

**The Board of Education of Moorestown Township
Moorestown, New Jersey
MINUTES
Video Conference
March 4, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.**

I. Call to Order

In accordance with the State’s Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by sending a notice of the time, date, location, instructions for remote access and making public comment and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting on March 2, 2021, to the Courier Post, and Burlington County Times.

II. Moment of Silence

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Roll Call

Present	Dr. Sandra Alberti
Present	Mr. Jack Fairchild
Present	Mrs. Dria Law
Present	Dr. Mark Snyder
Present	Mr. Mark Villanueva
Present	Mr. Maurice Weeks
Present	Mr. David A. Weinstein

Present	Ms. Lauren Romano, Vice President
Present	Mrs. Caryn Shaw, President

Present	Mr. John Comegno, Esq., Solicitor
Present	Dr. Scott McCartney, Superintendent
Present	Mr. James M. Heiser, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Present	Ms. Carole Butler, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Present	Dr. David Tate, Director of Special Education
Present	Dr. Carolyn Gibson, Interim Director of Human Resources
Present	Mr. Jeffrey Arey, Director of Instructional Technology

V. Moorestown “Steps Forward” Presentation and Discussion

Mrs. Shaw welcomed the Board and the Community. Mrs. Shaw turned the floor over to Dr. McCartney to open a presentation entitled “Moorestown Steps Forward.”

Mr. Fairchild stated that it appeared the meeting is at cap and asked if there was a way to expand the meeting.

Mr. Arey confirmed that the meeting is at cap and the District license permits 500 attendees. It was recommended that duplicate accounts be consolidated.

Dr. McCartney and district Administration presented upcoming plans for further reopening schools.

Mrs. Shaw thanked the Administrative team for the presentation.

Dr. Snyder asked why early dismissal is being recommended vs. full day. Dr. McCartney explained that mixing the cohorts and eating in school presented discomfort with staff and the amount of educational time gained back wasn't as significant as the early dismissal model. Dr. McCartney explained that we looked at eating inside classes and it became too cumbersome and impactful to instructional time.

Mr. Villanueva stated that indoor dining restrictions do not apply and asked if the 50% indoor dining is still a trigger point. Dr. McCartney explained that it is but it is dependent on several variables such as the time of year in relation to the number of days remaining in the school year.

Dr. Alberti stated that we can't task the district with planning both half day return and full day return at the same time and one or the other has to be chosen.

Dr. Snyder asked if the decision of full day is a school level decision or a district level decision.

Mr. Weeks asked about what lunch and recess would look like if we opened for full day. Mrs. Powell explained that lunch and recess would look drastically different with social distancing, cohorting, limited interactions, limited discussion, etc. Mrs. Rowe explained that we are currently doing stacked snack breaks, but it is drastically different with zones and cohorting.

Mrs. Shaw explained that other districts appear to be going toward early dismissal models vs. full day for all of the same reasons.

Mr. Villanueva stated that if the plan was to go back to early dismissal K-12, then lunch wouldn't even be a discussion.

Mr. Keith explained the difference between full day and early dismissal is approximately 40 minutes of instruction. Mr. Keith explained that there would be less time for breaks and study halls and students would be sitting online for the majority of the day.

Mr. Seibel explained the difference between full day and early dismissal is approximately 20 minutes of instruction. Mr. Seibel explained that we currently have dedicated instructional and course time in the back half of the day where other districts have what they consider office hours.

Dr. Alberti asked when the district would anticipate triggering teacher changes and is a waiver going to be requested. Dr. McCartney explained that parents would have to acknowledge that social distancing would be less than 6 feet. Mrs. Hackl explained that we do not want students to move to new teachers, but we have a good understanding of the levels that are going to require it based on current class numbers. Mrs. Hackl explained that prior to moving students we want to make sure the data is 100% received so the areas that require it are absolute.

Dr. Alberti asked what spaces we plan to utilize as satellite rooms. Mrs. Rowe explained the spaces.

Ms. Romano asked if the staff member in the satellite room would have to be hired or not. Dr. McCartney explained that it is a bit of both hiring and reallocating current resources.

Mr. Villanueva asked if the plexiglass was necessary to approve this. Dr. McCartney explained that his conversations with the DOH and DOE requested and recommended physical barriers.

