

**LEBANON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
JULY 23, 2020 - 7:00 PM**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Sarah Haynes, Alexis Margerelli-Hussey, Maureen McCall, John Konow, Nicole McGillicuddy, Dawn Whitcher, Danelle Person, Matthew Smith, Superintendent Robert Angeli, James Apicelli, Kathleen Smith, Kevin French, Robert Sirpenski, Robert Laskarzewski, Rita Quiles-Glover, Jacques Dulac, Jeannette Picard.

I. CALL TO ORDER

S. Haynes called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. DISCUSS AND ACT ON SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN

Superintendent Angeli presented a PowerPoint of the Lebanon Reopening Plan. The Reopening Committee has about 50 people on it. The committee is broken up into eight subcommittees that explored different aspects of reopening schools in a safe way. Those subcommittees are: Health and Safety, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Scheduling and Operations, Sports, Clubs and Activities, Staff Concern and Contracts, Professional Learning and Evaluation, Social Emotional Learning and Special Education. The state plan requires that districts plan for three different learning models. One is in school instruction. This is for all students coming back into the buildings to receive instruction in school. The state does provide opportunity for parents to opt out of in school instruction and to select distance learning. The second plan is a hybrid model. In that model half the students would be in school and half would be out of school and those students would flip flop. The third plan would be everyone returning to distance learning.

1. In School Learning

- Parents may opt for distance learning.
- Schools operating up to 100% capacity, students/staff with underlying medical conditions should consider restrictions and blended/remote learning.
- Buses up to full capacity with bus monitors for the first month of school, facial coverings in place during transit, controlled loading/unloading of riders.
- Face coverings for students and staff while inside school buildings.
- Identification/isolation of sick students/staff.
- Cohorting of students where possible, restrictions on congregating staggered entry/dismissal and hallway transit.
- Maximize spacing of seating to greatest extent possible. Three feet minimum or maximum of twelve feet.
- Sports, clubs and activities operate as normal with masks and social distancing.
- Increased cleaning and sanitization.

LES IN SCHOOL LEARNING

- Social Distancing: Desks will be six feet apart. Students keep to the right in hallways six feet apart. Masks with breaks twice a day.
- Cohorting: Each class is a cohort. Specials and support teachers come to the students. Meals in classrooms.
- Transportation: Buses up to full capacity. Monitors for first month of school. Masks will be worn. Buses empty at the main entrance one at a time.
- Planing on still having recess and allowing students to use play scape. The play scape will be cleaned in between students at recess. If that proves to be difficult and is unable to be solved, the play scape may have to be eliminated.

LMS IN SCHOOL LEARNING

- Social Distancing: Desks will be four feet apart. Students will keep to the right in hallways, six feet apart. Masks will be worn. No use of lockers.

- Cohorting: Grade 5 and 6 are cohorts. Specials and support teachers come to students. Grade 7 and 8 no cohorts due to the different level math classes and different language classes. Meals will be in classrooms.
- Transportation: Buses up to full capacity. Monitors for the first month. Masks will be worn and masks will be available if a student doesn't have one upon arrival to the bus. When students arrive at the school, the schools plan on emptying buses by grade level. Each grade level will be assigned a different door to enter and exit the school.
- Recess will continue for fifth graders. There is no play scape at the middle school.

LMHS IN SCHOOL LEARNING

- Social Distancing: Desks will be four feet apart. Students keep to right in hallways six feet apart. Some stairwells marked as one-way. Masks will be worn. No use of lockers. The high school already had block scheduling, but will go to a four period block schedule to limit passing time of the students.
- Cohorting: Impossible at the high school level because the kids don't travel in groups from one class to the next because they are in all the difference classes they have signed up for.
- Transportation: Buses to full capacity. Monitors for the first month of school. Masks will be worn. Students who get off the bus will enter through the main entrance, but the kids who drive or get dropped off in the parking lot will enter through a side door on that side of the parking lot.

IN SCHOOL VISITOR ACCESS

- To the greatest extent possible, visitors to district buildings will need to schedule appointments with the main office. Visitors will be reminded to cancel and reschedule appointments by phone should they be symptomatic (cough, fever, respiratory distress).
- 504 plan, PPT, and other meetings may be scheduled via online platforms such as Google Meet and Zoom.
- Advanced notice will be provided to the school office of scheduled meetings with school visitors.
- Visitors will enter the main office to sign in with photo identification via Raptor System.
- Visitors entering district buildings must wear facial coverings at all times.
- Posted protocols for appropriate hygiene techniques and social distancing will be expected to be followed by all school visitors.
- School deliveries will be facilitated by a school custodian to minimize contact with people in the building.

