DCS Steering Meeting

August 25, 2021

Co-chair Barb Boyd’s house

Jason Ahlf, Susan Grimm, Danya Kelberg, Diane Jewell, Chris Barrows, Shweta, Sophie Lalazarian Truman, Alissa Osbourne, Erin Bowser

Plan on adding Zoom for Steering until (Covid) numbers even out.

Principal’s Report:

Excited about upcoming school year, having everyone together in person since March 23rd 2020. First time having team together since March 2020. Learned a lot last Spring having students on campus, should help moving forward this school year. Variant. All schools working to make sure every student is healthy and safe at school, plus a partnership outside of school. No cases of Covid spread last Spring. Had students who had Covid and/or a close contact, acquired outside of school and able to stop the spread with contact tracing and quaranting. Thinking about eating and proximity. Students need to be 3 feet apart. Close contact considered 6 feet within another person for 15 minutes or more in 24 hours. Changed to 3 feet between students, 6 feet between students and adults. When students are eating and unmasked, should maintain 6 feet of distance. In Spring, able to keep kids 6 feet apart for lunches and in the gym. This school year, with increase in # of students, unable to keep kids 6 feet apart. Tables are four to six students in the same class, tables are 6 feet apart. Students are assigned seats, “pods” for contact tracing. Providing optional eating outdoors. Not required based student comfort. Will figure out need/desire for that, might get buckets to sit on or use as a table (with student on the ground) but will have that near the cafeteria so they can be safely supervised. Possibly will get a tent if there is a demand. Can do it any day (no previous sign up required). Parents can also request that students eat outside, teachers will communicate to IA’s.

Traffic flow is another change. School lunch will be free. System where lunch recess will be before lunch. Then will split in to to entry doors (lunch from home, students getting hot lunch) will have different routes. This will help with hand hygiene. Research has shown that having recess before lunch helps to calm students before returning to class. Helps with conflict resolution, physical needs (thirst, hunger, bathroom, etc). Helping this will help with calm before returning to class.

Water bottles are allowed. Will be refilled via classroom water faucets.

District wide: what is the plan in regards to close contact? How will they be supported? No concrete protocol in place. Online school isn’t partnering with neighborhood schools, so there is a disconnect between students who need home support online vs in-person school. In Spring, if they were sent home they weren’t “sick” per se (no spread), so how do they continue school work. One of the changes is the 3 foot rule vs the 6 foot rule. Should help with number of kids needing to be quarantining. Chris asks about masking outdoor. Erin will recommend that kids wear their masks outside, but we can’t (at this time) require – but will be a strong recommendation. In the morning before school, no playing on playground – hoping for a calmer start. Kids in line wearing masks. Runny nose falls under “covid like symptom”, not sure if the Spring rule of “can return to school if it clears up within 24 hours”. District will also try to hold flu vaccination clinics because the symptoms to Covid are so similar.

No attestation form this year because the CDC has found that those screening procedures did not prevent spread of Covid, not a measure that was helping due to spread of Covid within asymptomatic Covid positive. Asking families to do that check at home, if you answer yes keep them home (same with staff). All staff required to be vaccinated by October 18th (full vaccinated, last shot within two weeks of that time). Volunteers, contractors, etc also will need to be fully vaccinated.

Parent volunteers: sounds like we can have volunteers in the building, but not in the classroom yet.

Learning Journeys, Friday Specials, etc. Right now there is a pause on Elementary field trips. Secondary is allowed (probably because students are vaccinated). Have to use district transportation. Walking field trips are also a possibility, also a possibility to use district buses for Learning Journeys (Erin would have to get special transportation). Friday Specials can possibly be moved outside, distanced. Sophie says there is a possibility to purchase a tent for outdoor events.

Volunteer hour requirements: not something the district will say has to be done, it’s something we would decide as a group. Diane has been trying to think of new ways of doing things in the classroom, teachers will think of new ways to get parent support. Volunteers will need to be full vaccinated. Danya: just the two vaccination, or vaccination and a booster. Erin: right now it’s just the booster. Not storing pictures/files of proof of vaccination – just checking at the time of activity. Barb: Volunteers with a medical waiver be able to volunteer? Erin: good question, not sure – Erin will check.

Current volunteer status, flash a vaccination card at the time of the event (or a picture saved on your phone). May be able to keep a list (Erin). Ideas: ticker on volunteer badge (Danya)?

