferred setting, but with COVID we will change to outside air. And I will investigate microbial filters for the window units

DBC: Will teachers have cleaners?

AW: Yes, they will be made available

NB: Will you provide a list of acceptable cleaning materials?

RA: No cleaning products can be brought from home

JC: There may be student allergies. Only school cleaners may be used

(RC: Is leaving doors open approved by the fire department?)

RA: Certain doors yes, others no. We will provide guidance

NB: Leaving doors open in the portals is a danger

RA: Jackson Annex and ABGS have portables. We will have to increase security

(BI: Also, the suite doors at ABGS)

ST: Adult Ed comes in at 6:00. Do you clean before and after us?

AW: Yes

RA: Do we need more custodians?

AW: Maybe not. Cafeteria workers, for instance, will be freed up to do other things

RA: The custodians have been given sheets that need to be filled out when they clean. These are required to be filled out and submitted. If additional cleaning is required, it will be addressed

AW: The head custodians will be monitoring that. We will be doing deep cleaning on Wednesday and Saturday. We may have to adjust shifts

RA: We will schedule additional ZOOM meetings the week after next to keep you updated on our plan. We have a union president meeting tomorrow. We will also schedule a ZOOM meeting for parents. Dr. Gilmore will be sending information to staff regarding staff needs and medical accommodations. A survey was sent to parents as well. Do we know the results?

GR: 45-55% would prefer remote learning. Many are undecided until they see our plan

BBarr: What happens if a child gets sick?

RA: We will have an isolation room at each school with a person in protective gear. We are looking at gowns, plastic dividers. The parent will not come into the building. The child will be escorted out.

Next year, we will have no visitors to the buildings without an appointment. Most meetings will be done by ZOOM or phone

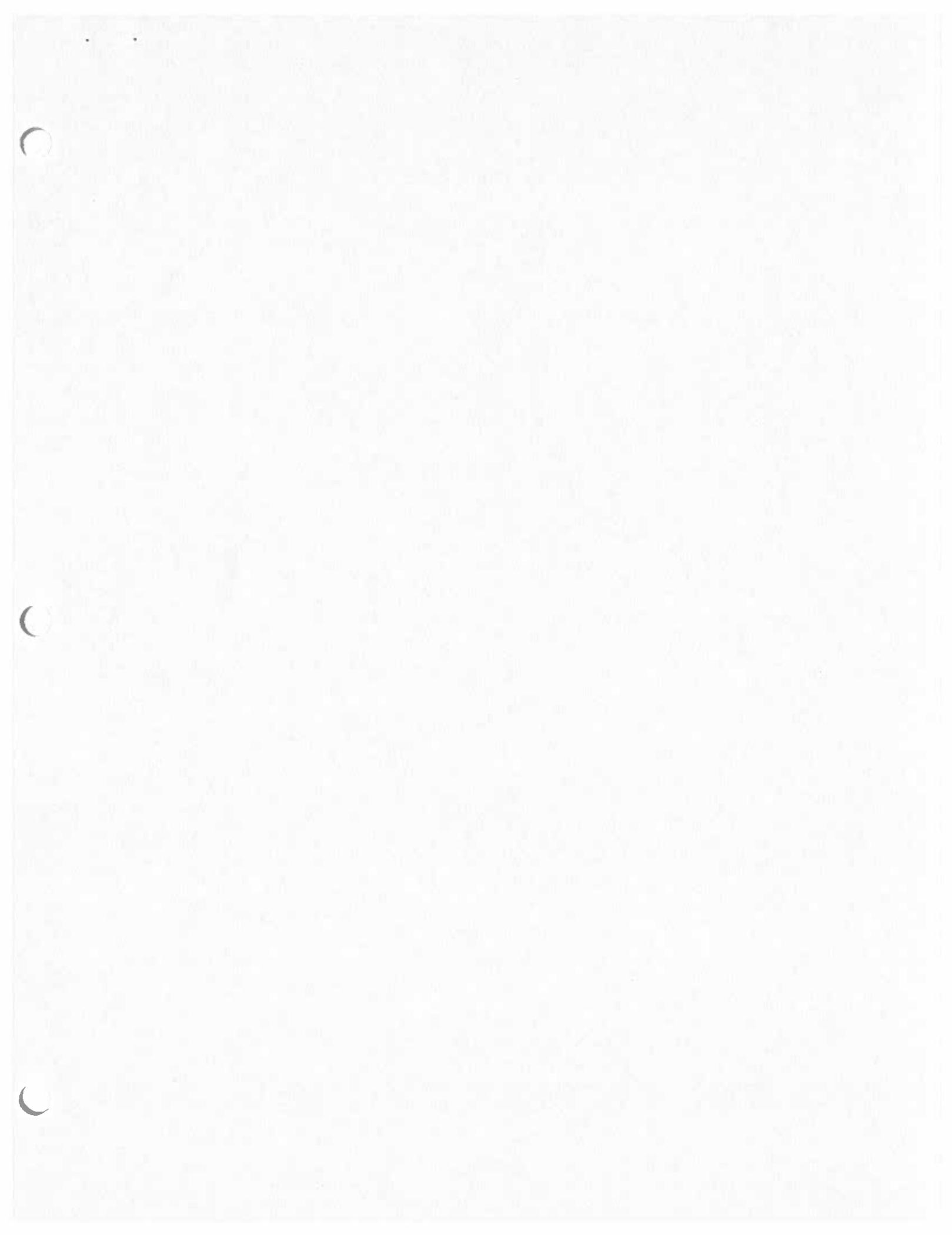
DBC: What happens if someone gets COVID?

