

7/9/20 Elementary Planning Committee Meeting

Our Mission: To create three learning plans to submit to DESE for the 2020-2021 school year.

- In-person learning w/ new safety requirements
- Hybrid Model
- Fully Remote Learning

The Elementary Committee will focus on Elementary operations, teaching and learning, student supports, professional development needs for staff

Members:

Administration: M. Coburn, D. Rehor, D. Leblanc

Teachers: K. Smith (K) D. Bashista (K) C. Moriarty (1) A. Dalton (2) M. McCaul (3) J. Bak (3) D. Murray (5) J. Hough (6) M. Collins (6) D. Dostal (specials)

Sped: R. Harper, C. Servaes

Secretary: J. Fairman

School Committee: L. Papillon

Subcommittee Report Out:

K-2: Potential for adding a third 2nd at LES to allow for daily in person during Hybrid, Recording platforms for instructional videos, Flipped Classroom Model modified for young learners.

3-6: Share departmentalized plan, fall assessments that drive instruction, Help Desk type of person for online learners.

Specials: Virtual in Chester w/Para supervising

Student Supports: 1:1 instruction or small group w/Plexiglass, Possibility for 1 SPED teacher per grade level

Logistics: Update on information from yesterday's district meeting, questions about those remote learning. Survey data update

MEETING MINUTES:

Update from district committee meeting: Looking at cafeteria capacity, works for HS, elementary keep in classroom, tables not allowing enough students to be able to sit in lunchroom, 5 & 6 grade trying to get everyone in the cafeteria 30 students on top tier 34 on bottom tier, can't fit all of 6th grade, looking at using school committee room for an additional space, 3ft distancing during classroom because masks on-need 6ft in cafeteria because no masks.

Installing water bottle filling stations in place of water fountains in all buildings.

Survey data indicates that 30% of families are looking to transport their own students, still waiting for info. from DESE to see if we do not have to maintain a seat on the bus for them. Collins question: If they say they are going to transport- is that a commitment or can they change their mind? They can not change their mind, but it could cause a huge disruption to a bus run. Currently, about 100 students are opting into a full remote learning program K-12. Lots of questions about who will be managing the online learners if teachers are teaching full time? Of that number, 6th grade has 13 students choosing remote learning or a homeschool option, classrooms only fit 16 students so that may help with the larger class sizes in 6th grade. Survey data will be collected through July 10th.

CDC saying new guidelines coming for education in the next week. We are already planning for 3ft distancing instead of 6ft per DESE guidance, but nationally on the news we continue to hear 6ft.

distancing. Servaes question- Isn't the return to school a local decision? Megan: Based on what other districts are putting out, it appears that way, but all schools were told to put together a full return plan and that DESE would send out a team to make it work if districts couldn't do it.

Update from Student Support Subcommittee: All a work in progress, some of what they started looking at is giving students individualized instruction, having a small classroom it would be easier to service students on IEPs. Could someone make a plexiglass partition and separate the students with that? Small group instruction would be possible this way; are we taking on any additional teachers to reduce class sizes to 16? Megan: Based on the number of parents saying they are keeping their kids home, we should be ok the way we are. We are just squeezing in under the classroom capacity. It would be helpful if we ask for a commitment from parents by August 15. Then we could look at managing the classroom sizes; Jen Bak question- 3rd grade considering departmentalizing structure. Can they make the classrooms by level? Megan: No, our inclusion model is best practice. We also don't have up-to-date student data, our current model allows us to support students while maximizing SPED staff, possibly less peer models because of parents opting out of in person schooling. Servaes and Harper asked about having one special ed teacher hooked to one grade level to lessen the risks of exposure and help with planning purposes. Kurt and Megan will work on dispersing SPED teachers to where they are needed based on caseload and student needs. As of now, Chester has no academic IEP goals for students in grades K-2. Could look at using Hollis if someone came into Chester with an IEP depending on needs of the IEP. Harper- K-2 at LES will not have one SPED teacher. Her concern is spreading her germs or coming in contact with whole classrooms, Support staff would like to be able to pull out those students for small group instruction. People are concerned about working in spaces with no windows. Ventilation is in the guidance, but what happens when there are no windows? Matt Collins suggested using tents in the courtyard on good weather days. Megan: Yes, but we still need classroom space inside due to inclement weather. Dalton- Are they utilizing gyms? Megan: We are trying not to allocate them for anything else just yet, waiting on more guidance from DESE to see what the recommendations are for PE classes. We know ideally they will be held outside, but on rainy days or in the winter that's not going to be possible. MS gym is also potential overflow from the cafeteria

