

## Delmar Board of Education



August 13, 2020  
Special Meeting Minutes

A special scheduled meeting of the Delmar Board of Education was held on the above date at the Delmar School District. The meeting was conducted online and made accessible to the public by video conference in accordance with Governor John Carney's Proclamation concerning precautionary measures for public meetings during the COVID-19 crisis. Members of the public were able to access the meeting via Zoom, a video conferencing service that allows both video and audio participation.

The meeting was called to order by Shawn B. Brittingham, President, at 5:30pm. Board members in attendance were Raymond T. Vincent and William D. Mills.

The following administrators and were present:

Charity H. Phillips, Superintendent

Lisa R. Morris, Lisa R. Morris, Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The following administrator's video conferenced into the meeting:

Michael E. Bleile, High School Principal

Andrew J. O'Neal, Middle School Principal

Terri Sensenig, I.T. Support, and Nicole Mezick, Board of Education Recording Secretary were in attendance.

Public online attendees included: Alan Preston, Alisha Solis, Alison Twilley, Allison Bergeron, Amanda Desmond, Amy Waters, Andrea Yoder, April Holloway, Ashley Nusbaum, Ashley Phillips, Ben Spear, Bobbi Green, Brenda & Eric Rose, Brian Cass, Brianna Layton, Brittanie Hudson, Caitlin Caudill, Carol Ann Harrington, Carol Kline, Carrie Whaley, Casey Taylor, Celeste Northam, Craig Yingling, Danielle Blackburn, Danielle Youngblood, David Van der Vossen, Dawn Brewington, Dawn Lucas, Dawn Lybarger, Dawn Timmons, Dean Woroniecki, Debra Frazier, Denny Murray, Donna Nesbitt, Donna Huston, Erica Joseph, Faith Higbee, Gail Fooks, Ilah Preston, Ryan Allen, Jackie White, Tony Simms, Jennifer Naugle, Jennifer Shupe, Jodi Hollamon, Jonathan Layton, Judy Mills, Julie Persinger, Kate Ford, Kate Hakeem, Kathy Dulis, Kelly Dryden, Kevin Moreland, Kristy Marshall, Kim Causey, Layla, Leslie Preston, Lynn Adkins, Maria Kostis, Mark Connelly, Mary Lyons, Matthew Smith, Michelle Niblett, Tim Kline, Nicole Dickerson, Nicole Fooks, Nicole Lamb, Nicole Scharf, Odell Jones, Rebecca Bender, Robert Searcey, Robin Cox, Rochelle Outten, Sally Irwin, Sara Otwell, Sean Evens, Shannon Rieben, Shawn Phillips, Shelly Dykes, Terry Rodenbaugh, Thomas Nichols, Tiffany Eley, Tracy Hayes, Amber Ball, Candace Meisenholder, Dorie Simpler, Kendra Wagner, Melissa Neudeck, Sabrina Williams, Theresa Evans, Dawn Lybarger, Faith Higbee, Kelly Bowden, Kristy Marshall, Lauren Webster, Nicole L, Brent Jett, Kendra Wagner, Theresa Wright, Caleigh Stewart, Gaby Solis, Pam Heritage, Teresa Chacon, Wayne Harrington, Yolonda Goodwin, Lisa Van der Vossen and Trinity Brown.

The meeting commenced with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the August 13, 2020 special meeting agenda was made by William Mills, seconded by Raymond Vincent and carried unanimously.

David Van der Vossen spoke on behalf a parents in the Delmar School District and stated the following:

"I'm speaking on behalf of a group of concerned parents and we would like to start by thanking the board for allowing us the opportunity to present our concerns and questions and appreciate your efforts addressing this tremendously difficult and complex issue.

We all, parents, teachers, administrators and board members stand behind providing a great learning community. We have great teachers at Delmar. Our students want engagement. Maximizing interaction is essential whether it is in person, virtual and hybrid learning. Frequent check-ins and synchronous communication are needed.

The size of Delmar's staff and school building is manageable to pull off a successfully planned rotation for our Middle and High School. Time in the classroom, F2F learning, will have favorable outcomes mentally, emotionally and physically for our students.

Regional leaders have observed significantly higher stress levels and the impact of mental health on the individuals, families and communities. In our community, the load on local food banks is tremendous from all spectrums of the socio-economic arc, stress and mental-health related crime is up significantly, and there is significant concern about the children in the community who find their primary needs met via their time in school with teachers and administrators who actively care about them. The reality of the last 6 months is that many families are sliding down the hierarchy of needs to more base level physiological and safety concerns. Face to Face instruction is one of the first steps to help resolve these issues.