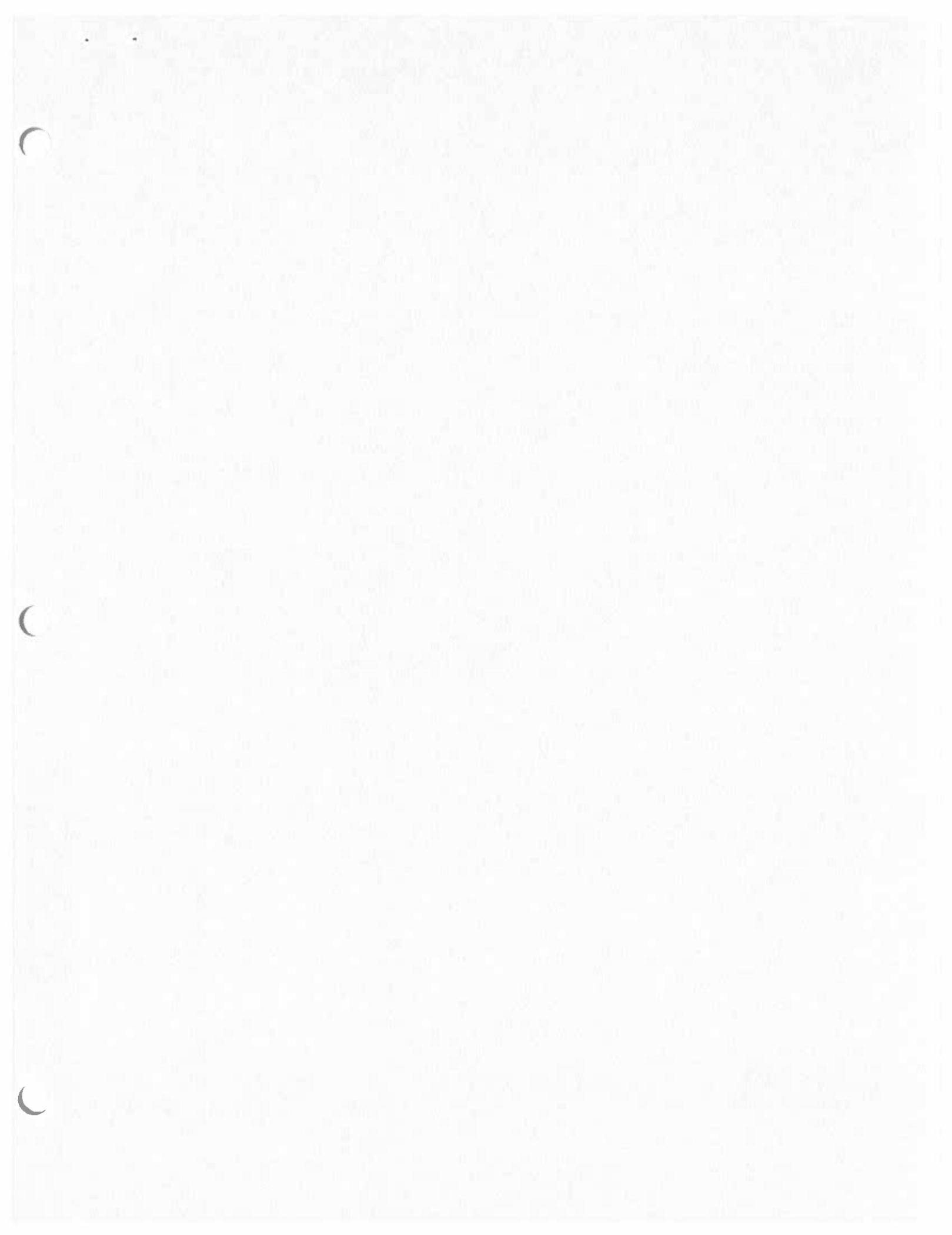
RA: If we get a call they must stay home until the test result comes in. The building COVID-19 Coordinator has to contact the CDC. A 48-hour shutdown is required before people can return to the space

