

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF THE GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting – June 18, 2020

The Grandview Heights Schools Board of Education met in special session via video conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Call to Order: President Jesse Truett called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. and read the following statement:

Good afternoon, I'd like to call to order this meeting of the Grandview Heights Board of Education on Wednesday, June 18, 2020.

Just like with our previous meetings, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are holding this meeting using videoconferencing technology. We feel this is the safest way to hold a meeting in light of the state's stay-at-home order and guidance regarding social distancing. The Ohio General Assembly and Attorney General have approved the use of virtual meetings as a viable alternative to conducting public hearings during this time, and the district's alternative complies with the new statutory directives.

Please also be advised that Board of Education meetings are not hearings – they are meetings. We are in full compliance with House Bill 197 by having our meeting live-streamed so that members of the public can observe and hear the discussions and deliberations of the Board.

Roll Call	Members Present:	Members Absent:
	Eric Bode	
	Emily Gephart	
	Kevin Gusé	
	Jesse Truett	
	Molly Wassmuth	

Fall Instruction Planning

Superintendent Andy Culp explained that this meeting is for step 2 (Design and Planning) in a three-step approach to plan for what school may look like in the fall as follows:

1. Data and Research – analyzed student, parent, teacher surveys (done at June 3, 2020 Board of Education meeting)
2. Design and Planning
3. Superintendent Recommendation to Board of Education

Governor DeWine is expected to release guidelines for returning to school during his press conference on Tuesday, June 23, 2020. Due to the current uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, Superintendent Culp stated that he feels it is important for the district to plan for three scenarios: 1.) traditional school environment with safety protocols put into place; 2.) distance learning for all students; and 3.) hybrid approach using aspects of both distance learning and traditional learning.

The leadership team has been working on a draft plan for returning to school under the scenarios above and will share that with the Board of Education for feedback today. Following this meeting, a Special Board meeting will tentatively be scheduled for July 8, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. for the third step in the 3-step process, which is a Superintendent recommendation to the Board of Education for returning to school in the fall.

Mr. Culp presented the following 3 plans for returning to school:

Option #1 - Traditional School Setting (with additional safety protocols)

This would include students returning to school for face-to-face traditional learning with the following provisions in place:

- Avoid large gatherings;
- Require face masks in all buildings;
- Social distancing;
- Health/temperature checks for staff and students;
- Hand sanitizers in or near every classroom;
- Students and staff must be temperature-free for 48 hours before coming to school;
- Increased signage throughout the buildings displaying healthy habit reminders;
- Change air filters to increase air purity;
- Turn off drinking fountains with the exception of bottle fillers;
- Encourage outdoor learning to the extent possible;
- Clean high-touch areas daily;

- Limit visitors in the buildings;
- Consider uni-directional hallways;
- Desks facing one direction;
- Grab and go lunches with no large gatherings in the cafeteria;
- Isolation rooms in each building for anyone with a fever;
- 1 student per seat in busses;
- Create staggered schedules for students entering/exiting each building;
- Close the media centers;
- No assemblies;
- Parent-teacher conferences and curriculum night to be held virtually;
- Kids Club will be open;
- Normal class sizes;
- Policy updates regarding attendance, social distancing, face masks, etc.;
- Athletic eligibility to be waived for fall sports;
- Limit the number of staff/students in restrooms and other common areas;
- Work with the school nurse for protocols for anyone with a fever spike during the day;
- Work with custodians on cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

Questions/Comments – Traditional School Setting

Mr. Gusé: Will there be an option for students to stay home and participate synchronously via classroom webcams?

Mr. Culp: It is likely there will be parents who choose to keep their students at home. The district is evaluating options for live-streaming cameras in certain classrooms and/or assigning a teacher(s) to a position as an online learning coordinator.

Mr. Gusé: If there were live streaming cameras, would there be FERPA considerations? And, would there need to be some incentive offered for teachers to serve in a position such as an online coordinator?

Mr. Culp: Both of those topics have been discussed.

Ms. Wassmuth: Would there be a potential financial impact if families elected home schooling or enrolling in virtual academies?

Ms. Collier: Yes, there would be a financial impact as students choosing either option would no longer be enrolled in Grandview Height Schools.

Mr. Truett: It is important to make sure alternatives are provided so families don't feel they need to withdraw and seek other educational opportunities. Also, with kids moving around less during the day, is it possible to increase instructional time to focus on core subject areas where students may be struggling due to the typical summer slide along with the final quarter of 2019-2020 being virtual?

