

THERESA AXFORD
Superintendent of Schools



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Chairperson

District #4
JOHN DICK
Vice-Chairperson

District # 1
BOBBY HIGHSMITH

District # 2
ANDY GRIFFITHS

District # 5
DR. SUE WOLTANSKI

Monroe County School Board Regular Meeting Agenda

BOARD MEETING VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE
Host Location: 241 Trumbo Rd, Key West, FL 33040
Tuesday, August 25, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. Mindy Conn
Mr. Bobby Highsmith
Mr. Kenneth Griffiths
Mr. John Dick
Dr. Sue Woltanski

Mrs. Theresa Axford, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Dirk Smits, Board Attorney

WORKSHOP AGENDA – TIME CERTAIN 4:00 P.M.

1. Community Health Metrics

The Superintendent opened the workshop by referring to a question asked by Mr. Highsmith at the July 28, 2020 School Board meeting regarding how long will it take to go from virtual instruction and back to face-to-face. She said it will take at least one week to phase students back into the campus buildings. On August 18, 2020 the Superintendent had a meeting with Mr. Eadie, Health Director of the Monroe DOH (Department of Health), to get vital information on health metrics as a guide for the transition back to face-to-face instruction. Mr. Eadie was introduced as guest speaker.

Mr. Eadie informed the School Board that he was advised to provide information only, and not to advise or provide recommendation. He shared the Florida Covid-19 Data and Surveillance Dashboard and said that indeed the case numbers are coming down, reports show that Monroe County has met the metrics, he is confident in community's overall numbers, and believes the school district plan allows to start taking steps for implementation. Although the pediatric/school aged numbers show a positivity rate of 16% over the last 2 weeks, he is uncertain where the test numbers are from and needs to review the Monroe numbers to confirm this.

Mrs. Conn asked - How can we have one case reported yesterday and a 14-16% rate of positivity in pediatrics? Mr. Eadie answered that pediatrics rate is accumulative from March but local numbers need to be crunched so as to give a true pediatric metric. Mrs. Conn felt that it is time to safely phase in more students slowly, that we are currently in an open phase by having district employees' children in campus buildings.

Mr. Highsmith reiterated his understanding of the plan that was approved by the DOE (Department of Education) and asked why would we not follow our approved plan? Also if we don't follow our DOE approved plan, how do we make decisions going forward? Mr. Eadie acknowledged that we are to listen to his guidance, however he is not to make any recommendation. Mr. Highsmith noted DOE & DOH conflict

regarding the school district plan and asked where we go from here? Mr. Eadie responded by acknowledging he was not to recommend, however noted that we are currently in a moderate spread. Mr. Highsmith felt that we have a legal obligation to keep to our approved DOE plan.

Dr. Woltanski expressed concerns regarding the metrics, that the DOH was advised not to give us advice, whether or not we had sufficient staff to meet the student/teacher ratio, the difficulties of getting children to wear their masks, the disruption to students from a possible closure after returning, and about not having the option to continue virtual instruction if preferred. The Superintendent noted that the current plan does not present this, however the plan is evolving to attempt to meet both virtual and brick and mortar instructional needs making the virtual option available by matching teachers with those students who want to continue in virtual.

Mr. Griffiths verified that volunteers who meet our criteria of being vulnerable students are the ones coming back to school on August 31, and on September 14 everyone that is willing to will come back to school, and asked if the plan language was consistent with DOH changing metrics. - Yes, the plan is based on a minimal, a moderate, and a substantial spread.

Mr. Dick expressed that the School Board should set the example and begin in-person Board meetings, we needed to get started with the safe phasing in of students, and that if the positivity rates go up before our opening then we don't open. In reference to our plan that is inclusive of low, moderate and high spread rates, we have listened to the information from the DOH and should make our decision regarding phasing in students.

The Superintendent stated that our top priority is to keep our teachers and students safe. Daily meetings are held to understand how our schools will implement this. She reiterated that our Guidebook plan does not specify a plan to reopen in relation to dates, it specifies that once we reopen school, based on a moderate spread, we will be in full session for elementary school, and on an A/B schedule for middle and high school. We currently have 250 students of employees in day care with no safety issues or concerns. This return will be phased over three weeks with the Vulnerable Population returning on August 31, orientations for student training the week of September 8-11, and full return for Elementary students on September 14 and using an A/B day schedule for grades 6-12. We will follow the Center of Disease Control (CDC) guidelines of a pod of eight (8) to ten (10) students per teacher. If positive cases increase things might have to stop. Many parents are grateful to start because we know a lot of students are not successful in virtual learning.

Mr. Dick requested inclusion to Action Agenda that we make a motion to implement our moderate spread plan as developed by the Task Force for Safely Reopening Schools with a phased reentry for students beginning on Sept. 8 with a full start on Sept. 14th if our numbers continue to meet the metrics set forth by the Health Department for a safe reopening.

