

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 271
Bloomington, Minnesota

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
August 3, 2020

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, and there being a quorum present, the virtual Special Meeting of the School Board of Independent School District 271 was called to order by Chair Nelly Korman at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 3, 2020. Chair Korman announced that the School Board meeting tonight is being conducted remotely via Hangouts Meet; it is being live streamed by BEC TV and will be replayed per the usual BEC TV replay schedule. Chair Korman announced that there is no public recognition tonight during this Hangouts Meeting. However, if you wish to contact the School Board, please send an email to schoolboard@isd271.org

Roll Call

Members Present: Nelly Korman, Chair; Tom Bennett, Vice Chair; Dawn Steigauf, Clerk; Beth Beebe, Treasurer; Mia Olson, Jim Sorum and Heather Starks. Administration Present: Les Fujitake, Jenna Mitchler, Andy Kubas, John Weisser, Mary Burroughs, Dave Heistad, Jennifer McIntyre, Rick Kaufman, Jake Winchell and Rod Zivkovich. Attorney Present: David Holman.

Approval of the Agenda

Nelly Korman moved, Tom Bennett seconded, to revise the agenda by removing the Bloomington Anti-Racist Coalition Update. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye. Chair Korman moved to approve the agenda as amended. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye.

[Note: the BARC Update will be placed on the agenda for the next School Board meeting, August 10.]

Superintendent Goals 2020-2021

Mia Olson moved, Dawn Steigauf seconded, that the School Board of Independent School District 271 approves Superintendent Goals for the 2020-2021 school year. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye.

Governance and Policy

- Strategic Plan
 - Collaborate with Board to prepare the foundation and framework for a process for the development and establishment of a new strategic plan in 2021-2022.
- Safe & Supportive Schools Plan (SSSP)
 - Establish a SSSP with an emphasis on Cultural Proficiency:
 - Collaborate with Board to align School Board policies with SSSP.
 - Align our curriculum and instruction with SSSP.
 - Propose mid-year 2020-2021 budget adjustments to support proposed 2020-2021 SSS actions.
 - Establish multiple measures for safe and supportive schools.

Operations

- Reopen and operate schools in compliance with state guidelines and executive orders.
 - Inform Board of plans to deviate from state guidelines.
- Obtain Board approval for a Right Sizing the Budget 2021-2022.
 - 2021-2022 Budget should address our Safe and Supportive School Plan (SSSP).
 - 2021-2022 Budget should address the Strategic Planning process costs.
- Settle 2021-2023 Collective Bargaining Contracts that fits with our RSB 2021-2022 plan.

Community Engagement

- Partner with Board Chair to implement a Superintendent to School Board Communication Plan.
- Establish a recruitment and retention plan to have our staff better reflect the diversity of our students and our community.
- Schedule and execute a plan to visit schools and programs.

Fall Planning Update

Staff Survey Results— Rick Kaufman, Executive Director of Community Relations, indicated that tonight results will be shared of the most recent staff and parent surveys that focused on individual intent and comfort levels for returning to school and work. Surveys were emailed to all BPS employees regarding their thoughts about returning to school in the fall in May and July. The survey was open for 10 days in May and 15 days in July. Mr. Kaufman shared detailed information related to response rates for several questions— by employee unit, comfort level to return by all respondents and by employee unit, various factors pertaining to comfort level, intent to return to school/work and childcare needs under the hybrid/remote learning model; showing the differences between the responses in May and July. Intent to Return to School/Work from all respondents showed 76.7% Yes in May and 63.8% Yes in July. Unsure responses went from 15.9% in May to 26% in July. Requests to work from home were 6.4% in May and 9.1% in July.

Parent Survey Results—Peter Leatherman of the Morris Leatherman Company reported on the parent telephone survey regarding fall planning and the return to school. The survey was conducted between July 15-30 using a random household sample of 600 parents in the Bloomington Public Schools. The presentation included results by various demographics. *How comfortable are you having your child return to school in the fall?* A few highlights from the presentation: the least comfortable is Early Childhood/Pre-school with the most comfortable being high school. Top three concerns were in-person interaction, not properly disinfecting and public health guidelines not being followed. For those intending to send their child back to school, the online school or the hybrid model were preferred educational delivery systems. Overall parents supported students wearing a mask, various percentages due to age—highest no was in the Early Childhood/Pre-School category.

Minnesota Safe Schools Plan Update—Rick Kaufman, Executive Director of Community Relations, Nick Kelley, Bloomington Public Health Administrator, and Jackie Johns, Bloomington Public Schools Health Services, presented information and key findings on the state's Safe Schools Plan 2020-2021. Districts must adhere to MDH parameters in implementing, shifting between Traditional (in-person), Hybrid & Distance Learning. The District will start school year using Hennepin County data from MDH as a base for decision making via Safe Learning Model Guidance. We can dial back to more restrictive learning model upon approval of MDE Commissioner. We can dial forward to less restrictive model, but must consult with BPH, MDE and MDH through Regional Support Teams. Regardless of the learning model chosen, we must offer an equitable learning option to all families who choose not to attend in-person. Learning model parameters were reviewed along with information to move between learning models, responding to confirmed cases, testing scenarios and thresholds. Mr. Kaufman expressed appreciation for the partnership with Bloomington Public Health and Mr. Kelley; his expertise and experience has been invaluable in providing information and guidance to our staff.