Mr. Culp: The district utilizes MTSS, multi-tiered systems of support, to increase time needed for students with an observed deficit.

Mr. Culp: Critical to this traditional schooling approach is the 6-foot social distancing concept. Meeting 6-foot social distancing in 600 square foot classrooms will be a significant challenge. We will look to the Governor's guidelines as we finalize our decision.

Mrs. Gephart: Research is pretty clear that COVID-19 is spread through droplets and, thus, the requirement for face masks. However, many people are concerned about the face mask requirement for young students.

Mr. Culp: Mask wearing for young students is certainly more of a challenge, but research is pretty clear that doing so mitigates the spread. District leadership will be discussing this topic more with a group of medical professionals within the community for additional feedback and guidance.

Mr. Bode: What will the testing protocols be given the high value in knowing when there are positive cases, and the resulting impact on other students/staff in direct exposure? This may be something to also discuss with the team of medical professionals.

Mr. Culp: Governor DeWine is committed to providing a database of positive COVID-19 tests by zip code. Communication and adaptability will be critical in this environment if/when cases arise.

Ms. Wassmuth: Can face shields be used as an alternative to face masks?

Mrs. Gephart: Face shields may be less restrictive to younger kids than face masks.

Ms. Wassmuth: Face shields may be a favorable alternative for teachers so that students are able to clearly see and hear what teachers are saying.

Option #2 - Hybrid School Setting

This would include components of the traditional school setting along with components of a virtual model including:

- Avoid large gatherings;
- Require face masks in all buildings;
- Social distancing;
- Health/temperature checks for staff and students;
- Maximum of 12 students in a classroom;
- No field trips or school assemblies;
- Parent teacher conferences/curriculum nights held virtually;
- Stevenson Elementary:
 - Follow an AM/PM rotation;
 - Special area teachers will provide blended learning opportunities;
 - Classroom furniture will be arranged to accommodate social distancing;
 - Eliminate shared supplies;
 - Close the media center;
 - Staggered recess.
- EILMS/GHHS
 - Follow an A/B day rotation;
 - Classroom furniture will be arranged to accommodate social distancing;
 - Stagger class transitions;
 - Close the media center;
 - Eliminate shared supplies;
 - Student lockers would not be used.

Questions/Comments - Hybrid School Setting

Ms. Wassmuth: Why is an A/B rotation proposed for EI/LMS and GHHS but AM/PM rotation proposed for RLS?

Mr. Culp: The RLS building leadership felt strongly that the AM/PM schedule would better maintain the consistency of learning for the young learners. Because of shared staff of related arts, special education, and foreign language, EI/LMS and GHHS would follow the same A/B schedule.

Mrs. Gephart: Has there been consideration given to families that have students in both RLS and EI/LMS or GHHS, resulting in different schedules for children in the same household? This would probably create significant challenges for working parents. And, how would Kids Club deal with the A/B rotation for EI/LMS students?

Mr. Culp: Do you believe that keeping all buildings on the same schedule would be preferable?

Mrs. Gephart: Yes.

Mr. Truett: That is a good point recognizing the scheduling factor for working families.

Mr. Bode: It may, in fact, be confusing for families having different schedules for their children in different buildings. The AM/PM schedule doubles the drop-offs of coming and going, possibly resulting in more interaction and exposure among students. For that reason, the A/B schedule seems appealing.

Ms. Wassmuth: Consistency is important and childcare will be a challenge in either scenario. Let's not let the childcare challenge dictate what is best instructionally for our students. We also need to be mindful of the amount of planning work for teachers.

Mr. Culp: These are all great points that will need further discussion.

Mr. Truett: Has there been any consideration given to non-traditional options?

Mr. Culp: The hybrid model addresses the social distancing factor. The A/B model does not as it doesn't reduce the number of students in the buildings and classrooms at one time.

Mr. Truett: There are some larger classrooms in EI. Would it make sense to include K-3 in those larger classrooms to accommodate younger learners needing more face-to-face time with teachers?

Mr. Bode: There is real value in keeping the plan as simple as possible and not overcomplicating it.

Mr. Truett: That makes a lot of sense. It's very likely that we will need to transition between plans, so keeping it as simple as possible makes sense.

Option #3 – Full Distance Learning

This would entail full virtual learning for all students, similar to how we finished the 2019-2020 school year with some modifications, based on feedback from the staff, student, and parent surveys as follows:

- More structure;
- More synchronous instruction;
- More time and accountability for all buildings including:
 - RLS would include synchronous learning every day throughout the day in small groups, a daily routine and schedule for the entire day, and increased office hours.
 - EI/LMS and GHHS would function on an abbreviated 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. 8-period day, and would include increased office hours and google meetings.
- The draft plan also includes more specifics on assessments and professional development.