K-2 Update: Question on hybrid model and are they coming every day in a hybrid model? One idea that second grade had was Harper being a second grade teacher, so if they move to a hybrid model the students can still come to school every day like K/1. Second grade team feels it's important to keep those students in small groups and be able to come in every day. Karen Smith- transportation question if K-1 coming in every day does that throw off the busing? Megan: Possibly, but if you know that your K/1 students are going to be in daily, we can plan for that from the beginning. Our goal is to provide the best education possible given the circumstances and we believe that it's a priority to have K/1 in daily- remote learning is a challenge at that age. Gallagher- put together SPED numbers by grade for Megan to review and see what needs are in each grade level. Amy Craig is another special education teacher that can be utilized K-6 since Chester and Littleville grades 3-6 will be together.

Moriarty asked about small group instruction, can they have extra desks to spread students out for small group instruction? Or find a way to work 1:1? Megan- not 100% sure yet if each classroom can put in plexiglass dividers because of cost. Having additional desks or tables also impacts the number of students that you can safely distance in a classroom. How small group instruction can work might be something that we figure out once we start school and have a better understanding. We need to

keep in mind that instruction and the classroom environment will not look the same and that is hard for all of us to wrap our minds around.

Megan: Understands that a big concern for staff is making the content available for those students who are remote learning when teachers are teaching all day. There are still aspects of this model that need to be worked out and we don't have all the answers yet. She wants teachers to start thinking about the flipped classroom model. How can teachers create lessons so that even the students in front of them are doing the same as the kids remote learning. Even the kids in school can be working in Google Classroom. If we have to change from in person to the remote or hybrid learning it would be easier for kids to transition. It is wonderful that we have so many K-6 teachers that are taking a flipped classroom course right now, it will help with implementation. Please share what you are learning and your ideas with your colleagues that are not taking the course.

Moriarty: In the flip classroom model you create instructional videos for students to watch during class and make it part of the teachers routine.

Smith: Pre-recording instructions for work and letting them listen to them as needed and other ideas they give make sense for the students to set them up in the best way possible, it definitely is a change in thinking. Megan: Can you record yourself on SeeSaw? Moriarty: Yes, you can create a video and have a link in SeeSaw for the instruction. You just need to find the time to be able to record yourself. Wondering about legal logistics using YouTube or another platform for recording lessons? Megan will check with Chris Parker.

Bashista: you can record yourself and get a QR code and put it on a piece of paper and students can then scan it to get the instructions or lessons. Want kindergarten & 1st grade students to have the touchscreen Chromebooks for learning.

Grade 3-6 Update: Matt Collins: Sharing a document on departmentalizing to match hybrid model and ease of online component. In the hybrid model students go home early and the teachers would have a 45 minute - 1 hour time frame to check in with students.

Collins: If teaching full time how do office hours come into play? Megan: Classroom teachers would either not be responsible for that or it would have to be negotiated with the Union because it would extend working hours. We would have to create a student support/help desk for students to reach out to teachers to answer questions for students needing assistance. This could be a staff member that was unable to return to work because of being at-risk.

Papillon - concern that point person may not be able to answer the questions because the grade levels are too broad

Murray-should we be looking at ways of managing/supporting our own classroom both in the classroom and for those at home?

Papillon-Question: pre-teaching assessment is going to be difficult especially for those students who are doing remote learning, how do you do those assessments? Even for those students that are at school would classroom teachers still be assessing their students? Megan: Assessing students with the Benchmark assessment is going to be time consuming and difficult because it's 1:1 and also our literacy staff are now going to be classroom teachers, so we no longer have that additional help with completing assessments. This is something we are going to have to give more consideration to...

Fairman- feels like the basic internet service is lacking. Even during this meeting, she is at Littleville and the computer keep freezing and cutting out- should we look at upgrading our internet? Will our network handle all the additional devices being on at the same time?

Specials Update: Denaë: Looking at making Chester online for specials- because the time it takes to travel to teach for 2 hours takes up a lot of the day. Megan: We could have specials presented virtually in live-time to Chester and have a Chester para supervise the class, this way the teacher gets their prep-time. We will be sharing staff with MS to cover specials for grade 6.

Next Steps: Megan: Everyone review the Hybrid model and be ready to discuss on Tuesday: Transportation could impact start and end time, K-1 (maybe 2nd grade) would attend every day, still having lunch at school, specials teachers could be utilized as substitutes and all specials would be online. Currently a 4 day schedule, but DESE guidance could change that.
Leblanc: Spent time with the 3-6 subcommittee group and still have a lot of questions, need more information on how the teaching model will work with in-person and remote learners in the Full Return model.