Superintendent Angeli stated he has been having preliminary conversations about the volunteers in the classrooms at LES. He needs to get more information regarding the roll of the volunteers and whether or not it is something we might be able to forego at this time. The volunteers are the schools lifeline but that is another level people that will need to be screened.

2. Hybrid Learning

Schools will move into hybrid learning based upon whatever the conditions are regarding COVID-19 transmission in Lebanon or surrounding communities. Not all of our students live in Lebanon, so we have to be in tune to what is happening in town and neighboring communities. Superintendent Angeli will be in consultation with UNCAS Health district. Moving into a Hybrid Model is likely to be a local decision based on local conditions. IF there is a moderate spread of COVID-19 in the community or surrounding communities, Lebanon will reduce the capacity by 50%.

- Schools operating at a reduced capacity (50%), with more reliance on hybrid model, blended/remote learning.
- Buses at reduced capacity with bus monitors for the first month of school, facial coverings in place during transit, controlled loading of riders, spread seating between unrelated riders.
- Identification/isolation of sick students/staff.
- Cohorting of students into Group A and Group B, restrictions on congregating, staggered entry/dismissal and hallway transit. The groups would be in an alphabet basis. Group A will be A-K and Group B will be L-Z. Lebanon will work with families with children with different last names. When the survey went out to parents one of the comments from a parent was that it would be better if her children were in different cohorts.
- Maximize spacing of seating up to six feet when feasible with reduced class sizes.

- Sports, clubs and activities could be suspended or operate with increased restrictions.
- Increased cleaning sanitization protocols.

HYBRID ALTERNATING SCHEDULE

- Monday and Tuesday Cohort A would be in school and Cohort B would be distance learning. Wednesday everyone would be distance learning so the school can be cleaned and sanitized for the next cohort. Thursday and Friday Cohort A would be distance learning and Cohort B would be in school. Then the schools would then be cleaned for the next cycle.

Cleaning will have to happen during the day, and will most likely be a shared responsibility. The custodians will be involved in wiping door knobs and surfaces in common areas. In the classrooms they will be doing deep cleaning every day after school. Some of the older students might share the responsibility of cleaning the desks that they eat at in the classrooms. Classroom teachers will assist in cleaning as well. The decision has not been made to go to a block schedule for 7th and 8th grade yet, but it is being reviewed. Superintendent Angeli has been working with K. French on what they think appropriate staffing levels for each of the schools. At least two perhaps three custodians during the day shift will be appropriate. Some temporary hires may be in order. There are several subs for custodian substituting, so they may need to be brought on during COVID-19 or possibly for the whole year. The work they would be doing includes, cleaning lavatories twice a day, wiping down commonly touched surfaces in the school (this was happening during the spring even after distance learning had started), cleaning the play scape in between recess. They will still be sweeping up messes and cleaning up after a child that gets sick. In the drafted plan it states custodians will be delivering lunches, however delivering lunches may be an all hands on deck situation if the custodians are too busy doing other duties. Custodians and teachers are getting additional training on disinfecting. If we switch to a hybrid model after September we will most likely bring the bus monitors back. If there are enough IA's to be bus monitors in September then we will continue with that plan. There will be another survey going out to parents after the plans have been submitted asking if they will be sending their child(ren) to school and if they will be taking the bus. Once school begins the choices are either in school or distance learning or if we have to switch to the hybrid model, it is either the hybrid model or distance learning.

3. Distance Learning

This means that the transmission of COVID-19 in the community and surrounding areas has reached the level that either the state has closed schools again or if they have left that decision to local control with through consultation with UNCAS Health and CT Dept of Public Health that it is unsafe to run schools either in school or hybrid so we have to move to distance learning.

- Schools closed, 100% remote learning.
- Staff will have the option to work remotely or continue to work in school, unless told not to come in for work.
- Bus transportation suspended.
- Extracurricular activities, including sports suspended.
- Two-hour delay school for students: Lyman Memorial High School - 9:30am - 2:05 pm. Lebanon Middle School - 9:40am - 2:16 pm. Lebanon Elementary School - 10:35am - 3:15pm. AM and PM pre-k is TBD. The LES schedule is still in discussion on whether or not to start earlier.

If we go to distance learning the transportation will be suspended, so we will possibly renegotiate our contract with the bus company, just as we did in the spring time of the 2019-2020 school year.

This three pronged plan is just a draft that will be sent to the state and could be changed at any time.