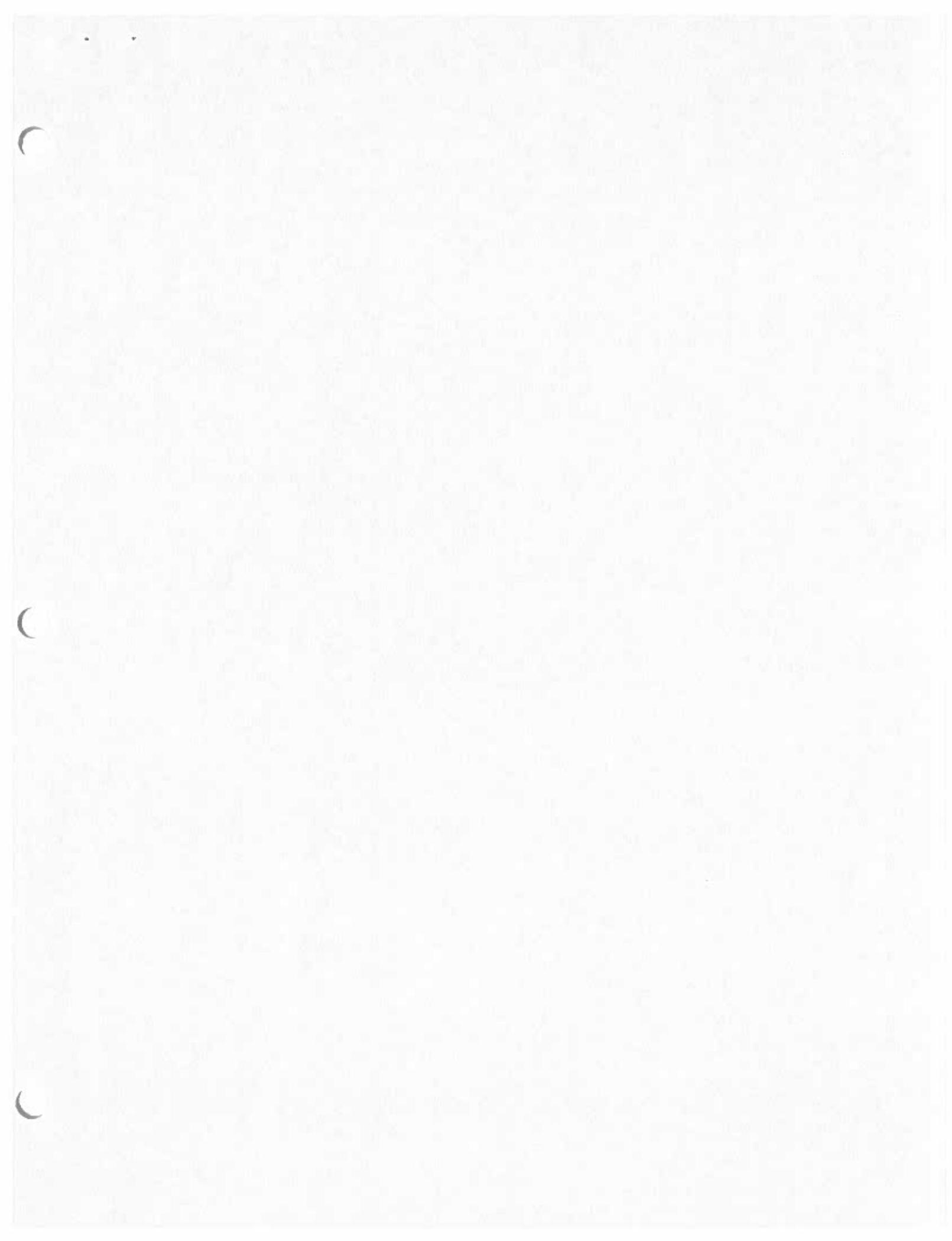
ST: Will the district be notified if a parent or family member has COVID?

