

Currituck County Schools**Meeting Minutes**

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Special Meeting
09/21/2020 10:00 AM
Virtual Meeting

The open session of this meeting can be viewed at [CCS_BOE YouTube](#)

Attendees

Voting Members

Karen Etheridge, Chairman
Dwan Craft, Vice Chairman
Dr. Bill Dobney, Board Member
Will Crodick, Board Member
Janet Rose, Board Member

Non-Voting Members

Dr. Matt Lutz, Interim Superintendent

A. Call to Order**B. Briefing on Plans to Return Pre-K through 5 th Grade to Schools**

Dr. Lutz informed the Board that more details for returning students will be presented at the next Board of Education meeting on October 6, 2020. At this time, he provided only a summary. There are staffing concerns that need to be addressed because while the district operates under Plan A for Pre-K through 5th grade it must also offer Plan C -remote learning. Currently it is not definite as to how many teachers will not return to the buildings due to health concerns- document by a physician of course. At the present time the district has more secondary teachers that will remain remote due to health concerns.

Results from the most two recent surveys indicate that 20% to 30% of students will remain virtual. Administration will plan accordingly. This is both elementary and secondary students.

Will Crodick said the parents who had contacted him had concerns with alternating weeks of live instruction with recorded instruction. Most parents chose virtual because at least they were receiving continuous live instruction rather than recorded. He cautioned that the 20%-30% projection could tick down if live instruction was offered continuously.

As far as the next effort in gathering data, Dr. Lutz said a survey will not be used but rather a registration form for parents to select either Plan A or Plan C for the next nine weeks.

Dwan Craft cautioned that students may change teachers several times if the parent switched back and forth from live to virtual instruction.

Janet Rose said all stakeholders need to be flexible. There is no guarantee students will have the same teacher or be with the same group of students in the classroom or virtually.

Dr. Lutz said the district will start assessing staffing needs. He added that the district is not able to hire additional staff. Substitute teachers that are hired will be trained on the COVID protocols.

Dr. Lutz said the state has mandated masks in the schools. He will continue to monitor state requirements. Mr. Crodick asked at what point a plan would be recommended. Dr. Lutz said a recommendation will be made at the Oct 6th meeting. In the meantime, the Transportation Dept. will review protocols and build routes accordingly with one student per seat. In the past, one bus could transport approximately 70 elementary students. The Board and Administration will encourage parents to drive students to and from school.

Dwan Craft asked if the district could set/mandate the type of transportation for the students for the next nine weeks as well. Dr. Lutz said he did not think the district could mandate the type of transportation for a full nine weeks. It must remain flexible. He added that bus drivers will be trained on COVID protocols. Chairman Etheridge said that possibly monitors could help the bus drivers with conducting temperature checks. Dr. Lutz said the district needs to review the logistics as well as staffing levels in the Transportation Dept.

The BOE discussed conducting temperature checks and other building entry protocol. Mr. Crodick asked that middle and high school transportation staff be used to transport the elementary students. He also inquired about masks and temperature check mandates. Dr. Lutz said masks must be worn but the temperature checking process for the buses would need to be reviewed and addressed. Renee Dowdy said the September 17th memo from DPI and the Dept. of Human Services stated that Executive Order 163 referenced the previous order - which stated masks and temperature checks are required.

The Board asked about plastic dividers in the classroom. Dr. Lutz worries about the disparities of only being able to provide dividers in some of the classrooms even if teachers purchased their own dividers. Dr. Lutz said he was concerned with staff creating their own rules. He does not want to see variation that could be outside of the COVID protocols. Air purifier will be researched. Dr. Lutz said lunches will be challenging and may be served in the classrooms. Staffing levels for the School Nutrition Dept. will be reviewed.

Dr. Lutz recommended returning Pre-K through 5th grade on October 19, 2020. School Nutrition requires two weeks to order food. This is also the start of the next nine weeks. Janet Rose asked if teachers could have a couple of work days in order to prepare for students. Dr. Lutz said possibly Oct. 12th and Oct. 16th. Mrs. Rose also asked about staggered entry or a soft start for the first week. Mr. Crodick asked if the district could start on October 12th. The Board discussed the need for allowing teachers time to prepare. Mr. Crodick said the district was already in a soft start and he would like to see students return to school earlier. Dr. Lutz asked the Board to allow the district time to identify how many students would return. Mrs. Rose asked about establishing an early release day each week for cleaning. The Board discussed the number of early release days already built in the calendar. Mr. Crodick questioned the need for additional ER days. Dr. Lutz stated the number of required instructional hours will be reviewed by the state. Mrs. Rose suggested asking retirees to substitute teach as a way of addressing staffing needs.

Mr. Crodick inquired about the district continuing to offer virtual instruction while returning Pre-K through 5th back to school. Dr. Lutz responded that yes the district would offer both Plan A and Plan C for that age group. Mrs. Rose expressed her concern with teachers providing both live and remote instruction. Mr. Crodick said that teachers cannot perform both job functions. Dr. Lutz said there may be some staff who are able to due to the specific job function and student instruction, but other district's have found this quite challenging. Dr. Dobney said right now until data was collected it was only speculation on the day to day operation. The district must confirm the type of instruction with parents. Mrs. Craft again cautioned that students may not have their original virtual teacher. Dr. Lutz said it's compared to a teacher being out sick - replaced with a substitute. Mrs. Rose said that she plans to visit an elementary school in Edenton/Chowan where students have returned to the building. She extended the invitation to the group.

Mrs. Rose asked about offering Plan B (hybrid schedule) to middle school students. Dr. Lutz said that once elementary school is back in operation, middle schools will be reviewed next. The group discussed the difficulties with offering some of the high school courses that require hands-on instruction.

The Board will make a formal vote on a detailed plan at the October 6th Board of Education meeting. The Board discussed the dynamics of cleaning the schools. Mr. Crodick asked if cleaning could be conducted in the evenings and after school hours in an effort not to disrupt the school day. Some custodians are already on a staggered schedule. The Board

discussed the manpower currently available and the need in order to adequately clean the schools.

Mrs. Rose asked if teachers could work longer during the day. Again the need for the buildings to be empty in order to clean all touchpoints was discussed.

Mr. Crodick questioned the legality of the temperature checks. He stated that if someone cannot be made to take a test, other mandates may violate someone's rights. The Board discussed mandating testing, temperature checks, entry protocols for public schools versus other entities, and addressing sick students and staff. Dr. Lutz added that so much of the process is just doing the right thing versus law.

C. Adjourn Meeting (Action)

Chairperson

Secretary