2. Return to Play for Fall Sports

Dave Murphy, Executive Director of Assessment and Testing, presented our athletic phasing based on the guidelines of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFAHSA), American High School Athletics Association, Center for Disease Control, and local orders. We will move to NFAHSA Phase 2 Practice on September 8, and Phase 3 guidance on September 21 assuming public health metrics remain stable for 14 days prior.

Mr. Highsmith asked what nearby county athletic plans were – Many schools are aggressively moving forward. He also asked is it possible to start football if there's improvement, and if we wait to start football competition on September 28, do we have time to complete traditional 10 games season? – We just received guidance today, and believe we can extend but need to confirm.

Mrs. Conn asked if we have added any releases to athletic packet in light of Covid-19? - It was considered however don't believe it serves any purpose.

Dr. Woltanski asked since there was no spring sports and kids may be out of condition, do we have enough time for pre-seasoning conditioning? - Each school athletic director will consider schedules in order to be competition ready.

END 5:05pm

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – TIME APPROXIMATE 5:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 5:05pm

B. ADOPT AGENDA AND FORMAT – Superintendent's and/or School Board Members' requests to amend the agenda or remove items from the consent agenda.

Mr. Dick requested the addition: Action Item 7 – Approval to implement our moderate spread plan as developed by the Task Force for Safely Reopening Schools with a phased reentry for students beginning on Sept. 8 with a full start on Sept. 14th if our numbers continue to meet the metrics set forth by the Health Department for a safe reopening.

Dr. Woltanski requested that Consent Item 6, Approval for District Travel Requests, be moved to Action Item 8.

Mrs. Conn - finds cause to add that to action items.

Recommendation to adopt agenda was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

Vote: PASSED

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

Vote: PASSED

D. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN THE MONROE COUNTY SCHOOLS

1. Great Educational Moments (GEMs)

Rebecca Brown, collective GEM - Back to School Task Force

CITIZEN INPUT/REQUEST(S) TO ADDRESS THE SCHOOL BOARD

Presentations to the Board are limited to three (3) minutes for each individual speaker and five (5) minutes for the representative of a designated group. Transfer of time between individuals and/or groups is not permitted. Letters submitted to each Board Member and/or Board Secretary prior to a Board Meeting will not additionally be read into the record at the meeting.

PLEASE CALL 305-293-1400, EXT. 53323 TO SPEAK DURING OUR CITIZEN INPUT SEGMENT.

Marcella Gregory, parent of a Monroe County School District student – Expressed dissatisfaction that students must wear masks in school when they return.

Jessica Prescott, parent of a Monroe County School District student - Appreciated efforts made, expressed that students should have choice about whether or not they want to wear a masks and social distance – it should not be a requirement.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed as consent agenda items are considered routine and noncontroversial by the School Board and will be approved by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. Prior to this meeting, Board Members have had the opportunity to review each of these items and may request that any item be moved to an Action Item for individual consideration.

- 1. Approval of Personnel Recommendations for 2020-2021 School Year*
- 2. Approval of Worker's Compensation Settlement Claims – August 2020*
- 3. Approval of Procurement Card Transaction Reports for the statement ending July 5, 2020*
- 4. Approval of Legal Services – Vernis and Bowling Invoices for Juris Bill_6_0*
- 5. Key Largo School 5th Grade Safety Patrol Trip to Washington D.C – reschedule for March 21, 2021*
- 6. ~~Approval for District Travel Requests~~ moved to Action Item 8*

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Mr. Highsmith

VOTE: PASSED

A. REPORTS

GOAL 1: Student Success

1. Advanced Placement Report, D. Murphy

Dr. Dave Murphy, Executive Director of Assessment and Testing, discussed that Advanced Placement Tests were done completely differently this year due to Covid-19 and shared some of the Monroe County highlights. Credit to our teachers for encouraging students to partake, and to those students who did partake. Our report demonstrated success.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Dr. Woltanski asked what does one (1) student signify? - Normally a student working independently with a teacher but not enrolled in the course. She expressed her disappointment that A.P and Honors Physics is not continuing at Coral Shores High School - We will look into this, possibly dual enrollment could be available through college. She asked if no data from Somerset Island Prep High School means they had no AP tests? – We didn't receive data in 2019, therefore we can only assume this.

Mrs. Conn asked how much weight can we give these numbers considering no in person school as of March and that the test was different from the past? - We performed as well as the state, we held our own in a very unusual year. She asked that next year we look closer at 2019 results to compare 2020 results.

