

NEW PRAIRIE UNITED SCHOOL CORPORATION  
New Prairie High School Auditorium  
5333 N Cougar Road  
New Carlisle, IN 46552

NOTES

WORK SESSION

June 22, 2020

A work session was held on Monday, June 22, 2020, with Phil King, Al Williamson, Dale Groves, Rich Shail and Jason DeMeyer present. Dr. Paul White was also present.

- Mr. King opened the work session stating the topic of this work session is to discuss the "return to school" planning. There will be 9 topics discussed.
1. Dr. White opened the Work Session explaining the slight changes to the School Calendar that was just approved by the Board for 2020-2021. The calendar committee met and discussed the need for training days for teachers and staff due to COVID concerns. As a result, 2 teacher work/training days were moved to the beginning of the year, eliminating traditional Parent/Teacher Conferences which is an extra teacher day, and a January teacher work day, previously approved by the Board, was moved to the beginning of the year. The first student day has been moved from August 12<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup> giving the teachers 4 training/work days before students return. To balance the calendar days between the two semesters an eLearning day was added to the Thursday of Fall Break so anyone planning a trip can still do that and the additional school day needed could be added. Dr. White then stated that the E-Learning Days related to inclement weather days will remain the same as this past year with not more than 3 consecutive eLearning days in a row and a total of 6 Board approved eLearning days in a school year. E-Learning days connected to COVID outbreaks can be unlimited based on need.
  2. Dr. White discussed the 3 options currently being considered for a COVID impacted school year start:
    1. Option 1 – Full attendance with full cleaning/social distancing when possible
    2. Option 2 – 50% attendance in a Monday-Thursday format by alphabet (A-L, M-Z) maximizing social distancing protocols
    3. Option 3 – Zero to 33% attendance with full COVID concernDr. White stated that there is no way to know right now what the COVID situation will be before August 13<sup>th</sup> so we need to be ready for all options or what the state says needs to be done to start school. We may not hear what the Governor decides until the first of August if at all. A flow chart outlining the NPUSC return to school plan regarding the COVID situation will be distributed to parents in early July. Dr. White stated that it could be possible that all 3 options could be utilized during the school year.

Parent concerns mentioned on this topic include:

- Parent question: When will parents know the final plan to start school? Dr. White answered that hopefully somewhere between July 27<sup>th</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Parent question: Has there been a consideration of staggering the school day for different grade levels on the same day as eLearning does not work well for her students? Can teachers' video their lectures for the students at home?  
Dr. White explained that by sending students to school alphabetically on a 50% Attendance option, on the same days, it will accommodate the family and if the family were a blended family it would be worked out that all students in that family attend on the same days as well. The staggered idea greatly affects the transportation department in that it is unrealistic to deliver the kids to school on time and within budget with the extensive area that makes up our school system.
- Parent question: While a student is at home eLearning in the 50% Attendance option, would the teacher in the classroom be accessible to the student when at home and the teacher is teaching in the classroom? Dr. White said that teachers focus would be in the classroom. The student at home would be focusing/practicing on what was taught the day before while in the classroom. It has been discussed that possible support for the students at home could be done by Instructional Assistants via Zoom. This has not been developed fully yet.
- Mr. Groves asked if the A-L scenario doesn't equal 50% by grade levels, how that would work. Dr. White answered that it has been looked at closely by the administration and this split is close to 50% in all grade levels.
- Parent question: If we start with eLearning will those grades actually count? Dr. White responded that we have not fully developed the answer and will work this out in July.
- Parent question: How will lunch and recess look with social distancing and social interaction? Dr. White answered that in the 50% Attendance scenario regarding feeding students there is a lot of planning on feeding and social distancing. In elementary schools' breakfast will be served in the classrooms. We can create social distancing in every classroom in the district in the 50% Attendance situation with the exception of just a couple rooms. Regarding lunch, students would be assigned to areas A or B. Students will be assigned social distance seating within these areas. When group "A" is done eating they all get up and it is immediately disinfected while the next student group is seated in area "B" and so on. This will work well in a 50% scenario but will be more difficult in a 100% scenario. Honestly, social distancing will be a lot more difficult in a 100% scenario. Recess times may have to be reduced or look differently on the playground. Each classroom would be equipped with their own equipment and sanitized following its use.
- Parent question: If we start on the eLearning scenario, will parents have tools available to them to help their students. If a teacher could video themselves teaching the lesson it would be far more helpful. Dr. White

answered that there are things that can be done to help parents and this will be worked on.

