

**Board of Education**  
23033 Northline, Taylor, MI 48180 (734) 374-1200

## **Special Board Meeting Minutes**

February 1, 2021

### **OPENING ITEMS**

#### **I. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:00 P.M.**

**Roll Call**

Present: **A. Block, R. Danaj, V. Horth, A. McNew, D. Meyers, D. Thomas, J. Thomas**

Absent: **None**

#### **II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

R. Danaj thanked Mayor Sollars for the donation of masks.

### **AGENDA-BOARD AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **III. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by D. Thomas and seconded by D. Meyers to accept the Agenda.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Danaj - YES**

**Horth - YES**

**McNew - YES**

**Meyers - YES**

**Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Carried: 7-0**

**D. Thomas - YES**

**J. Thomas - YES**

**Block - YES**

#### **IV. SPECIAL MEETING TOPICS**

##### **1. BOARD PRESIDENT STATEMENT**

R. Danaj stated that the Board's top concern is the safety of the staff and students of this district. She wanted everyone to know that they are listening to all concerns and questions, not only at Board Meetings but outside of Board Meetings. She also stated that this Board's best interest is for the community staff and students of this district. Tonight the Board will ask some of the staff, parents and community questions in addition to asking some of their own questions.

#### **PLANS TO RETURN TO FACE TO FACE:**

- **Reaching Out:** Have you reached out to other districts and asked what is working for them.
- **Substitutes:** What is the plan for substitute teachers? If we are short substitute teachers how will the class be covered? Consider an increase in pay for substitutes. Reach out to more colleges for student teachers.

- **Technology:** Can an IT person be hired for each building for Tech Support and to address any issues that arise. Can teachers be given microphones? Will there be additional devices available if needed?
- **Wednesdays/Hybrid Plan:** Give clear guidelines for the Asynchronous Wednesday classes and why are the teachers coming in. On Asynchronous Wednesdays, do students get new assignments or can this day be used for something they are already working on? Can we do a hybrid plan?
- **Contact Tracing/Roll Back/Safety:** How are we doing contract tracing? Define the metrics that determine the need to roll back to virtual learning? How do we best address the needs of students and staff without compromising safety? Explain our Mitigation Plan. When the staff did a walk through, did they think that we were ready for students?
- **Covid Response Team/Screening:** What is a Covid Response Team and what does it mean? How are staff and students being screened daily? What is the protocol for staff or students testing positive?
- **Isolation Room:** Is there isolation rooms in every school and who is monitoring each room? Does this include a room for TVLA? What is the procedure if a student is sick and the parent cannot pick them up?
- **Safe Distance:** Why was the guideline for safe distance changed from 6ft to 3ft?

#### **TEACHER/STUDENT CONCERNS:**

- **Teaching Simultaneously/Synchronous:** Why do teachers have to teach simultaneously instead of some teaching virtual and some face to face? How will the teachers be prepared and supported teaching simultaneously and also those that teach split grades? Are we flexible with simultaneous learning? How are we making the classrooms equitable so we do not add more stress to the teachers and students? How is PE going to be taught simultaneously? What will music and phy. ed. look like.
- **Traveling Teachers:** The teachers that travel from building to building are at higher risk of exposure, Phys. Ed., Music, STEM, etc. as well as other staff moving around the district.
- **Health Concerns/Vaccines:** Can concerns about health issues be adjusted as needed? Update on staff vaccines and will the teachers have the time off to receive them without using personal/sick days. Can the district work with Beaumont Hospital, Henry Ford Hospital and Meijer to host vaccinations?
- **Movement/Socialization:** Are face to face students sitting for 6-7 hours or will there be time for movement, breaks etc.? What will the socialization look like for both staff and students? Will students be allowed to move around and drink from their water bottles? Can students go to the restroom and how many will be allowed in the restroom at a time?
- **Special Services:** How will students receive Special Services?
- **Masks/Social Distance:** What are the consequences for staff or students that do not follow the procedures and do we have masks available for anyone that forgets theirs?
- **Orientation:** Is orientation only for face to face students and will there be an orientation for the virtual students when they return?
- **Change from Virtual/F2F:** What is the procedure if a student wants to change from virtual to face to face or vice versa? Is there a cut-off number for our face to face classes? Will the December numbers be honored and not add any more students face to face so that the students that choose to remain virtual stay virtual or will they be given another chance to choose returning? Parents wishes should be honored if possible.
- **Transportation:** How will the bus schedule work?
- **School Day:** What will a school day look like? What does a PreK-Kindergarten room look like with synchronous teaching? Will there be para-pros or ATA's available?
- **Food Service:** Where will students eat breakfast and will they be eating on the floor? What is the procedure for lunchtime?
- **Grading Scale:** Can the grading system be changed to lessen the stress of the students who are attending classes, doing the work but not getting it because they need to learn in person? How are we reaching out to the students that are struggling? Do we know the failure rate at this time?
- **Teacher Evaluation:** Can Teacher Evaluations be relaxed?

