

7/23/20 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

July 23th Meeting Agenda will focus on the idea of a “Phasing In” model

- **Update from District Committee Meeting on 7/22**
 - Board of Health concerned about amount of cleaning that needs to occur daily
 - Union not comfortable with DESE guidelines, asked district to negotiate/impact bargain
 - DESE now approving 5 days of professional development, 175 school days
 - DESE preliminary guidance on transportation is one student per seat (about 23 students on large buses and 8 on the small buses)
 - DESE guidance for band/chorus is for them to be held remotely
 - District committee supported a “Phased In” model
 - Communication of preliminary plan going out to the public tomorrow
- **What is a “Phased in” model??**
 - Based on bringing students back in a planned sequence based on specific criteria
 - The first group to return would be students with higher needs (IEP/ELL)
 - The second group to physically return would be PreK-first grade (2-4 days).
 - The third group to physically return in a hybrid model would be the remainder of the elementary grades
 - The fourth group to physically return would be the middle school
 - The last group to physically return would be the high school
- **Planning for a Meet n’ Greet w/ incoming students & families**
 - Chromebook distribution day - All elementary teachers participate
 - Meet student, inform parent of expectations/schedule
 - No kindergarten screening, individual meet n’ greet and start w/remote learning. If needed, we will assess/screen once they are in school.

Remote Learning

- Daily schedules
- Expectations for Google Meets, assignments
- Policy for grading K-2, 3-6

MEETING MINUTES:

Cleaning concern: Not such an issue at the elementary level but at the HS, students have to transfer classrooms in order to take a variety of courses. How classes get cleaned between groups of students and concerns about bathrooms.

Question: Is one of the 5 days of PD going to be used for moving items? Answer: Some teachers have already been coming in to move personal items or take personal furniture home, Megan believes those 5 days would be specifically for professional development. Question: who would the teachers contact about getting into the building? Megan: Let her know and she will touch base with Cara about letting people into the building at the MS.

Megan: Preliminary plan is just that, preliminary. Gateway will put a communication notice out tomorrow to the public. It mentions that parents have the option of keeping their children home while still accessing Gateway's remote learning plan. It also mentions the phased in plan. This may not be the final plan, but it's reflective of where we are at right now. A lot of push back from the union on the DESE guidelines and coming to a common ground to be able to put students back in the classrooms is difficult with the looming August 10th deadline. Many feel that the phased reopening is a good starting middle ground, but DESE negotiations stalled with the MTA.

"Phased In" model would be based on certain criteria that needs to be developed. Ideally, based on our population's positive COVID numbers. If the numbers in our communities remain low and there is not a spike for a set amount of time then we could move to the next phase of bringing students in. The SPED group is meeting today with the Sped director to discuss our high needs students and determining who will need to be prioritized. Need to look at the actual needs of the student.

Question: How are we going to know if someone comes down with the virus because of the HIPAA laws? Megan: Great question. Not sure if the Board of Health receives that information first and then has a responsibility to inform the district or if we have to solely rely on the parents to share that information. I'm also not sure how specific the information that we receive from the Board of Health could be due to HIPAA. Contact tracing could also play a role in this. Megan is going to reach out to nurse, Jodi Cabral-Croke for clarifying information and will follow-up.

District is looking into a communication system where all the parent contact information would be easier for staff to access and allow for all two-way communication to be on one platform. We currently have teachers using various modes of communication. 6th grade teachers mentioned again that they would like a parent group email to be set-up so that they have an easier way to directly communicate with all their parents. The majority of the elementary teachers have been using Class Dojo to regularly communicate with families.

Chromebooks are ordered but on back order. Chris has enough Chromebooks to start the year for everyone to have one, then will switch them out when the new ones come in for K-2 especially for kindergarten who wanted touch screens.

Megan described how the meet n' greet would work. Most likely have stations set up outside and parents and students would go to the grade level station to pick-up their Chromebooks, and meet their teacher. Teachers would also be able to share their remote learning expectations and weekly schedule. The distribution day could be scheduled by last name to control the amount of families

coming through and to make it more convenient for those families that have children in multiple grade levels.

Question: Textbooks were not collected for 6th grade from the spring, so we won't have those to distribute. How will we get them? Megan: Will look into that and figure out the best way to get them back so we have them available for the new 6th graders.

Dostal: Concerned that if the specials teachers are teaching all day on Wednesday that they will not get their prep time because they are also going to be used to cover teachers that are out. So that means they will be teaching for a full day on Wednesday with no break and also be working the other 4 days covering teachers, so when would they get their prep time? Classroom teacher stated that the classroom teachers will not be getting a prep period at all for the other 4 days so Wednesday is the only day that they will have to plan. Megan said that this "phased in" model was only given to her yesterday, so she also needs time to look at the whole picture and figure out schedules. Specials might look different while everyone is remote vs. when all have returned in-person and are operating in the hybrid model.

Things to think about for the next meeting: Grade levels to produce a schedule of how a day may look under remote learning for students in their class. Need consistency between grade levels. Create universal expectations for Google Meets (must wear a shirt to Google Meets, no eating, sign-in on time, etc...