2. Identifying and Addressing Our Vulnerable Populations, F. Herrin

Dr. Frannie Herrin, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, shared the activities and curriculum resources that will be used with students. She also listed the number of students registered at each school, and shared how happy parents are to have this opportunity for their students. In reference to how we were to respond to our vulnerable populations in our back to school plan, the sub groups were selected appropriately.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Griffiths asked if this takes into account all students on reduced and free lunch? - Yes, they do qualify.

Mrs. Conn asked to confirm that coming back as a vulnerable student is a parent decision, they have the option – Yes.

GOAL 2: The Whole Child

GOAL 3: Human Capital Advantage

1. Personnel Report – New Teachers for the 2021 School Year, H. Russell

Mr. Harry Russell, Executive Director of Personnel Relations, discussed the challenges of Covid-19 within the Human Resources department. They needed to create the New Teacher Orientation for remote participation – thanks to Amy Flaherty, Jerian Winn, Joy Nulisch, and Kristen Condella for their work. New Teacher recruitment efforts were discussed. Feedback from New Teacher survey results were shared. Talked about Teacher retention, discussed surveys that are shared throughout first year of experience and the mentor program that is provided, and spoke about build-from-within. Showed new data base tool for demographics called Power BI – thanks to Pansy Wang and CJ for their work.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mrs. Conn ask what are we doing with growing our own? – Examples include targeting students interested in teaching, and a possible four-year degree program at College of the Florida Keys, we would work with those students.

Mr. Highsmith hopes the new scholarship in honor of Phyllis Allen will help us to promote recruitment of minority students from within.

Dr. Woltanski asked what the impact on established teachers was – Numbers remained mostly steady.

Superintendent was happy we can access data from the new platform.

GOAL 4: Safety and Security

1. Back to School Health and Safety, P. Lefere

Mr. Pat Lefere, Executive Director of Operations and Planning, discussed the work done within schools to prepare for return to classrooms. He explained mask shipment issues and how we are overcoming this, a separate order for K-5 sized masks was placed, enhanced cleaning procedures and training for custodians are in place, and great signage related to safety is placed within schools. We asked schools what their wish lists included - the three most wanted items were face shields, sleeves, & clear masks. These items are now purchased. For purchases of additional items requested, we are considering allocating funds to each school to make their specific purchases.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Dick requested there be some kind of confirmation of receipt at schools when safety supplies are received for security purposes – We are working with principals to ensure close control of these items.

Mrs. Conn loves the clear masks, especially for use with young students in support of their social and emotional support. She asked if ultra violet lights can be considered? – American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend in a school setting.

Dr. Woltanski recommended color coding the spray bottles – Bottles are clearly labeled but we can look at color coding options. She also spoke of the CDC guidelines around ventilation and better filtration and asked if we have done an evaluation on school air filters, is HVAC up to date? Our resident HVAC expert is looking into this because the national guidance does not necessarily work with our tropical climate. She also felt we should consider airborne particles spreading through HVAC – We are currently doing a comparison between CDC recommendations and our systems.

2. Teacher Covid-19 Training Update, J. Barrios

Ms. Jennifer Barrios presented the specifics of the Covid-19 workplace safety course.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mrs. Conn asked if there is a completion date required - Yes, teachers who have volunteered to report on August 31 must have done before then, then dependent on next phase of opening those teachers must have it completed before reporting, it is less than 45 minutes.

Dr. Woltanski asked if board members will we have a log in? - Yes, we will provide that.

Legal

Already spoken with members of the Board regarding the court hearing and Department of Education. Don't need to report any more, unless there are questions - No questions from the School Board.

Superintendent

Hosted a Facebook live for parents to comment on virtual programming, thanks to Kristen Condella and Erin Williams for helping. Had 3500 viewers, 806 comments like shares, answered numerous questions, parents requested to do more, some great suggestions such as - longer breaks between HS classes, more face time for young grades, upon return to school offer an AA BB schedule, teachers use students view rather than teacher view when showing screens, good feedback and lots of teacher praise, input for successful return to face-to-face instruction.

Board

Mr. Griffith – no

Mr. Dick – no

Mr. Highsmith had communication with our legal counsel Dirk Smits and Gaelan Jones regarding kids recording and sharing someone's voice or face without permission. Reminder that this can be deemed felony in state of Florida and we should send students clear reminder regarding inappropriate use of digital media which can cause serious repercussions. – Gaelan Jones is working on this.

Mr. Griffith was in agreement with Mr. Highsmith's comment.

Dr. Woltanski visited Plantation Key School on Friday and was very impressed by all the hard work.

Mrs. Conn - no

Recess

G. PUBLIC HEARING 6:34pm

1. Second Reading: 61008 Coordinator, Student Support Job Description

Superintendent noted this appears on Action Agenda. Position was formed from mental health allocation, the district portion is approximately \$13,000.

2. First Reading: 77008 Enterprise Resource Planning System Coordinator Job Description

Superintendent explained that this represents reorganization in the Finance department, not a new hire.

