

Office of
The Assistant Superintendent
Miller Place Union Free School District

MEETING MINUTES

TO: MPUFSD Reopening Schools Steering Committee

FROM: Susan G. Craddock, Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: Learning and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting #2 Minutes – July 13, 2020

DATE: July 14, 2020

Committee Chairperson: Susan Craddock, District Administration

Recorder: Kurt Roth, District Administration

Committee Representatives: Matt Baruch, District Administration; Robert Bray, Operations; Marianne Cartisano, District Administration; Melinda Chiochio, Clerical; Jeffrey Dimoulas, District Administration; Suzanne Elliot, Parent; Laura Gewurz, Administration; Joanne Grippe, Teacher; Debbie Himmelmann, Teacher; Patricia Isenberg, Teacher; Jenn Kirby, Teacher; Candace Lindemann, Parent; Seth Lipshie, District Administration; Birgit Martino, Parent; Alyson McGrath, Parent; Bridget O'Brien, Teacher; Desiree O'Neil, Parent; Eva Pere, Teacher; Peter Ponticelli, Teacher; Nancy Sanders, Teacher; Amanda Saulle, Teacher; Ronald Skolnick, Teacher; Kevin Slavin, Administration; Erin Southworth, Nurses; Amelia Spampinato, Teacher; Andrea Spaniolas, Parent; Nena Thompson, Parent; Barbara Weir, District Administration; Sean White, Administration; Sandy Wojnowski, District Administration

Meeting minutes:

- Shared some of the new guidance that came out from New York State
 - The importance of social emotional learning and putting together a team
 - Stressing SEL prior to beginning instruction
 - Attendance as a mechanism to engage with students
 - Creative methods in reaching out to parents and students
 - Mandatory requirements
 - Continuity of learning
 - Using standards
 - Daily interaction
 - Clear communication plan
 - Technology and connectivity
 - District must know what types of connectivity students have
 - Providing IT support and professional development for teachers
 - Must submit our plan to the state by July 31st
- Governor Cuomo put out some guidelines
 - Region must be in phase 4 or reopening
 - 14 day average must fall below 5 percent
 - 7 day rate over 9 percent will immediately create a stoppage

- Steering committee will meet to discuss all the feedback and is currently being planned
- Parent question about the number of students that did not participate in distance learning
 - Shared that the steering committee will address that information
- Questions from emails
 - How to deal with Kindergarteners using desks rather than tables?
 - Chairperson will bring that issue to the steering committee
 - Will NYS will give us a number of students that will be in a class?
 - Asked if the guidance mandates that students are 6 feet apart. Do we need to wear masks if more than 6 feet apart? The state has been unclear.
 - Do not see anything specific and will check
 - American Association of Pediatrics makes a recommendation that it is either 3 or 6 feet depending on the age of the child. Masks in the guidance is encouraged, but doesn't say mandatory.
 - Conflicting measurements in the guidance depending on whether it is an adult or a child
 - Are we going to put together spacing guidelines for a lab? How many students should be sitting at a lab table?
 - Instrumentalists should be between 6 and 7.5 feet based on some studies
 - Teacher feeling that we are going to be in a hybrid model because students and teachers are going to be absent due to quarantines. Not sure students are going to be able to play their instruments due to a lack of wearing masks. She suggested that there can be a daily do now where students would have to check in each day
 - Parent suggested that if we are on a hybrid model, have to determine what can be done well remotely, what needs to be done live, what can be recorded. Determine what the district already has regarding software or prepackaged science packets. What we need?
 - Parent inquired has there been any decision made regarding what subjects may be recorded or live instruction if we go hybrid?
 - That will have to be addressed
 - Admin rep mentioned that he has some expertise in the area of SEL. He mentioned a couple of researchers within the field of growth mindset that he thinks can be helpful with both students and parents
 - Elementary buildings have that type of experience and that it will be great to bridge the gap between Elementary and Secondary
 - Admin rep mentioned that the guidance plan has some parts of SEL integrated in
 - School psychologists in another district are already creating push in lessons-regulating emotions, executive functioning skills-psychologists would do a whole class activity/lesson. They also recorded some lessons so that the teachers could use them when needed
 - Teacher rep shared that LADSBS has support staff that provides SEL lessons once a month
 - Admin rep shared that the mental health teams, district-wide, all do something similar to the elementary-collaborative approach to all of the mental health team both when they were in school and on distance learning