Instruction will certainly look different, but quality is key. Online learning has many restrictions for our young learners as we witnessed in the spring. The recommended Hybrid option (blended learning) will enhance teacher student relationships, guiding the students (at any level) in the learning process, as well as offering frequent feedback."

We have several questions we would like to pose for consideration:

- Will the Administration provide additional resources to deliver quality, student-centered instruction? Will *best practice workshops* be held for online instruction, prior to the start of school as well as throughout teaching? This is help with accountability.
- Has Administration established an evaluation checklist for teachers and instruction? Assessments should be conducted for each class throughout the semester, offering formative evaluations to help improve online instruction along the way.
- Will instruction at Delmar be synchronous communication (real-time)? Effective online teaching is not lots of busy work. Learning objectives for each class need to be modified for virtual education, has this been done?
- Are elective classes being taught?
- Will in-person tutoring be available at any time IF a student makes a "reservation" with a teacher, not virtual?
- Is a Pandemic grading scale possible, using the 90-100 scale and so on...? Both teachers and students skills and abilities to perform virtual learning vary greatly. Not all are superstars. A grade adjustment may help create a fair baseline. -When our students are compared to students in other school districts.
- When will the grading policy be shared with parents and students? The change of grading policy in the spring was unfortunate, can the board commit to not switching policies midterm. Can you share the total counts of codes (039, 040, 041, and 042) that were given in MP4?
- Was Delmar awarded CARES Act Funding? If so, how much and how will monies be spent?

- Can you provide info on how many surveys were returned and summarize the results of the survey? What total number want to return Hybrid/F2F?
- Are there dates or baseline numbers that will be utilized to bring different levels or percentages of students back into the classroom and school to make decisions less subjective? State of DE has provided such a structure as guidance.
- Is Delmar following best practice recommendations as they bring portions of the population back that it is spread throughout the levels to keep densities down in classrooms? Typically addressed by rotating percentages of students throughout the grade levels by days or weeks by alphabetical groups.
- Has Delmar considered having students circulate between classrooms by exiting and entering each classroom by its respective exterior door? This is being utilized by Salisbury School. 2nd floor classrooms would have single directional travel in or out the adjacent stairwell door, one up stair up, one stair down, single direction down the hall.
- Have infrastructure adjustments and improvements been made to building systems to address transmission methods?

"We want to conclude by again thanking the board for the opportunity to present our concerns and questions and appreciate your efforts addressing this tremendously difficult and complex issue. Thank you."

Donna Nesbitt spoke on behalf of the Delmar Education association and asked the following questions:

- Can the district find funding to create a social distancing friendly outdoor recess or P.E. area for the students such as clearing out the walking area behind the baseball field?
- How will some staff exposure to more than others be handled to keep staff exposure minimized and equal?
- How will a schedule work to keep class sizes small enough to meet CDC guidelines of spacing?
- How we will we address the Maryland students as Wicomico County going virtual to start the school year?
- What If students are in the building, what happens if there is a positive case? Are we going to be penalized for working from home? Is working from home going to be an option on any given day? If a teacher wakes up with a sore throat do they stay home and work from home? What happens if a staff member or someone in their family face multiple quarantine times during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester? What policies are being developed for these type of scenarios?
- How will long term substitutes be made available to cover extended leave of teachers who become infected and have extended recovery and need to extensive rehabilitation as these are more common than deaths and more likely to occur? Will positions be held for teachers in these such incidences?
- We have several students who have hearing loss and use hearing aids and rely on reading lips. What is our plan for these students with use of masks in the classroom?
- What data was provided from the staff survey or all questions?
- How will the quarantine be handled when a student or staff member arrive asymptomatic with no known exposure but then becomes symptomatic after being in the building with multiple students and staff members? Will everyone have to be sent home immediately?
- Will students be required to temperature screen prior to getting on school buses or just prior to entering the building?
- No contact thermometers are less effective in extreme temperatures and how will this be accounted for? Will there be a second temperature check? Will students who have a high reading due to being hot from coming to school be sent home rather than given time to regulate their temperature? How is this being documented? Will there be time for face temperature to warm back up for those students who walk to school in cold temperatures? These factors can greatly affect no contact temperature readings as can head coverings.
- In the 2 x 2 format if the building is being deep cleaned on Wednesday's when is the building going to be cleaned after Friday's last session?

- With the possibility of going to a semester schedule, making the transition easier on the students in the high school, students will only see their teachers one time per week and in all reality that day will need to be used for assessments. If we had a semester schedule students would only have to focus on 4 classes instead of 8.

Mrs. Nesbitt then yielded her time to any parents.

A motion to enter into executive session at 5:43pm for personnel was made by Raymond Vincent, seconded by William Mills and carried unanimously.

Mr. Brittingham announced the return to regular session at 4:40pm.