Ms. Romano asked what would happen if the County moved back to high risk. Dr. McCartney explained the DOH and DOE has taken the position that we should maintain social distancing and that they may require if we move to high risk but it is ultimately unknown how they would react.

Dr. Snyder asked if the plexiglass divider allows you to go down to a particular distance. Dr. McCartney explained that there is no information on how far down you can go on distance.

Mrs. Law asked if the satellite rooms will eliminate the need to change teachers or only mitigate the odds. Mrs. Rowe explained the satellite rooms work in conjunction with what is happening in the students' actual classroom. Mrs. Rowe also explained that satellite rooms help mitigate teacher changes.

Mr. Villanueva asked at what social distance mark would we not need a satellite room. Mr. Carter explained that at 4.5' and 4' it wasn't too different. At 3' we are business as usual. Mrs. Rowe explained that we most likely will be able to get class sizes of 18-20 all in one classroom by removing additional furniture.

Mr. Weinstein stated that he appreciates the effort that was put forth at the Elementary levels.

Mr. Weeks asked for an update on how this would impact special education and choice remote. Dr. Tate explained that this plan would enhance the already robust program and that it would also enhance inclusion programs. Dr. McCartney explained that choice remote students would have similar programming.

Dr. Alberti stated that stronger commitment and creativity needs to happen at the 4-12 levels.

Mr. Fairchild was curious why there is a delay to constructing surveys for 4-12 now. Dr. McCartney explained that March 22nd is the date to implement the new plan, but it doesn't mean that we wouldn't pursue or survey the community on the other levels.

Mr. Weinstein asked what would happen if we would run specials at the UES level similar to the elementary level. Mrs. Powell explained that if we moved those outside the regular school day, we wouldn't be able to accommodate all of the students in all specials.

Mrs. Shaw stated that we need the next survey to determine the next steps for Grades 4-12.

Mr. Villanueva asked when we will receive those data points and expressed his frustration for the 4-12 model changes.

The Board requested the data for Grades 4-12 be sent out as soon as possible to review and evaluate.

Dr. Snyder asked if 5 day instruction can be implemented for certain grade levels at UES. Mrs. Powell explained that it has been evaluated and that it is possible but could impact certain teachers that are shared across grade levels.

Mrs. Romano asked if the vaccine rollout could impact the high school. Dr. McCartney stated that it hasn't necessarily been thought about at only the high school level, but more at the district level.

Mr. Villanueva would prefer to see a fundraising effort to fund plexiglass expenses.

VI. Public Comment

1. Open Public Comment

MOTION:

A motion is requested to open the floor for public comment.

Moved by: Mr. Weeks Second: Mr. Weinstein Vote: 9 - 0

2. Public Comment on Agenda Items

- a. Lisa Trapani, MEA President, reviewed the MEA membership makeup. Ms. Trapani emphasized that COVID has taken a toll on all of us. Ms. Trapani indicated that the plan as presented has the MEA support.
- b. Michael Sullivan, Teacher at MHS, read a prepared statement. Mr. Sullivan has seen some amazing things in our current situation and is proud of his colleagues. Mr. Sullivan thanked his colleagues for their inspiration.
- c. Jeff Seiden, 179 Rockland Avenue, stated that he is one of the healthcare professionals that signed the letter that was distributed from healthcare professionals. Mr. Seiden stated there isn't anything magical about six feet distance. All choices are a risk-benefit analysis.
- d. Jill Fallows Macaluso of 800 Golf View Road acknowledged the safety concerns that exist. Mrs. Macaluso stated that transmission rates at the elementary level are lower. Mrs. Macaluso is disappointed in the 4-12 plans.
- e. Amy Barton, SpEAC Member, thanked the staff for all of the efforts being made. SpEAC should be included in the dialogue in the crafting of these plans. The plan around satellite classrooms is a teaching moment of how special education students feel on a day to day basis.
- f. Anthony Dragun of 547 Eaglebrook Drive, stated he is bitterly disappointed in the plan for the upper grades. Mr. Dragun stated that the goal posts keep moving. There is a certain amount of inertia to get these plans off the ground.
- g. Peter Macaluso of 800 Golf View Road thanked the principals for their contributions tonight. Mr. Macaluso thanked the parents that signed the petition. Mr. Macaluso stated that he feels the plan seems to be to only go backwards.
- h. William Parkhill of 900 McElwee Road commended K-3 staff. He hopes the Board moves the plan forward and expands on it for 4-12.
- i. Ryan Kent, Teacher at MHS, commented that the district has not lowered its expectations for students and the bar has not been lowered. All district staff have been working nonstop to better educate students with safety in mind.
- j. Bridget Potts, Teacher at Roberts, commented that there is light at the end of the tunnel for K-3 students. There have been meetings until midnight, weekend meetings, and closed-door meetings all day to make this happen. This is for our students. This is starting K-3, but it isn't stopping there. It just takes time.