RA: At the start, the answer was yes. But now the CDC is so overwhelmed that we may or may not get an update

Thank you all for coming today. We would like to keep this process as transparent as possible. Our priority is safety and we plan to return as safely as possible, but with no guarantees. Governor Cuomo has the ultimate say and will make an announcement the first week of August.







Meeting Minutes

State Education Issue Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools – Update for Hempstead Reopening Task Force – Group B

July 22, 2020 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Regina Armstrong, James Clark, Rodney Gilmore, Ahunna Akoma, Allan Wakefield, Robert Hodge, Cheryl Goodridge, Carman Ayala, Gabrielle Kirby, April Keys, Anishia Massay, Barbara Intrieri, Barbara Powell, Bridget Pratt, Delmy Bermudez-Castillo, Diane Petito, Desiree Uzzell, Donnette Williams, Erika Deans, Gwen Jackson, Heather Cuccia, Joelle Day, Jane Fisher, Joy Vanhook, Keesha Keller, Lorna Barnes, Laquana King, Maria Junior, Madeline Baez, Maria Cady, Peter LaDuca, Patricia Wright, Rhonda Chung, Suzette McMillan, (516) 434-4000, (516) 361-3763, Patricia McNeill, Anita Reynolds, Felicia Prince, Nicole Brown, Pam Parsley, Peggy Wilkens-Walker

James Clark opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming. We have met before and you have come up with excellent suggestions before we had guidance from the state. We have finally received guidance, and we have spoken of most of what they want us to do in the fall. We have a timeline for getting our final plan to NYS; July 31st. If they find fault with our plan, they will contact us, if not we go forward to open. The administrators have had a very productive week with Professional Development and have spoken in more detail about our plans. I will turn the meeting over to Ms. Armstrong to summarize what we have come up with.

RA: Thank you, Mr. Clark, for your leadership with collecting information for this plan. We would like to go over what we plan on presenting to the state on July 31st. Guidance finally came out late Wednesday, July 15th. The portal did not open until 10:00 p.m. on July 17th. We have a very short period of time to go over the information and submit our plan

Hempstead is going with a hybrid model. We do not have adequate space in our buildings to bring back all the students at one time. Some districts can do it. For the elementary, we are going with a cohort plan. Cohort A, and Cohort B. The "A" plan is the morning schedule two days a week. Monday-Tuesday or Thursday-Friday. Wednesday is all virtual. The "B" plan is the afternoon session.