Mrs. Anders explained that we currently only have one employee covering specific tasks, this job description update recognizes this employee. Finance has given up a departmental position and made some salary differentials, saving \$140,000 in the re-organization.

Reconvene 6:36pm

H. ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of Job Description 61008 Coordinator, Student Support

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Mr. Griffith

VOTE: PASSED

2. Approval for Monroe County Sheriff's Office Interagency Cooperative Agreement for Education

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Griffith

Seconded: Mr. Dick

VOTE: PASSED

3. Renewal of Discovery Education Streaming Services

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

VOTE: PASSED

4. Approval of Change of Order #1 for Big Pine Academy Renovation to Design Center, Inc

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

VOTE: PASSED

5. Approval of KWHS Backyard Design Build Deduct Change Order #1 to Ajax Building Company, LLC

Mr. Highsmith asked for an explanation of this change request – This is the standard process of applying savings against total cost of product, we buy a supply item not contractor. This a cost savings matter? – Yes.

Dr. Woltanski asked if this reflects what was approved a month ago? - No, those were furniture and fixture items, outside this contract.

Mrs. Conn thanked Ajax for lower cost.

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Dr. Woltanski

Seconded: Mr. Griffith

VOTE: PASSED

6. Memorandum of Understanding between Total Package Hockey (TPH) and Monroe County School District

Dr. Woltanski asked how this is no cost to us? Will their performance be part of our district's grade? What is Monroe County School District's benefit? If these students don't show up for testing, will it affect our district? – They will serve as virtual students in our program through Edmentum, is built into the contract that they are held to the same requirements and standards, is born of the partnership we have with Edmentum - Lee county reached out to us as they are not partnered.

Mrs. Conn asked why would we spend \$50,000 to do this? - We will earn \$80-\$90,000. Where will the testing be held for these students? – Either at our schools or a local location, dependent on numbers and Covid safety recommendations.

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

VOTE: PASSED

7. Approval to implement our moderate spread plan as developed by the Task Force for Safely Reopening Schools with a phased reentry for students beginning on Sept. 8 with a full start on Sept. 14th if our numbers continue to meet the metrics set forth by the Health Department for a safe reopening.

The Superintendent asked Mr. Dick to state his request.

Motioned: Mr. Dick

Seconded: Mr. Highsmith – for discussion

VOTE:

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Highsmith had two discussion points 1.) he did not recall a formal Board vote regarding setting school start date of September 11, it was to be the Superintendent's call, now switching to board vote, going forward we need to be consistent, either it is the Superintendent's call or a Board vote; 2.) he also stated with different levels of risk tolerance we should offer staff similar flexibility to protect selves.

Superintendent clarified that the July 28 minutes showed that the Board voted on the school re-entry plan.

Mr. Griffith expressed incorrect order of this vote, law requires that the recommendation precedes the vote.

Superintendent made a recommendation to approve implementation of our moderate spread plan as developed by the Task Force for Safely Reopening Schools with a phased reentry for students beginning on Sept. 8 with a full start on Sept. 14th if our numbers continue to meet the metrics set forth by the Health Department for a safe reopening.

Mrs. Conn verified with Mr. Dirk Smits, Board Attorney, that order was correct – Yes.

Dr. Woltanski was not clear that students had option to stay in virtual learning until ready to return to school classroom - All schools will re-poll parents, some teachers will continue to teach virtually to serve students who are not ready to go back. She further requested that adjustments of the reopening plan to be an Action Item at every Board meeting going forward.

Mrs. Conn expressed that it will now be necessary to include this as an Action Item.

The Superintendent expressed that health metrics are constantly changing, virtual instruction and face-to-face instruction preferences keep changing, we do need to continue discussion and will bring it to the Board as amendments are needed. If directed by the Department of Health to close, we will have to do so.

Mr. Dirk Smits stated that the Superintendent has emerging powers, can also call emergency meeting. Recommend making it a standing item on each agenda and vote on changes.

Mr. Griffith asked if we will meet face-to-face at next Board meeting. – Yes, it was already agreed to and is advertised.

Any further discussion? - No

Any opposition? - Dr. Woltanski

VOTE BY ROLL CALL

Mr. Highsmith - yes

Mr. Griffith - yes

Mr. Dick - yes

Dr. Woltanski - no

Mrs. Conn - yes

By majority motion PASSES

8. Approval for District Travel Requests

Dr. Woltanski questioned if we are we reopening district travel? – We are not reopening district travel, it is considered on a case by case, this is vital legal training that is not available locally or virtually.

Recommendation for approval was made by the Superintendent

Motioned: Mr. Griffith

Seconded: Dr. Woltanski

VOTE: PASSED

ADJOURMENT 7:04pm