Questions/Comments – Full Distance Learning

Mr. Gusé: The planning work that has been occurring is critical and necessary based on the survey feedback from parents, students, and staff. We will need to take into consideration the guidance issued by the Governor and Ohio Department of Health, but full distance learning seems like the worst of the three options. Having at least some level of face-to-face instruction would be preferred.

Mr. Bode: Has consideration been given for all of the other activities such as specials, athletics, and Kids Club under the full distance learning option?

Mr. Culp: Full distance learning would only be used if required for health/safety reasons and in that situation, all other activities would be shut down.

Mr. Truett: It seems like the three plans really took the survey data into consideration and incorporated that feedback. Has there been any conversations about making sure we are meeting IEP goals for special education?

Mr. Culp: Dr. Partlow has worked hard to make sure IEP goals are still being met. One component of the hybrid model is the ability to bring special education students into the classroom every day. In some instances, this may be beneficial and in some instances it may not.

Mr. Gusé: It does seem preferable to choose either the AM/PM or the A/B model for all students. It doesn't seem like a great idea to mix the schedules considering families will have students at both buildings. Also, there is value in keeping as much normalcy for students as possible so choosing the AM/PM option seems preferential unless there is a compelling reason not to follow that.

Ms. Wasmuth: The AM/PM schedule does seem preferential.

Mr. Truett: The feedback loop from district staff will be a critical piece to evaluate in making a final decision. At this point it seems like the Board of Education would like some consistency K-12, but it is important to listen to feedback from the staff.

Mr. Culp: Mrs. Ullum feels strongly that the AM/PM schedule for K-3 students is best while Mr. Gage and Mr. Brown feel strongly that the A/B rotation is best for their students. However, hearing the Board's desire for consistency, we will have further conversations about how we can enhance consistency.

Most Important Points

Mr. Bode: The ability to be flexible is one of the most important points. The district will need to be prepared to change plans at any point in time. We should try to pick the option that will be the most flexible. The A/B schedule with cameras in the classrooms whereby students would attend school one day and watch instruction via cameras the next day seems very appealing. The traditional educational delivery option seems like the preferable option, but we should focus on the parts of that plan that will lead to the smoothest transitions to the hybrid or full virtual learning options if necessary.

Ms. Wassmuth: Keeping things simple and being mindful of what is best for kids is very important. It seems somewhat unrealistic to think we could be fully back to a traditional setting in August when we are still having virtual Board meetings at this point in time. There seems to be some positive aspects of the hybrid model and staff will need to be mindful that students have not been in school face-to-face for six months.

Mrs. Gephart: It seems that we will focus on either the traditional or the hybrid model of instruction, unless we are forced to revert to the full distance learning. The difference between traditional and hybrid is the social distancing aspect. If masks offset the inability to remain six feet apart, then the traditional model seems most favorable. The Governor also announced today that fall sports can be full contact and practice which seems difficult to reconcile if students are not back in school face-to-face.

Mr. Gusé: Holding the next special Board meeting on July 8th and making a decision at that time is a good idea. Also, the efforts to get these plans in place are appreciated.

Mr. Truett: Distance learning will have a place even if we choose the traditional model to start the school year. Learning is the constant factor regardless of the option chosen. We need to keep the kids at the center of this decision. It is not lost on this Board of Education that we have a teaching staff that puts kids first. We are not fighting battles with staff that certain other districts are experiencing. The Board appreciates the feedback from staff centered around what is best for kids.

Next Steps

The Board will tentatively meet on July 8th at 7:00 p.m. to consider a recommendation for school to start in the fall. This is a very fluid and dynamic situation that could change. It will be important to communicate effectively with parents and students. The goal will be to return to school in a traditional setting if we can do it in a way that maintains the safety and security of staff and students, and is supported by the Ohio Department of Health and Franklin County Board of Health.

Mr. Culp will also be meeting with a team of medical professionals within the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff communities on July 1st to seek feedback on the draft plans.

Mr. Truett stated that the Board has a regular meeting on June 24th and requested each Board member be thinking about whether we would want to hold the July 8th special meeting in person (socially-distanced) or through electronic means.

Motion 20-110 (Adjourn) Mr. Gusé moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Bode seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Bode, aye; Mrs. Gephart, aye; Mr. Gusé, aye; Mr. Truett, aye; Ms. Wassmuth, aye.

President Truett declared the meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

President

Treasurer