There are still many questions for doing this. Bussing, for instance. Marshall, Prospect and Joseph McNeil depend on bussing. (JMcN for the Rhodes Avenue students). Some transportation companies have gone out of business. We do not know if they have the capacity to accommodate our requests. We have a meeting with First Student, our primary bus company, Monday or Tuesday of next week. We also have other districts competing for their services. It is a matter of money. I would rather put the money into staff, versus transportation.

There may be students who can't return due to health or have a parent in a high-risk category or students with an IEP. We need to bring back the students with an IEP everyday with live teachers/specialty areas

The middle school and high school are more complicated. We would like to bring kids in on a 40% capacity on a rotating basis, either AM or PM. We would like to do in-person twice a week, the rest remote, some at night or credit recovery.

These plans are also dependent on the ability to clean/disinfect in between sessions. We have one disinfecting machine in the school and we will see if it is possible to do all the schools in a timely fashion

RH: I found a place that has the machines in stock

RA: We do not want full capacity. We must follow the 6' rule without a mask. Some say 6' with a mask. There are different interpretations and the rules are ever changing

We also must plan for full remote learning in the fall for all students. My compliments to how we did it in the spring. Students in some districts never saw a teacher or heard from the school. Kudos to how we handled it

We have PD in place, so teachers get the training needed. In addition to learning all the remote teaching techniques, we need to train on how to spot COVID symptoms, how to wear a mask correctly, MIS-C symptoms, and hygiene

issues. Bridgett Burroughs is working on a video to send to parents, community and staff that focuses on handwashing, mask wearing and social distancing

Food. Breakfast and lunch will be served in the classroom and will be grab and go

Everyone must have a health screening before entering the building. A temperature check as well as a series of questions. It is already online and it will go directly to the supervisor. Parents must do it for their children. There is also an app that can be purchased by BOCES. It will collect the data of those who responded. It will show up with a red light/green light. Red, don't come to school, green, you are OK to enter

PL: The BOCES app is no cost to the district. It encourages everyone to screen from home. I will give the info to AA. It can be adapted for parents and visitors as well

AA: Where does all the data go?

PL: We spent a lot of time working on this. The attorneys were involved. We do not keep any personal information. Only, who can come into the building. You can track the data

RA: I will open the forum for any questions

NB: What will the teacher's day look like?

RA: Like a Pre-K model

NB: Hours?

RA: I will share with union presidents on Friday. All aligned with the teacher's contract. They may even have extra time off

NB: What about specials? Art, PE, etc.?

RA: Probably virtual or small group with TA or AIS/FLEX teachers. We are looking into that now

NB: Will "B" group get instruction non "A" day?

RA: Maybe in PE or special. May be phased in. Or they may be working on an assignment due. They have to get the required minutes in. We will have the info on Friday

NB: What about staff members in high-risk categories?

RG: We have "COVID-19 Regional Accommodations". It will go out to the bargaining units. It is similar to reasonable accommodations. It will go to those who are considered vulnerable or high-risk. We will spell it all out, quarantine, etc., it will be very clear as to what we have to do, by law

RC: What does the health screening entail?

RA: Temperature check, no exposure, no symptoms questionnaire

AA: This information is not on the website yet. I am separating it out. Each principal/department head will be managing their own people

JC: We have an English and Spanish version

AA: Please send Spanish version

RG: Visitor screening will be translated into Spanish. Not for employees

RA: We will have no visitors to the school. By appointment only. We will be conducting business via phone or ZOOM. No random walk-ins allowed

RC: If someone comes down with COVID-19, do you have to use your sick days or is it covered?

RG: We have something called the First Family Response Act. If you must be quarantined, we will pay without taking away your sick days. And if a family member has it, you are also covered. You must provide documentation.

