

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
SPECIAL MEETING AUGUST 11, 2020

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Call To Order

The special meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Bolton at 7:04 p.m.

Members Present: Dean Bolton, Katie Cavanaugh, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Tonya Rodriguez and Sarah Wohlford

Administrators: Superintendent John Hood; Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Assistant Superintendent Cheri Meier; and Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz

Superintendent Hood and Assistant Superintendent Stacy presented the 2020-2021 Preparedness and Response Plan. Superintendent Hood reviewed the process so far, as well as timelines and upcoming board actions. He provided an overview of the plan which outlines safety protocols and instructional approaches for Phases 1-4. Phases 1-3 were briefly touched on while Phase 4 was presented in detail. During Phase 4, the mode of instruction is 100% online. Safety protocols including mask, social distancing, hygienic requirements, limited building access and more were described.

Preparedness &
Response Plan

Phase 5 was previewed as the District continues to develop plans and timelines. Safety protocols will be consistent with Phase 4 with the exception of loosening the social distancing requirements and a shift to in-person instruction.

Considerations used in the development of the instructional schedules and expectations were explained and included community input, survey information, task force work, best practices, student and staff feedback and information from the MSU collaboration. Assistant Superintendent Bailey also reviewed the OPS values as set in the Strategic Plan.

The Learning Plan was described and included the following main areas: academic monitoring and grading; attendance; a common learning platform; family and mental health supports; ongoing professional development; special education requirements; technology access and support; engagement and flexibility.

Principal Tara Fry reviewed the Elementary Level schedule and clarified that it is a framework that will be built up to. She also reviewed class meetings to establish community and expectations; onboarding students; intervention, enrichment and extension time; and allows time for art, music, phys ed and exploratory specials. Specific details will be provided by buildings and teachers to families.

Principal Jody Noble reviewed the 5-12th grade level schedule which includes team, base or mentor time; allows for smaller learning communities; social-emotional check-ins; as well as live and on-demand time built into each day.

Principal Shannon Nedds explained that the Montessori schedule will align with the traditional schedule to include as much Montessori philosophy as possible. The learning blocks of time allow for typical Montessori work schedules.

Administrators discussed the district's beliefs as we transition to virtual learning noting new opportunities, what is best for students, meeting students' educational and developmental needs, relationships and meeting diverse needs – observing that time on task does not automatically equal rigor.

Members inquired about the following: attention to social-emotional health; logging off and on multiple times or to multiple systems; State hour and day requirements; sick days; science and social studies at the elementary level; AP classes and community expectations; progress through material and content mastery; time with counselors; flexibility within each learning block; amount of live time; socialization breaks during the day; library time; and equity.

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Preparedness &
Response Plan

Member Lynn suggested a discussion item regarding the district’s strategic approach to the learning gap that is emerging.

The following individuals addressed the board: Jan Casey, Crystal Scott, Wei Lee, and Christina Salem concerning the proposed cell tower; Amy Burton and Jessie Gillard regarding the return to school plans; Jenny Carr, Deep Grewal and Larry King regarding athletics and extra-curricular activities; and Pam Kaur regarding Montessori PPK.

Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: extended thanks to MSU, Joan Ferguson and Stacy Bailey for their collaboration to develop a K-12 support program to help districts with online learning; proposed cell tower will be on the August 24th board agenda; forecasted the August 13th board agenda; upcoming budget update; upcoming resolution regarding board policies; handbook updates; and new directors will be introduced August 13th.

Superintendent
Reports
& Requests

Members inquired about the following: substitute teachers; professional development for lower elementary teachers; hot spots and technology support; internet connectivity issue and August 12th fix; possible policy regarding communication with community during construction; upcoming athletic budget update; and club funding discussion.

Board Reports
& Request

MOVED Tonya Rodriguez, SUPPORTED by Dean Bolton that board approve voluntary, outdoor, non-contact conditioning for all sports, including cheer and dance while in Phase 4.

Return to
Conditioning

Roll Call Vote

Dean Bolton	Yes	Vincent Lyon-Callo	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Tonya Rodriguez	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Sarah Wohlford	Yes
Melanie Lynn	Yes		

AYE: 7 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 **MOTION CARRIED**

The board agreed to add athletics as an additional discussion item on the agenda.

The board discussed administration’s recommendation to allow tennis, golf and cross country to return to practice and competition with an approved return to practice and return to competition safety plan.

Return to
Athletics

Members inquired about the following: transportation; chipped times for cross country; and limiting interactions. The board would like to review the cross country plan for returning to competition.

Member Lynn proposed a discussion item regarding the cell tower and communicating with the community.

The following individuals addressed the board: Nicole Heathcock and Nathan Schuster regarding the return to school plans; Chris Nugent, Chris Silker, Malcolm Mead-O'Brien and Annette O'Connor regarding athletics; and Melissa Terry regarding childcare.

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Public Comment

Mary Gebara expressed thank for the time, energy and effort that has gone into the development of the Preparedness Response Plan.

There were no other matters.

Other Matters

President Bolton adjourned the special meeting at 10:17 p.m.

Adjourn

Mary Gebara, Secretary