3. Dr. White addressed health protocols & considerations upon the start of school. Temperature checking and mask conversations need to be had. Temperature checking is not realistic because it is not always accurate and can stop social distancing. Schools in the area are talking about requiring masks if returning to school at 100% Attendance. NPUSC will have to seek input on this issue.
  - Mr. Groves stated that he currently has 2 children in district attending New Prairie schools and if he had to decide today he would vote to return at 100% with voluntary masks. The corporation would constantly monitor the situation closely and if things were to drastically change then we would go with other options. Dr. White said that Mr. Williamson, who was not able to be present tonight, shared that if he had to vote right now he would vote to have students return at 50% Attendance with social distancing and encourage masks to be worn. Mr. Groves added that his kids stated to him that they don't want to wear a mask but would if told to. His kids added that they know most kids won't wear masks. Mr. Groves stated that they know it would be very difficult to enforce in school.
  - Parent question: Will parents be asked on the survey if they would want their students to wear masks. Dr. White responded that yes it will be a question on the survey. He knows there are strong feeling from parents on the wearing of masks both for and against.
  - Mrs. Hite, NPMS teacher, added that the ultimate goal is to give students the best education possible and to be back in school 100% so we have to do the best we can and make the right decisions to keep kids and staff healthy so we can achieve that goal. Dr. White shared that the things being considered are being considered out of a deep sense of concern and responsibility for how best to keep kids and staff safe and healthy.
  - Mrs. Kirkham asked who will provide masks. Dr. White said that as a starting point the district has ordered a bulk supply of masks for each school for students and staff use that should last for the initial start of school. Initially we will offer parents to supply their own or the school will provide masks. We do not know if we can sustain ordering and offering masks past the start of school. There will also be other offers of PPEs to the teachers of plastic or plexiglass dividers, hand sanitizers, etc. This will go out in an email in July of what will be offered to teachers.
  - Dr. White stated that we are studying the Dept. of Ed protocols that they sent out and their guidance related to COVID signs and symptoms. A parent suggested referring to the American Academy of Pediatrics for more info. Dr. White responded that he will check it out as well. Dr. White will send out protocols to parents in mid-July.
4. Dr. White explained that the custodial staff will be cleaning and disinfecting daily. We have been researching disinfectant machines. Few are made in the USA so they can be difficult to get. We may be using common sprayers. There would be deep cleaning of facilities mid-week and may call in temp services to help do that cleaning.
  - Parent question: will the schools be providing wipes to students to wipe down their desks. Dr. White responded that we will have a supply of

disinfectant wipes available for the first 5 to 6 weeks as a part of a bulk PPE order.

- Dr. White asked Mr. Aikman, Director of Facilities, if since the pool chlorine and the ultraviolet light is safe and good for use, could the pool be available for use and when it could be opened. Mr. Aikman responded the pool can be opened and ready for swimmers in mid-July. Dr. White went on to explain how the weight room could be opened for social distancing as well.
5. Dr. White explained that Nutritional Services Director, Mr. Mike Hale, has worked tirelessly to feed families through this pandemic and has a plan for when school starts. Mr. Hale explained how the USDA waiver works and how it allows us to send meals home if we cannot start school. Mr. Hale and his staff have plans for all 3 scenarios. He explained protocols that are in place for staff including temperatures being taken daily, along with PPE's being worn at all times. Dr. White stated that attempting to social distance students during lunch will put an additional strain on staff. Dr. White added that because drinking fountains will be shut down, water will be provided to students during the day.
  6. Regarding Transportation Plans, Dr. White said it has been figured out how to disinfect buses daily. Transporting students on a 50% basis is still being looked at. We are unsure if we can get students to school on time. Requiring masks on the bus is still in question. Bus drivers feel it would be a big challenge requiring masks on the bus and monitoring it while driving. We will be looking at rate of pay for substitute bus drivers. It has been difficult finding sub drivers and will be more difficult at this challenging time.
  7. Dr. White next addressed technology considerations during this time. We supplied 75 hotspots this past spring. Dr. Cannon added that we are trying to obtain more for the start of school. Mrs. Hite asked about breakage and loaners. Dr. White said that if we see an increase in breakage we do have insurance funds to cover that. We do not have a lot of extra iPads. Dr. Cannon stated that if we need additional loaners in the fall we will have to invest in some.
    - Parent suggestion: tailor eLearning assignments to just the essentials. Data limits may become a problem with parents running out while eLearning.
    - It was asked if Zoom will be free to the corporation. Dr. White answered that he does not know the answer at this point in time.
    - Mrs. Hite asked about adding a question to the parent survey on condition of students' iPads. Dr. White responded we will check on that.
  8. Dr. White provided an IHSAA flowchart for sports from Mr. Bachmann, Athletic Director. Dr. White said the IHSAA flowchart shows how athletics are re-started in phases beginning in July and how we should run the programs. All sports are different in regard to contact and proximity. Mr. Bachmann explained the IHSAA flowchart. Dr. White said that we need to look at this further and perhaps make our own determinations on high contact sports and how that will look. Transportation is another issue to be looked at with ECAs. There will be more to come on this. Dr. White also mentioned there are concerns with marching band as well to be discussed. Dr. White also stated that there are plans for afterschool programs that are forthcoming depending on our opening.
  9. Dr. White stated that there are 2 versions of a survey ready to go for parents and staff. Dr. White did a quick overview of the questions on the survey with the

Board. A few questions were adjusted based on community input. Dr. White will send out an all-call referring to the email that will go out which includes the survey link.

- Mrs. Aerts thanked Dr. White and the Board for all the work they are doing to do the best for everyone.
- Dr. White thanked Mrs. Aerts.