

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Voting Members

Karen Etheridge, Chairman
Dwan Craft, Vice Chairman
Dr. Bill Dobney, Board Member
Janet Rose, Board Member
Kelly Williams Peters, Board Member

Non-Voting Members

Dr. Matt Lutz, Superintendent

A. Call to Order

B. Review Local Implementation Procedures of the StrongSchools NC Public Health Toolkit.

A special meeting was called on January 13, 2022, to address the prior vote to make masks optional on January 18th. The initial date was set to allow Administration and the Board time to review COVID data following the return from the holiday break. Currently, 71 cases have been reported in the schools - which is an all-time high since the opening of the 2021-22 school year. A positivity graph was used to show the spike in positive cases of COVID. Superintendent Lutz said the special meeting was called to discuss delaying the mask optional date due to the spike in cases. The Board will vote again on the mask options during the January 20, 2022, Board meeting, as required by state law.

The Board discussed the possibility of the number of positive cases actually being higher than reported. Kelly Peters believed the omicron variant was more contagious, although symptoms seem less severe. Janet Rose inquired about testing in the schools. Virginia Arrington, Student Services Coordinator, said that schools had been testing since October '21 - which may have helped with identifying positive cases. Dr. Lutz said that due to the surge, result times had lengthened. Dwan Craft asked about the student absenteeism rate. Ms. Arrington provided data - an example was Central Elementary with a 15% absenteeism rate. The rate was a combination of reported positive COVID cases and non-reported illness. Karen Etheridge made the motion to extend the December 16, 2021, decision to make masks an option until the January 20th Board Meeting, seconded by Dwan Craft. The Board will evaluate the data and vote on the mask options at the January meeting.

Janet Rose asked for data on staff absences be presented at the January 20th meeting.

Motion made by: Karen Etheridge

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

C. Adjourn Meeting (Action)