



Gateway Regional Middle School and High School

12 Littleville Road • Huntington, MA 01050 • Tel: (413) 685-1102 • Fax: (413) 667-5593

Jason S. Finnie
Principal

Martha Clark
Assistant Principal

MS/HS WORKING GROUP MINUTES July 14&16, 2020

- District Working Group update
 - Minutes for meetings can be found on the district website [here](#)
 - Focus was mostly on state, building level, and subcommittee updates
 - *protocols for individuals with symptoms waiting final DESE guidelines; “isolation” room will be school store for main complex*
- Discussion of 3 models Considering [DESE Reopening Guidance](#)
 - *DESE update on plan submission:*
 - *Initial plan with overview and challenges of each model due July 31.*
 - *Plan with details of each model’s implementation due August 10.*
 - Shifting our focus to development of a hybrid plan
 - *We have identified that we can bring all students back (minus those indicating they will choose online) if ideal conditions, but conditions are not likely to be ideal....DESE still emphasizing focus on getting students into school*
 - *This model further reduces class sizes to make 3 ft minimum more practical (will look at spacing student seating 6 ft apart in classrooms), and potential for transitions more possible (though likely not every period)*
 - *Allows for use of more effective classroom management and facilitated learning strategies*
 - *Working off a 2 cohort model; parent survey indicates desire for set days per week vs. alternating weeks*
 - *Given equity and need for consistency, looking at 4 days per week (2 for each cohort), though state will need to approve*
 - *5th day could be used to focus on online support, and socio-emotional/college & career readiness curriculum*
 - *Need for common MS/HS schedules will eliminated Advisory in HS bell schedule*
 - *High risk students (IEP, 504 DCAP, EPP, ELL, etc.) would be on site every day.*
 - *Concern about being in synch with neighboring districts raised; Jason is continuing to meet with area principals and indicated that other districts’ hybrid plans vary based on interpretation of guidelines, structure of district (especially as it relates to bussing), and results of initial parent surveys.*
 - *Concerns raised about increased need for protocols and custodians for cleaning of bathrooms (still awaiting final guidance) and for a plan that*



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allows for period transitions- Jason to work with facilities subcommittee on this, though transitions will likely be highly restricted.

- Pros/cons of Partial Day Full vs. Partial Day Half schedules (7:45-noon)
 - *If state allows partial day, this would allow additional time to prepare flipped instruction model and/or check in with online students; more reasonable for students ability to be accessible to learning while safety measures (masks, social distancing, lack of transitions to other classrooms) are in place*
 - *Full schedule (six 35 minute periods each day in person) allows in person more frequently, but short periods make synchronous instruction with online learners more challenging*
 - *Half schedule (three 75 minute periods each day in person) reduces transitions for teachers (if students must stay put), makes some transitions for students possible; better supports labs; allows time for more varied instructional approaches for synchronous in-person and online learning*
 - *Concern expressed regarding attendance of online students who do not consistently attend synchronous classes; will need to develop interventions to address this, though awaiting DESE guidance on this as well.*
- Planning & Adjusting Instruction & Assessment
 - Shifts in instruction to accommodate online learners
 - *Flipped classroom model will allow for synchronous learning of online students (parent survey indicates around 20% of district parents/students considering full online option) without the challenges of live streaming or recording live classes; planning all instruction in a common manner will facilitate better transition between models if needed.*
 - *Discussed need and district plan for follow-up parent survey to re-assess number of online learners once model decision is communicated*
 - *Pre-recorded mini lesson followed by facilitated student practice and application; Deanna to share more explanatory resources on this model next week.*
 - Challenges/needs for flipped classroom model
 - *Early indications from the Commissioner are that max of 3 day reduction of school will be allowed for teacher PD*
 - *Tech investigating recording and teaching platforms (some that teachers used this spring) to bring to tech committee for recommendations; staff survey also collecting tech and PD needs.*
 - Other options?
 - *Given the number of core teachers teaching at multiple grade*



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*levels, focus on core subjects only in-person (like elementary)
not feasible*

- DESE is stressing common assessments to allow for adjusting to student gaps in learning while maintaining focus on grade-level standards (will not be able to fill all gaps)
 - Need to look into assessment programs to assist, or facilitate teacher development (cost and time will be major limitations)
- Additional Topics for Future Agendas (though these may also be part of ongoing discussion)
 - 6 Period Schedule 7-12 & Incorporation of furlough days (9)
 - *Currently under discussion with union*
 - *Would need teachers to teach 5 out of 6 periods; would largely be absorbed in HS by eliminating Directed Study*
 - *Draft of MS schedule shared with related staff- Meet discussion held 7/17; additional meeting will be scheduled once model is decided*
 - *While common bell schedules facilitate greater capacity for teacher coverage in case of absences or for teachers at high risk, multiple staff have expressed concern that covering other classes (if in other grade levels) will increase their exposure to more cohorts of students- this is a safety concern.*
 - Remote Learning Structure & Expectations (further guidance from state to come)
 - *Expected by the end of this month*
 - PD & Preparation Needs (staff) and Expectations (staff, students & parents)
 - *District staff survey sent out*