Return to Learn Plan – Andy Kubas, John Weisser, Rachel Gens, Katrina Mezera, Jackie Johns, Jennifer McIntyre, Rod Zivkovich and Jake Winchell provided an update on fall planning. The educational model options were reviewed focusing on the Hybrid model being planned for the start of the school year for Early Childhood and Preschool-Grade 12. Students are assigned to attend school physically at least two days per week; the balance of the days will be remote learning. The Hybrid Flex option allows students to remain in their neighborhood school (or current enrolled school) to the extent possible so as to make a transition back to school easier when parents feel it is appropriate to do so. Students will complete teacher-assigned work remotely with no in-person class time. Students in Hybrid Flex will transition to Distance Learning if their class or school is required to close when confirmed cases warrant a move to the more restrictive educational model. Families can re-evaluate their participation in Hybrid Flex every four weeks. Special requests outside this window will be reviewed by the building principal.

Updates also were given on the following components of the return to learn plan focusing on the Hybrid instruction model—physical health and safety, social and emotional health supports, supporting all learners—remote learning “Asynchronous” and “Synchronous” opportunities, special education services, gifted and talented and English language learners, facilities, food service and transportation operations, community education, early childhood and childcare programs.

At 10:22 pm, Tom Bennett moved, Dawn Steigauf seconded, to continue the School Board meeting, extending beyond the 10:30 pm time limit and continue until we are done. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye.

Staff responded to Board member questions regarding the return to school presentations.

Recess 10:43-10:51 pm

Recommendation--Superintendent Les Fujitake thanked the presenters for their work and bringing this information to the School Board. The purpose of the Superintendent’s presentation is to summarize information from previous presenters and make a recommendation to the School Board for an instructional model to begin the school year; the School Board makes the final decision. Mr. Fujitake shared the values and guiding principles driving this decision—safety and health for the well-being of our entire school community—students, staff and families, and the use of science and research to do this work. The state required school districts to plan three instructional delivery models. Mr. Fujitake reviewed the instructional models—Traditional (in-person), Hybrid and Distance Learning. The state required school districts to develop educational delivery plans for each instruction model. The District must adhere to the MDH parameters. We use Hennepin County data and work with Bloomington Public Health on COVID numbers information. According to the numbers, the District should be in a Hybrid model for elementary and secondary students noting that COVID data can change at any time which could call for a change in delivery model at any time. The District can seek a less restrictive delivery model by applying with the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Education and the regional agency. The District has developed a COVID Preparedness Plan. Executive Orders from the Governor state that the District must provide accommodations to staff as required by applicable laws and must allow school staff whose health is at risk or who have members of their household whose health is at risk to work from home to the extent possible. Parents can choose not to receive in-person learning. Remote learning options must be provided. Options include Hybrid Flex and the new Bloomington Online School. Staff accommodation opportunities are available by remote learning choices chosen by parents.

Superintendent Recommendation 1 – Hybrid Model educational delivery.

If adopted, next steps would be to survey families to determine who will choose a remote learning option, determine how many staff can be accommodated to provide remote learning teaching and support, and determine how many staff may need childcare accommodations.

School districts must communicate the education model to families no later than one week before the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

Superintendent Recommendation 2 – Postpone the start of school until after Labor Day on September 8. Traditionally, school starts the day after Labor Day. This year our schools are scheduled to start August 31. Over 80% of school districts in the metro area will start on September 8.

Dr. Mitchler outlined the proposed revision to the calendar for a September 8 start date. Currently, the instructional days for secondary school students is 168 and 166 for elementary. The current calendar includes days built in for inclement weather. The proposed revised calendar would change instructional days to 165 for both levels. Working with the teacher union president and the Executive Director of Human Resources, and agreed it is possible to accomplish. We have options for providing instruction should there be an inclement weather day. The later start of the school year also will provide the gift of time for staff to prepare for this instruction model including additional professional development for staff.

Jim Sorum moved, Mia Olson, that the School Board of Independent School District 271 approves the revised calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. The 2020-21 school year will begin September 8, 2020 and end June 3, 2021. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye.

Proposed revisions to the 2020-2021 school year are being recommended to provide staff more time to prepare for the unique start of the 2020-2021 school year and to more closely align the District with other metro area school districts. The calendar for the 2020-2021 school year was revised with assistance from elementary and secondary school representatives of the District Calendar Committee, under the guidance of the Assistant Superintendent. The revised calendar reflects a school start date after Labor Day and a school end date of June 3rd, 2021. The elementary assessment days remain scheduled for August 26th and August 31st. April 30, 2021, previously a professional development day for elementary staff, will be an instructional day for all students. Back-to-School Week remains as scheduled. Teachers will have additional time the week of August 31st to connect with families, engage in professional development and prepare for the start of the school year.

Jim Sorum, Dawn Steigauf seconded, that the School Board of Independent School District 271 adopts the Hybrid Instruction delivery model as recommended by the Administration; and that the Administration is directed to work toward its implementation by the start of the 2020-2021 school year. On roll call vote, directors Beth Beebe, Jim Sorum, Heather Starks, Dawn Steigauf and Nelly Korman voted aye; Tom Bennett and Mia Olson voted nay. Motion carried 5-2.

In line with the Governor's Emergency Executive Order 20-82 and Stay Safe Minnesota's Safe Learning Plan for 2020-2021, Administration recommends starting the 2020-2021 school year in the Hybrid Instruction delivery model. County data and MDH parameters show that our District should plan to start in the Hybrid Instruction delivery model. Administration has educational delivery plans ready to support the Hybrid Instruction delivery model. Administration also has a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan to help ensure the safety, health, and well-being of students, staff, and families.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Board, Jim Sorum moved, Beth Beebe seconded, to adjourn the Special Meeting. On roll call vote, all directors voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 12:07 a.m.

Dawn Steigauf, Clerk