MC: I attended a conference recently. Two items were discussed that I have not seen here. HVAC – Many do not have to filters to contain small particles

RH: We are getting microbial filters for our roof units, so that issue will be addressed. Also, our ducts will be cleaned

MC: Also, the screening process. A person can be contagious 4 days prior to symptoms.

RA: Anyone with symptoms will be taken immediately to the isolation room. The question is do we close just the room or the building? It depends on where they are in the building

PL: Valid point. Many asymptomatic too. We are putting plans in place to do the best we can. It is the nature of viruses. It is very unlikely that we will pick up all cases. And we know that parents will still send their kids to school sick

RA: We are basically putting this on an honor system. We know that not everybody will be honest. Parents may load them up with Tylenol and coach them to say they are not sick

(AA: Question in CHAT. **SM:** How will we handle childcare of staff members of kids who are on a blended plan?)

RA: The district is not responsible for childcare

(EG: What about Tele-health for speech, OT, etc.?)

RA: Only kids with IEPs have to be taught in person

(SM: How do people work if their kids are on a different schedule?)

RA: That would have to be worked out county/district wide. Sixty percent of our quadrant in Nassau County are bringing back all their elementary students at one time. Long Beach purchased portables to spread the students out. We cannot do that. The schools in the quadrant could not all agree to do the same thing

(GJ): Will every child have a computer to use?)

NB: What will Special Ed look like?

RA: Pretty much the same except a shorter day. It also depends on how many students are sent back

NB: Are we asking parents if they will send their kids back in the fall?

RA: No. Cohort A, B or total remote. But to be total remote they must fall under the vulnerable persons act

RG: Under the Emergency Family Act, if your school/daycare should close for COVID, you can get up to 10 – 12 weeks of coverage, it may be at a reduced rate

RA: (In response to GJ) Our goal is for all students to have internet access and devices by September. We have ordered 900 iPads, 3000 laptops. We have a quote from BOCES/Altice. Internet access will cost \$1/student/month. We are working on it

RA: (in response to SM) It is the parent's responsibility to find childcare

(EG): What about hotspots in the community for internet? Churches, etc?)

AA: We are discussing it. We have \$4.5 million left on a Smart Bond. We plan to include community Wi-Fi with that

RA to RH: Can you please give an overview of what Facilities is doing?

RH: We will have additional sprayers before school starts. Electrostatic Sprayers. We clean first and they spray the doorknobs, desks, bathrooms. A real time saver. We can cover a lot more ground

We have been stockpiling PPE. We got more face shields today. We have plenty. Custodians are required to fill out a questionnaire when they clean, and it must be signed off by the head custodian and our office. We will have auto-dispensers of hand sanitizer at all entrances to buildings. We have ordered filters for our HVAC that are microbial and will pick up small particles. Front Street, where we don't have ventilation, will have to open windows. Maintenance is checking that all windows are operational

(LB: Will there be face shields for all staff?)

RH: Yes. And masks as well.

NB to RH: Has the staff been through training?

RH: Yes. We are going through it now. Starting tomorrow, AW and I will be going to each building to discuss procedures with the head custodian. We have plexiglass shields for the security desk. Permanent signage, floor decals, hygiene signs, building entry procedures

(AM: A 12' distance is required for PE, music. What about water fountains?)

RH: We will be getting filling stations for all buildings.

JC: The state has sent out a list of mandatory things that all schools must have. We are addressing all the issues. This is a process that is constantly changing. We need to be flexible. Safety of our students and staff come first. If you have any questions you can email them to myself and Mary

(PW: We can keep our doors open now?)

PL: What Mr. Clark said is correct. This is a living document. Things will be constantly changing.

RA: We have not come to a decision as far as a phase-in period. For example, the first two weeks of school could be done remotely. We do not want to open schools if we do not have everything in place. Please be patient. Thank you all for giving up your time this summer to participate. Please feel free to share this info with others. We have a meeting with the union presidents on Friday at 12:00. I will be providing the BOE a draft of the reopening plan tonight