

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE (VOTING) MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WILLIAM PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022

An Education Committee (Voting) Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the William Penn School District was held on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 remotely via Zoom. At approximately 6:30 p.m., Ms. Cook Henry presided and called the meeting to order. Allegiance to the flag was pledged. Ms. Shaiko called the roll of attendance.

Board Members Present:

Ms. Monique Boykins, President
Ms. Joana Hopkins, Vice-President
Mr. William Callahan
Ms. Valerie Cook Henry
Ms. Jennifer Hoff
Ms. Wadiya Ivery
Ms. Louella Richardson
Mr. Jan Tong

Board Members Absent:

Mr. Robert E. Wright, Sr.

Also Present:

Dr. Eric J. Becoats - Superintendent
Ms. Janet M. Shaiko - Assistant Board Secretary
Other Administrators and staff

ACTION ITEM

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Valerie Cook-Henry - Chair
Jennifer Hoff, Joana Hopkins, Jan Tong - Members

Dr. Becoats presented the proposed revisions involving masking guidelines in the Health and Safety Plan. He provided information on the following topics:

- COVID-19 Update
- District COVID-19 Levels
- CDC COVID-19 County Check
(WPSD is currently at the low transmission level)
- CDC COVID-19 Community Case Rates

Dr. Becoats announced that the revisions to the Health and Safety Plan refer only to the masking guidelines. He said these revisions would become effective Monday, April 4, 2022 and that masks would become optional. He added that anyone may still wear a mask, if preferred.

Ms. Cook Henry read aloud the motion, and she opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Callahan stated that East Lansdowne Borough officials have not revised the masking guidelines for their Municipal Building. He said that, as Borough Manager, he will be voting “no” on this issue, as it would be hypocritical of him to approve optional masking at the school district, yet still require masks at the borough.

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Ms. Hoff asked if we would require masks immediately following Spring Break. Dr. Becoats responded that such wording was not part of the current motion. Ms. Hoff asked if we should consider this wording in a separate motion or could we revisit it at a later date. Ms. Boykins responded that there is no reason to revisit this issue following Spring Break, as we will be watching the data. Ms. Cook Henry said the wording on the revised Health and Safety Plan stipulates that universal masking will be required if the community level is “high.”

The discussion turned to what is considered a “high” level. Dr. Becoats stated that the CDC designates the “low,” medium,” and “high’ levels. Ms. Hoff suggested that, should the school district reach the “medium” level, action be taken and not wait till we reach the “high” level. Ms. Boykins said that, once we determine what number designates each level/threshold, the Administration will advise the Board of School Directors if the school district is approaching a “medium” or “high” level.

Ms. Richardson asked if a recommendation will be made to parents to test the students before they return from Spring Break. Dr. Becoats said that a message will be sent to the community prior to Spring Break similar to the one sent prior to Winter Break, with suggestions and guidelines. Ms. Ivery suggested that parents be reminded that another round of free at-home test kits are available.

Questions posed by attendees in the Q&A section were answered.

Ms. Ivery asked if masks would be provided for those who wish to wear them. Dr. Becoats responded that we have a supply of masks available.

Mr. Callahan asked if masks would be required on buses. Dr. Becoats said that they would not, in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Ms. Boykins said we are making the right decision in established an effective date of April 4th, as we will have the opportunity to watch data from other school districts who have already removed a mask mandate. Dr. Becoats agreed that this will provide us with enough time to monitor data.

Ms. Cook Henry stated that the Board and the Administration are trying to respect all views on this issue.

Ms. Hoff said that, as we watch data from other school districts, we have time to make adjustments, if necessary, at the March 28th School Board Business Meeting.

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Ms. Cook Henry presented Action Item I.

Ms. Cook Henry made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ivery, to approve Action Item I.

I. SY 2021-2022 Health and Safety Plan

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan, hereinafter referred to as a Health and Safety Plan.

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The Health and Safety Plan has been updated to reflect the updated masking guidance from the CDC which was released on February 25, 2022.

MOTION: To approve the district's revised Health and Safety Plan for the 2021-2022 school year as described above. Further, effective Monday, April 4, 2022 wearing facial masks will be optional in all school district buildings. In the event Delaware County returns to high COVID-19 Community Levels and/or COVID-19 related cases rise within the district, the Administration has the ability to reinstate "Universal Masking" as a mitigation effort.

On roll call: Cook Henry, Hoff, Ivery, Richardson, Tong, Hopkins and Boykins voted yes. Callahan voted no. Wright was absent. The motion carried.

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Ms. Cook Henry returned to the scheduled presentations on the agenda.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Student Services Update
 - Danielle Seward, Executive Director of Student Services
2. Academic Services - Spring Assessments
 - Tara Brown, Assistant to the Superintendent of Academic Services
 - Ed Dunn, Supervisor of K-12 Math Curriculum Support
 - Geana Germana, Supervisor of Special Education
 - Dr. Mark Lewis, Supervisor of Research & Evaluation
3. Discussion
 - Valerie Cook Henry, Committee Chair

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Cook Henry adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Shaiko
Assistant Board Secretary