

SIC Meeting 1/19/2021

Intro:

Shared some thoughts that were written in the survey.

Plexiglass is starting to go up in classrooms.

Problem of students knowing Covid info (relating to other students, etc.) before the teachers. Teachers are concerned as they cannot answer question from students.

2nd semester expectations consist of several parents/faculty hoping the high schools stay hybrid, new shields causing limited movement and safety concerns going back 5 days a week.

Questions/Comments from Parents and Teachers:

Is the DHEC recommendations of 3 feet being followed? Yes, it works but it is tight. Student max per classroom is 21-22. The shields create a unique and problematic challenge.

Were teachers surveyed? No, teachers were not asked. It bothered parents that teachers were not surveyed or asked for input.

Some teachers have surveyed students and overall, students do not like 5 days a week as it currently stands with shields, etc. The shields create a problem for face to face instruction as they distort view of board and front of room.

Ms. Castillo showed pictures of classrooms with floor-based Plexiglas shield installments.

Safety should be first for any individual that is there, including teachers and staff. School district needs to look at safety first for all.

Return to School Plan (Mr. Massey)

1,400 students total returning to a face to face model on 2/8. Adding about 300 students.

Tripling the number of students will create issues with lunch, busing, etc. We will have guidelines and other issues that will need to be adjusted and changed. It would be crippling if we lose large numbers of staff (out due to quarantine, etc.) in critical areas. It would affect our function.

We would like to refine what we we've done with the A/B model, to have synchronous instruction on days when students are home and hold them accountable. This would maximize safety. We would require students at home on home days to log in and complete work during their scheduled block. RTI could be provided one of the days in the week.

Currently, 1/25 is an early release day and Professional Development is planned for teachers in the area of technology.

Questions:

Student motivation is low with virtual.

If teachers are teaching students virtually and face to face at the same time, will there be instruction sent from the CO for holding student accountable? Will district be consistent across all schools?

It was brought up (raised and addressed previously) that it has to be consistent – same expectations for logging in and being present whether student is at SPSHS, RHHS or NHS. Students will be held accountable with logging in. We will need to adjust our plan as to what to do if students do not have reliable service. Preparation has to be in place to provide instruction in a mixed environment. A memo has been drafted to address some of these issues.

At first the VA was going to be a stand-alone school but adaptations had to be made at the school level. One idea is to have Phoenix Academy be used asynchronously to take off some of the stress of mixing students from different schools.

Teacher comment: There have been a wide variety of student perceptions. Some students want to be pushed more while others are overwhelmed.

Parent comment: When it comes to grading, we need to keep it internal if students can keep same grade as previous quarter. Last Spring, some students were less motivated or not motivated at all when they found this out.

Parent question: Where did the requirement for Plexiglas shields come from? It is a DHEC requirement. However, it was the district's decision to install the floor-based Plexiglas shields because all students were going to come back 5 days on Feb. 8th.

Parent comment: There needs to be a strategic plan with “stepping stones” to implement them coming back. It does not seem realistic to expect them all to return on Feb. 8.

Parent: Faculty becomes the police and bringing everyone back at once would be chaos.

Parent: We need to be looking at our community, the statistics, the mental impact, etc. of what is going on and base our decisions on the data.

Teacher: Not having a clear plan of logistics makes faculty uncomfortable. We could still go out on a quarantine even with vaccine, masks and shields. A lot of logistics have not been worked out.

Teacher: We do not want students to be pinpointed negatively due to an EOC test that they had to take during this pandemic. Not a true representation of ability.

Mr. Massey:

Bond Referendum – will be put back together and proposed soon.

Rezoning of the Elementary schools – looked at building capacity, student enrollment and minimizing the travel for some students going across the city. It will involve construction of new elementary school and how older building in the district will be repurposed.

Parent - please remember that the committee felt strongly that NHS did not want to become a school of choice. It came down to arts or athletics and who gets money for that. We were adamant about not having to be a choice school but rather a school of excellence. Bond referendum was not equitable or detailed. So much was left out and it was not clear where the money was going.

A letter will be drafted, please email any comments by Thursday.