DAILY SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

If a person has any of these symptoms, they should stay home, stay away from other people, and call their health care provider.

- Fever (100.0 or higher) or chills. Taking temperatures upon entering buses or the schools is not recommended because of concerns with the calibration of the thermometer and it may cause congestion at the entrances which is what we are trying to avoid. School nurses will be using thermometers for assessing individual medical concerns or symptoms.
- Shortness of breath.

- New cough.
- New loss of taste or smell.
- Sore throat.
- Congestion or runny nose.
- Muscle or body aches.
- Extreme Fatigue.
- Headache.
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- New skin rash.

Children that are sent home just to be monitored may be able to participate in the distance learning. If they are indeed sick, then their health comes first and if they are not able to participate in distance learning the district will help to catch those children up when they recover.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

- A person can return to school when a family member can ensure that they can answer YES to ALL three questions: Has it been at least 10 days since the start of the first symptom? Has it been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine)? Has it been at least 24 hours since the symptoms have improved, including cough and shortness of breath?
- Alternate Criteria - If a person has had two negative COVID-19 tests at least 24 hours apart, and no symptoms they can return to school. A person can return to school following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternative diagnoses from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19 symptoms and the doctor says it's OK to come back to school, they may come back to school.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

- Ventilation: All ventilation systems will be operated at full capacity one week prior to the reopening of school. The air flow is flushed for two hours prior to building occupancy. Ventilation systems are operational during school hours. Routine inspections and maintenance are performed on a regular basis. Portable air filtering devices will be used in critical areas where the school ventilation system is not present. These areas are: LES isolation room, LMS school nurse office, LMS staff room and the Maintenance shop. Lebanon will be installing MERV-13 filters on all air handling units in all schools.
- Restrooms: Sign-in/out sheets. No-touch paper towel dispenser. Leave doors open where possible. Limit sink and stall use where possible. Cleaned twice during the day.
- General: Increased surface cleaning throughout the day. Cleaning supplies in each classroom. PPE: masks, gloves, face shields, gowns and goggles provided when needed. Trash cans without lids.

As long as we remain a low risk community we will reopen school with in school instruction. If things change for us as a state and the governor intervenes on behalf of the entire states we will have to do what the governor says. If schools are opening fully and parents opt for their children to do distance learning, those children will still be allowed to participate in sports.

A copy of the plan will be posted on the website and there will possibly be a webinar with the plan presented.

Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by J. Konow to approve the plan as presented. The motion passes unanimously.

III. DISCUSS AND ACT ON 2020-2021 CALENDAR CHANGES

The State Board of Education has shortened the school year for students from 180 days to 177 days.

Districts wanting to do this can use three days at the beginning of the year to do some of the professional development and the planning that districts may need to do with their teachers and administrators to ensure that they are ready to have a safe opening of school. The school calendar change would be to move the start date of school from August 26, 2020 to August 31, 2020 and use August, 26, 27 and 28th along with August 24th and 25th for professional development.

Most areas within the school buildings don't have air conditioning, so there may be some transition issues with mask wearing and other things, which we may need to pull the staff together at the end of the day to debrief. Superintendent Angeli is asking to operate on an early release schedule for the first two weeks of school. This would be August 31, 2020 - September 11, 2020. Starting September 13, 2020 would start a full day schedule.

The committee considered starting after Labor Day, but the recommendation is to abbreviate the school days for the first nine days as opposed to delaying the start to after Labor Day. Superintendent Angeli will be monitoring the temperature every day and if school needs to be canceled due to high temperatures those days will be added to the end of the school year just as snow days would be.

Motion made by A. Margerelli-Hussey and seconded by M. McCall to approve 2020-2021 calendar changes as presented.

Discussion: Superintendents have been asking the state if snow days can be switched to distance learning days. Superintendents were sent a reminder that state statute does not allow for distance learning on a snow day. Delaying school to start after Labor Day has two concerns. One being a second wave of the virus could come up and trying to get some days in in August and September is beneficial. The second concern is starting after Labor Day will result in the school year going later into June which could also be warmer temperatures. The new teacher orientation will be August 20, 2020 and August 21, 2020. All teachers will be in on August 24, 2020. There will be some sort of convocation for the teachers, whether it be virtual or in person. This hasn't been planned yet due to the planning of reopening schools.

N. McGillicuddy, D. Person, A. Margerelli-Hussey, M. McCall, S. Haynes, D. Whitcher and J. Konow in favor. M. Smith is opposed. Motion passes.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m. by S. Haynes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Hashem