#### **NOTIFICATIONS/UPDATES TO STAFF AND COMMUNITY:**

- How are we connecting with families, and can something be put in place to make sure we're answering the public's questions. How is the return to learn plan been communicated to staff and community
- Where do community/staff/parents post their questions and concerns?

## **CLEANING BUILDINGS/PPE EQUIPMENT/ISOLATION ROOMS:**

- **PPE:** How much PPE equipment do we have on hand and can we replenish it?
- **Custodial/Maintenance Staffing:** How are we doing regarding the shortage of custodial/maintenance and hiring more personnel?
- **Cleaning Schedule:** How and when are the classrooms being cleaned and how are they cleaning them? What is deep cleaning Wednesdays and what does that look like? How is the cleaning between classes being done? How often are the restrooms cleaned?
- **Air Purifiers:** How much Covid money do we have and can air purifiers be purchased for every room
- **Merv Filters:** If the State of Michigan guidelines recommend MERV 13 filters why are we using MERV 9?

## **2. DISCUSSION/Q&A REGARDING BACK 2 SCHOOL PLAN**

Superintendent Griff Mills thanked everyone for their questions and had several Administrators respond to the questions in their areas of expertise. This presentation was based on questions that were asked and will be answered this evening. Questions that were not answered will be followed up and put into a Q & A document.

Superintendent Mills' presentation was on communication. The district will continue to use our Board Meetings, Robocalls, Facebook and Website to keep the staff, students and community informed and involved. Superintendent Mills also provided links to all our Covid-19 response plans.

**Jack Giraud, Director of Facilities and Operations** addressed the cleaning of the buildings, the MERV filters and the PPE supply concerns and explained the Deep Cleaning Wednesdays.

**Mary Ann Cyr, Asst. Superintendent of Covid and Communications** spoke about the Covid-19 protocols, the Isolation Rooms and gave an update on the vaccine availability.

Mary Ann Cyr, on behalf of **Jennifer Trombetta, Director of Food Services** clarified eating breakfast in the classroom and lunch in the Cafeteria with food pre-packed and ready to go.

**Steve Woodworth, Director of Transportation and Fleet Services** gave an overview on Transportation. There will be extra PPE on the busses, the students will use hand sanitizer when they get on and off the bus and seating on the bus will be 1 child per seat unless they are in the same family, if so, they will be allowed 2 per seat. Superintendent Mills asked the challenges if students change from virtual to face to face? S. Woodworth stated the seating chart as well as loading the students from back to front when an additional student is added will require a reconfiguration of the entire bus. There is also a capacity issue.

**Cynthia Nickel, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum PreK-12**, did a presentation of what a day of teaching/learning would look like and what to expect. She described a daily routine, seating charts, how hands will be sanitized when entering/leaving and how students will wipe down their own desks.

**Tracy Carroll, School Improvement Coordinator**, presented on technology and the technology that will be available to teachers. She also gave ideas for teaching face to face and virtual simultaneously and on-line tools that are available to support instruction.

A question was raised regarding Clever touch Boards and where/who teachers reach out for help? Ms. Carroll said that most teachers already have Clever touch Boards in their classrooms and they can contact their building School Improvement Coaches who are trained, or they can put a "help ticket" into the IT department.

## **3. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION**

**Mary Ann Cyr**, did a presentation on safety around others, provided slides regarding classroom management strategies and preventing the spread of Covid. She gave an example of a daily screening for staff and students as well as the protocol for a positive diagnosis and how to deal with a student that complains of symptoms. She also thanked the nursing team, administrators and School Improvement Coordinators.

She also addressed simultaneous teaching concerns and orientation for students next year when they return face to face. She said the district is looking into possibly being able to use Covid funds for air purifiers. She said that the Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum are in a group with other Superintendents and meet and talk frequently regarding returning safely to face to face learning. The district and TFT are in discussions regarding the substitute teacher shortage. The district is making sure the traveling teachers are given ample time for travel as well as the classrooms being disinfected between classes.

A question was asked about a Covid positive student getting to the Isolation Room, Ms. Cyr said that every building Principal is meeting the individual needs of their building because every building has a different configuration and staffing.