A motion to approve Business Item 4.1 Monthly Personnel Report a.- h. and l. and deny i., j., and k. as discussed in executive session was made by William Mills, seconded by Raymond Vincent and carried unanimously.

Lisa Morris proposed edits to the current 2021-2021 school calendar. Request for changes are as follows:

- Teachers First Day – August 31
- Students First Day – September 16 (This does not change the last day of school for grades 5-11)
- Seniors Last Day – May 24 unless exams are required to be taken and that last day will be June 4
- Student and Staff last day will remain the same
- Back to School Nights will be virtual through Zoom
- Orientation Days will be for distribution of curriculum, textbooks, technology, schedules etc.

A motion to approve Business Item 4.3 Modification to the 2020-2021 Academic Calendar was made by William Mills, seconded by Raymond Vincent and carried unanimously.

Charity Phillips presented the Delmar School District Re-Opening Schools is 2020-2021 plan. Mrs. Phillips thanked the 50+ members of the Delmar Re-Opening Schools in Wildcat Country Committee as well as the sub-committees and their leadership. She also thanked the families, staff members, Delmar Board of Education, Governor John Carney, Donna Hanlin, and Kirby Bryson for their participation throughout this pandemic.

Mrs. Phillips spoke on the following areas:

- Key Components of Governor and the Department of Education's Decision
  - Governor Carney approved on Tuesday, August 4, that Delaware schools may open under the state's Scenario 2 hybrid model with a mix of in-person and remote instruction, with significant safety precautions to limit transmission of COVID-19.
- Delaware's Planning Scenarios
  - Scenario 1 – Minimal Community Spread (schools are open for in-person instruction)
  - Scenario 2 – Minimal-to-Moderate Community Spread (schools may use a hybrid model with precautions set in place)
  - Scenario 3 – Significant Community Spread (schools are closed – remote learning only)
- Health "Gating Criteria" used to determine Re-Opening Scenario
- 2020-2021 Re-Opening Schools Parent Survey
  - Distributed electronically and via mail to 1400 families
  - 712 Responses were received
    - How Comfortable sending child into the school building every day?
      - 21% - Very, 18% Mostly, 25% A Little, 34% Not at all
    - Preferred Model of Instruction if unable to return to school traditional in-person

- 64.5% would commit to hybrid model sending children to school only certain days of the week and engaging in virtual learning the other days
  - 35.5% would commit to a fully virtual online instructional model for the 1<sup>st</sup> semester
- Areas also covered in the parent survey were:
  - Hybrid Model A and Hybrid Model B
  - Most important experiences for your child to have while attending school in-person
  - Internet Service Availability
  - Access to computer or device to complete school work.
  - Student's availability to participate in live instruction between 7:50am-2:56pm
  - Transportation
  - Health Measures
    - Temperature Taking
    - Hand Sanitizer
    - Mask Requirements
    - Volunteers and Visitors
- 2020-2021 Re-Opening Schools Staff Survey
  - 98 Responses were received
    - Preferred Model of Instruction if unable to return to school traditional in-person
      - 53.1% would prefer to hybrid model, a mix of in-person and remote learning
      - 46.9% would prefer fully virtual online instructional with teachers in the building to deliver instruction
    - Are you comfortable returning to the school building in the fall if students return in-person (hybrid or traditional)?
      - 66.3 – Yes 33.7% - No
    - Areas also covered in the staff survey
      - Preferred layout of hybrid schedule
      - Personal Restrictions
- Delmar's 7 Key Goals
  - Ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the students, staff, and Wildcat families as well as our extended Delmar community
  - Engage students in rigorous educational experience aligned to Delaware Standards and National Standards
  - Improving access to learning from enhanced remote learning experience and instructional activities
  - Ensure Student Support Services are provided to promote social and emotional well-being
  - Comply with State Directives and Recommendations from Delaware Department of Education's "Returning to School Plan"
  - Supporting families with technology and providing information to families to help identify internet connectivity options
  - Increasing regular communication with families and students
- Health, Safety, Welfare, & Human Resources
  - Snapshot of COVID cases
  - Nursing Updates
  - Delmar Wellness Center Updates
  - Behavioral/Mental Health Support for Students and Families
  - Daily Student Health Assessment Screening Tool
  - Face Coverings, Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing Requirements and Guidelines
  - Monitoring Health Symptoms and Health Screening
  - Isolation, Pick-Up, and Clearance

- COVID Testing
- Operations & Facilities
  - Facility Preparation
  - Facility Organization
  - Child Nutrition
    - Feeding students who are not in the building
    - Free and Reduced Meal Applications must be completed every year
- Transportation
  - Bus Capacity
  - Sanitation

Lisa Morris discussed Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support Services:

- CARES Funding in Delmar
  - Round 1 – Received \$182,262
    - \$125,000 for staff and student technology
    - \$57,262 for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for staff and students, cleaning supplies, sanitizing equipment, partitions, and signage etc.
- Fully Remote Learning Model vs. Hybrid Model of Learning
- Rigorous Teaching and Learning
  - Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning
- Communication and Collaboration
  - Schoology, Microsoft Teams, HAC (Home Access Center), Remind, ClassDojo
  - Translation Services
  - Agendas
- Assessing Students' Needs:
  - MAP Testing
  - Reading Achieve 3000
  - RTI
  - Mental Health Screening Tools
  - SEL Social & Emotional Learning
  - Special Education, 504, & Related Services
- Technology Vendor Options for Connectivity
- Instructional Expectations
- Student Attendance
- Middle & High School Schedules
- Grading, Grading Policy, and Grading Scale
- Professional Development

Hybrid Model Proposal was presented by Lisa Morris:

- Cohort 1 – Monday, Tuesday in-building – Wednesday, Thursday, Friday remote
- Cohort 1 – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday remote – Thursday, Friday in-building
- Cohort Virtual – Fully Remote
- Wildcat Waves Schedule was presented
- Orientation Days – September 16, 17, 18, and 21 with 25% of students traveling through a modified schedule in person
  - Goal: meet teachers, course expectations, directions for virtual learning, pick-up materials, return back-to-school documents
- Hybrid/Remote Challenges

- Length of day may need to be modified
- End of school may be adjusted
- Stabilizing cohorts
- Cleaning in between classes
  - Robert Searcey, Director of Facilities, spoke about the challenges of having enough staff to sanitize during the day and deep clean at night. Equipment and cleaning supplies have been a challenge to get in stock. Electrostatic sprayers are still on back order and last possible ship date would be September 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Hybrid Block Structuring
- Instructional Interfaces for All Students
- Student Scheduling
- Classroom Safety Protocols
- Virtual Back-to-School Nights
- Student Events: Clubs and Activities will be held virtually, no field trips

Charity Phillips completed the Re-Opening Schools plan by highlighting the following areas:

- Delaware Sports & DIAA
- Families in Need of Childcare
- External Counseling & Intervention Support Services
- Next Steps Pending Board Approval
  - Registration
  - Parent CHOICE regarding Full-Time Remote Learning
  - Parent CHOICE regarding School Bus Transportation
  - Parent Check-Out of Student Technology
  - Internet Connectivity Support: Bloosurf
- General Reminders
  - Details of Hybrid Proposal are fluid and subject to change due to possible community/state health conditions, DPH Guidance, Governor Executive Orders, and Parental Choices in selecting fully virtual learning for their children.
  - Internal logistics meetings will be convening in upcoming weeks to delve deeper into the specific details and unique considerations identified through our specific student, staff, and family needs.
  - This Hybrid Proposal is solely for 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

Mrs. Phillips stated if the school buildings are able to safely plan and implement a Hybrid Scenario Learning Model under Governor Carney's August Declaration: Request approval to offer families the choice to have their Delmar Middle/High School student participate in a Hybrid Learning Model or Full-Time Remote Learning Model as Delmar School District's Re-Opening Schools in Wildcat Country Plan presented this evening.

Mr. Brittingham asked if technology is being distributed per household or per student. Mrs. Morris stated the goal is to distribute per student but will depend on the amount of technology available.

Mr. Brittingham asked that the HVAC system and air flow in classrooms be as up to date as possible and a priority. Mrs. Phillips stated Dr. Puzzo was working with Modern Controls.

Mr. Vincent voiced concerns with the amount of classrooms that will need to be sanitized vs. the number of staff available to clean the rooms.

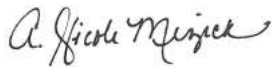


Mr. Mills appreciated everyone's effort to create the plan presented but does not believe the district is ready to open up with a hybrid model. There are too many risks at this time. He would like to see teachers in the building to access their resources if we open in a virtual setting. Mr. Vincent does not believe we can safely and abide by the guidelines and open the building safely. Mr. Brittingham has safety concerns as well and believes that school should start in a virtual model through the first marking period.

A motion to approve Business Item 4.2 to offer families the choice to have their Delmar Middle/High school students participate in a Hybrid Learning Model or Full-Time Remote Learning Model as the Delmar School District's Re-Opening Schools in Wildcat Country plan presented this evening with a modification to delay hybrid Wildcat Waves until the start of the second marking period was made by William Mills, seconded by Raymond Vincent and carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 9:52pm was made by Raymond Vincent, seconded by William Mills and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



A. Nicole Mezick  
Recording Secretary



Charity H. Phillips  
Executive Secretary