- Should assume that all students need that support
- Admin rep shared Ms. Gittler does SEL lessons every week. Find a way for students to have a 1:1 connection with an adult-bringing in students for DIAL screening at the end of the month
- Parent inquired how students will feel if they are wearing a mask and everyone is wearing a mask around them. Try to make social distancing and wearing a mask like a game and something fun. Must be fun and safe
 - Wearing a mask in school will be part of the teacher's instruction
- The special education committee did discuss wearing masks. Students in summer school are currently wearing masks. Students have been exiting the buses wearing the masks, but then halfway through the day, the masks are coming off. Staff provide the students with new masks if they fall on the floor. Special Ed students are encouraged, but not required to wear the masks if they are struggling. Social stories were sent home to be read by the parents about wearing masks
- Admin rep shared the NYS DOH put out interim guidance stating that all students must wear masks except during meals. Music guidelines suggest 12 feet apart for band and chorus
- Parent wants to know if the guidelines must be adhered to or is it just a suggestion
 - Admin said it is just a guidance document
- If masks are just encouraged and not mandatory then labs could still occur, but they would have to wear the proper PPE
- How do you keep some people safe if some are wearing masks and others are not? Doesn't make sense not to require it
 - Admin rep stated going to need a large supply of masks
 - Teacher asked if we could have desks 3 feet apart if all students are wearing masks.
 - Admin rep feels that there will be a capacity guideline rather than spacing
 - How many students would fit in a typical classroom if there is a 6 foot spacing?
 - Admin Rep responded operations is looking into it
 - Parent inquired is there a consideration on the temperature of the classroom? Wearing a mask would be difficult if the classroom is too hot
 - The guidance document outlines that office space should be at 50% capacity
- Parent pleased that both music teachers mentioned the music program. Small ensembles is a method used by some districts. Use an app to put together musical pieces. For singers, using a Plexiglas pod to prevent spray. Can sing outside. Can classes meet outside?
- Teacher expressed needs a limit on any shared materials. Says that there is a risk. Need to restructure the use of time so that materials can be cleaned or swapped out

- Teacher shared there should be no sharing of music stands. They would either have to be cleaned or swapped out. Do chairs have to be cleaned?
- Teacher rep asked if students would have to bring their own supplies so that nothing is shared. Parents will have to be notified to exactly what is needed for the day.
 - Parent inquired are students permitted to have Lysol wipes?
- Parent shared that she is hearing that many parents are looking for a survey to find out what type of model parents are looking for regarding the instructional day. One or two questions from each committee to help guide decision making. Wants to recognize those teachers that did an “amazing” job during distance learning so that those teachers can help others
- Teacher rep shared that all 3rd grade teachers worked together as a group to help each other. They met once or twice a week on Zoom
 - Admin rep confirmed that teachers and support staff in her building did the same thing
- Parent asked what does the district plan to do with students who are not comfortable returning to school? Find the hybrid model very hard to wrap her head around. Teachers will have to juggle a lot. Believes that students will be bringing in COVID and that it can be transferred from group to group
- Teacher rep believes that reducing the density in the classroom is the most important compromise and inconvenience. It can be done through the hybrid model.
- Parent wants to know what the hybrid model may look like
- Students learn in different ways. Some students need face to face instruction and other can be successful online. This was considered “crisis learning”
- Parent rep has a question about grading and assessment. What are the thoughts about creating teams of students for project-based learning? Students could work together which could help with the social emotional learning.
- Parent expressed that students should not have grades based on group work because we are asking students to be too responsible for their other group members’ work.
 - Teachers would help to guide the parameters for the group work as they would in a classroom
- Closing
 - Will bring this information to the steering committee
 - Look forward to the guidance document
 - Admin asked id committee should investigate different types of hybrid models for the next meeting?
 - Hold until we have the guidance document. The guidance document may give us more focus.

Specific questions:

1. *How many students did not participate in distance learning?*

- Response – Steering Committee may review and share data as appropriate.
2. *Is the District prepared to replace kindergarten tables with desks?*
Response – will forward the question to the Steering Committee
 3. *Will NYS provide the number of students per class?*
Response – Mr. Lipshie referenced American Association of Pediatrics makes a recommendation that it is either 3 or 6 feet depending on the age of the child. Masks in the guidance is encouraged, but doesn't say mandatory.
 4. *Are there specific guidelines/will the district follow specific guidelines for the following: Science labs, materials, instruments, music classes, art classes, small group instruction areas?*
 5. *What subjects will be recorded and/or live in a hybrid model?*
Response – that will be discussed with the admin and Steering Committee
 6. *Must the DOH guidance be followed or are they just suggestions?*
Responses – documents are guidelines
 7. *Can desks be 3 feet apart if all student wear masks?*
Response – there will most likely be a capacity requirement
 8. *Is there a temperature requirement in the classrooms since all will be wearing masks?*
Response – waiting for guidance, will consult with Health and Safety Committee
 9. *Can classes meet outside?*
Response – Guidance documents specific repurpose rooms and spaces as necessary and appropriate
 10. *Do we need to wipe down chairs between classes?*
Response – waiting for guidance, will consult with Health and Safety Committee
 11. *Can students/teachers use Lysol wipes to disinfect?*
Response –will consult with Health and Safety Committee
 12. *What are the District plans for students who do not want to return to school?*
Response – will forward the questions to the Steering Committee
 13. *What are the thoughts about creating teams of students for project-based learning?*
Response – this is something that could be discussed further in subcommittee and recommendations brought to Steering Committee.

Subcommittee feedback

- Learning-committee@millerplace.k12.ny.us

Meeting Dates for Learning and Instruction Subcommittee (Mondays):

July 20 - Planning for a hybrid learning environment
 July 27 -
 August 3
 August 10
 August 17
 August 2