- k. Amy Delgado of 6 Walnut Court asked why we are staying remote after spring break. Dr. McCartney explained that it is to limit the amount of exposure after student and staff travels.
- l. Steve Rosenman of 4 Baltusrol Terrace stated that there is still no plan. Mr. Rosenman is on a healthcare board that is saying get back in school and stated he has no confidence at UES and standardization of synchronized learning is necessary.
- m. Donald Smith of 101 Camden Avenue commented that we need open schools five days a week with all students in person.
- n. Greg Harr, Teacher at MHS, gave an update on how his class was doing. Mr. Harr explained the difference for the spring concert. Mr. Harr stressed the importance of safety.
- o. John Makopoulos of 5 Walnut Court stated that we have 65 days of school left. Mr. Makopoulos stated that 6' distance is not required and that plexiglass isn't mentioned anywhere in the guidance documents. Kids aren't resilient and all of this is impacting them.
- p. Karen Vidal of 441 Oldershaw Avenue commented that Moorestown schools are open. The call is to return in hybrid. The private sector has not returned and they are still working from home. Ms. Vidal referred to a tracing course by Johns Hopkins. It makes a big difference for quarantine. The satellite room needs a quarantine plan.
- q. Andrew Lawson of 781 Garwood Road commented that he has five kids in the district. I stand with the parents to increase in-person learning. It is not adequate that only K-3 would be going back. My family spends over \$1,000 a month to supplement learning.
- r. Sean McDermott of 933 Fernwood Road commented that full day learning is possible. There are benefits to it compared to the risks. The Board should vote tonight to move forward the plan to all grade levels.
- s. Marcia Stetler-Klock, Teacher commented that Moorestown has always had their foot ahead of others. Many districts are just going back to hybrid. Some are still on full remote.
- t. Manny Delgado of 6 Walnut Court commented that his family moved to Moorestown because of the schools. It has been petitioned since August to return to school.
- u. Katherine Lovison of 119 W Central Avenue commented that there have been over 200 plus parents that have been watching on my stream.
- v. Nicola Hampton of 725 N. Stanwick Road commented that there is light at the end of the tunnel. The K-3 model that does not impact me as I have kids in high school. My kids thrived in the remote model. There are pros and cons on every single decision made during COVID.

3. Close Public Comment

MOTION:

A motion is requested to close the floor for public comment.

Moved by: Mr. Weinstein Second: Dr. Alberti Vote: 9 - 0

The Board discussed modifying the resolution language.

VII. Amendment to Restart and Recovery Plan

MOTION:

The Board directs that the Superintendent and Administration, in cooperation with the Board, propose a plan that enables 5 days of in-person education for grades 4 – 12, which may include less than 6 (six) feet social distancing and further requests that such plan be presented and set forth for a vote no later than the regular Board meeting on March 16, 2021,

The Board now approves the next phase of Moorestown Township Public Schools Restart and Recovery plan amendments for grades K - 3 only, presented by the Superintendent during the Board's special meeting on March 4, 2021, which includes less than 6 (six) feet social distancing in some grade K - 3 classrooms, and

Directs the Superintendent to so amend the plan and submit the amended plan to the Burlington County Office of Education.

Moved by: Mr. Villanueva Second: Mr. Weinstein Vote: 9 - 0

VIII. Adjournment – 12:01 a.m.

Moved by: Mr. Weinstein Second: Mr. Weeks Vote: 9 – 0

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Heiser, CPA
Board Secretary