## V. ACTION ITEMS

### 1. Purchase of Additional Table Shields for the Cafeteria

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and to provide more safety, we have ordered additional table shields for our cafeterias at the cost of \$14,706.50. This will not impact our General Fund.

A motion was made by J. Thomas and seconded by A. Block to approve the purchase of additional table shields for the cafeteria.

#### ROLL CALL:

Horth - YES

McNew - YES

Meyers - YES

D. Thomas - YES

Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Carried: 7-0

Thomas - YES

Block - YES

Danaj - YES

### 2. Request to Hire Director of IT/Field Supervisor

Interviews were held on Tuesday, January 26, 2021, for the Director of IT/Field Supervisor. The committee selected Mr. Cliff DuPuy for the position. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, he recommends that the Board of Education approve the hiring of Mr. DuPuy for the position, Director of IT/Field Supervisor. His salary for the Non-Certified Director (N1-12) will be \$82,631.00 prorated. With a start date as soon as practical.

A motion was made by D. Meyers and seconded by D. Thomas to approve the Request to Hire Director of IT/Field Supervisor - C. DuPuy.

#### ROLL CALL:

McNew - YES

Meyers - YES

D. Thomas - YES

J. Thomas - YES

Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Carried: 7-0

Block - YES

Danaj - YES

Horth - YES

## VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act of 1976, the Board provides opportunity for citizen input during the "Public Comment." Because agendas are full, each speaker is limited to three minutes.

There were 21 members of the audience that participated this evening:

K. Fields, M. Westfall, M. Greenberg, G. Rowell, M. Brewer, K. Darga, A. Gamble, J. Winkle, H. Kastalio, C. Prout, G. Martin, J. Ferguson-Barringer, L. Vizon, M. Balis, T. Fulton, S. Turner, J. Robinson, K. Williamson, L. Lee, C. Patts (comment read by R. Danaj) and Anonymous (comment read by R. Danaj)

It was stated that the district is still hiring and wanted to inform the Board that the non-certified staff has had many resignations and retirements. It was also indicated that the 26M union is going to have another job fair once the weather breaks and said it has been successful in the past.

One participant indicated that she liked the Q&A but felt that the presentation seemed to be telling the teachers how they need to teach.

If staff members lived closer to a vaccine clinic, could they get their vaccine there instead of coming to WCCC?

The question was raised as to why do teachers need to return to school 2 weeks in advance of the students?

Where did the change from 6ft distance to 3ft distance come from?

Why did Wednesdays change to a full day?

**Superintendent Mills and Mary Ann Cyr answered the questions asked:**

The district is not trying to tell the teachers how to teach but was showing them examples to give them ideas and help support teachers. No disrespect was intended

Ms. Cyr responded to the vaccine question indicating that it would be a nightmare to coordinate that since our designated site is WCCC, however if you can get a vaccine elsewhere, please feel free to do that. Supt. Mills added to the vaccine question stating that the site you receive your vaccine is the site you must get the 2<sup>nd</sup> shot, because different sites may be giving different vaccines. WCCC is giving the Pfizer shot while Schoolcraft College is giving the Moderna shot.

Supt. Mills stated that the question of the teachers returning early was to give them the support they may need. He also stated that as more people enter the building and use the internet, the system will help us see how things will work.

Supt. Mills said regarding Wednesday's, we are in discussions with TFT. Ms. Cyr added to the Wednesday question that there doesn't have to be a new or extra assignment, it can be a continuation of something that they are already working on.

Supt. Mills said that when he submitted the 3ft distance to the state that it was reported that not many schools were able to meet the 6ft distance because the buildings are not made that way and many older buildings were made with less space. Ms. Cyr also stated that the 3ft distance is the safest distance that we can commit to.

**VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

**VIII. NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING  
FEBRUARY 8, 2021 AT 6:00 PM**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by J. Thomas and seconded by D. Meyers to adjourn the meeting.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Meyers - YES**

**D. Thomas - YES**

**J. Thomas - YES**

**Block - YES**

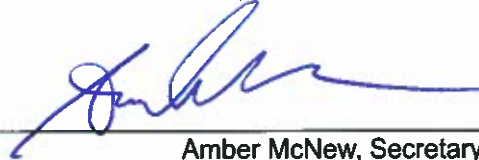
**Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Carried: 7-0**

**Danaj - YES**

**Horth - YES**

**McNew - YES**

The Taylor School District Board of Education, Special Board Meeting for February 1, 2021 adjourned at 9:10 PM.



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Amber McNew, Secretary