Chris: questions for tomorrow night, Erin talking after the kids are in the classroom. 25-30 minutes only while kids are at.

Covid test: if we get a negative test, can students come back to school? The school nurse will contact you.

Reminder to dress appropriately, pay attention to hand hygiene. Pack lunches, easy snacks that they can open themselves. Reusable lunchbags are ok. Not required to have everything disposable.

Spring 2021 vs present quarantine time: in Spring it was 10 to 14 days. School nurse will determine quarantine time, if negative test can get a student back to in school, etc. School nurse will contact families directly in cases of close contact when quarantine is required, with specific instructions.

As new information/guidance becomes available, Erin will update/answer questions. Town Hall with Sandburg PTSA answering same questions.

All filters have been replaced and upgraded MERS-10 over the summer by the district.

**\*Send out notes tonight\* Dyana**

Teacher’s Report:

Teachers are super excited to be back, energy was good today. Gillian Stroup is a delight, energetic and is working on setting up the Middles of classroom. Erin Subcleff spent a lot of time getting Olders set up. Gillian is experienced, she taught in her Houston classroom all year last year so she feels pretty good about Covid safety protocols. Setting up tables in the classroom 3 feet apart has been a challenge, but everyone will fit/be comfortable. Kids are adaptable, Diane’s feeling is that they will be so grateful to be back in the classroom it will be a win/win.

Question from Diane: Are email distro lists set? Adwar is Communications chair, sent a request to register to create the lists. Barb doesn’t have confidence in the list yet.

Susan: where does the Family Directory propagate from? Shweta: Adwar put together student lists in June for Room Parent emails. Sophie: verified that Adwar updated student distribution lists.

27 olders, 24 Middles, 22 Youngers, 73 total.

Jason Ahlf: Who purges students who are no longer here, so we don’t contact them for pledges.

Treasurer’s Report:

Word doc for donation/pledge. How much do we say at the Meet and Greet Community Meeting? Wait until September event to mention pledges and donations. Will say more info to come for that verbiage in September. Just the basics at this meeting.

Shweta: is this saying that if we have a Surplus coming in to this year, are we talking about asking for less of a pledge? Chris: we’re just not sure, but yes the thinking was do we reduce dues? Barb: Vikram said we still spent plenty. Jason: income vs projection, net is -$8600 for this year. Expense income. If we follow the budget the way it’s meant to be spent, we’d still have $13k in savings. $1400ish in hardship last year, the rest we collected in full. Options: a) one year reduction, b) or increase hardship and keep pledge/donation the same.

Barb: if we decrease the dues, we’ll lose out of corporate matching.

Checking: $6704.90

Savings $14,969.42

Chris: funds were misappropriated to Community School, Katty has those funds. How should we spend those funds? Someone mentioned possibility of water filling station. Erin noted that Katty knows where those funds are currently.

Community Building:

Excited to build community. Outdoor Meet & Greet. No root beer/food – gym is reserved for 20th of November for Fall Event. TBD if that can happen. Barb: are we allowed to use the building for school events. Erin: District said no to all school events, with just DCS we may have more flexibility. Chris: suggestion for outside events for community building/Fall Event.

Could be any time in Fall, Nov 20th is just space is reserved.

Susan: do you need volunteers for Fall Event? Shweta/Sophie: yes!

Master Checklist:

Erin Moreland is working with Barb on insurance renewal. Insurance renewal in process, payment will be first weeks of September.

Friday Specials: TBD, Mary is coordinating with a co-chair.

Kids are allowed to mix classrooms.

New Families event, Sunday afternoon. Co-chairs are attending.

Volunteer Updates:

Fall Event: set up/tear down or do you need a chair? Sophie: a chair would be nice, but with Shweta/Sophie helping to coordinate.

We do need a Winter Event chair, have space reserved: date is on Ourschool pages, on the calendar. 1st or 2nd Saturday in March. Volunteer needs: will send to Sophie, Susan unable to attend Meet & Greet on 8/26. Sophie is setting up a card table for Community building.

At this point, all Community Meetings (after Meet & Greet) will be online.

Susan: Is it possible to not “require” full amount of hours? We don’t want the number to be an obstacle for people signing up.

General discussion on how reducing hours affects parent involvement. Chris: we will stay say 65 hours, we’ll be flexible but attending meetings, being creative in thinking of ways to stay involved, helping teachers virtually, etc. We will need more people for doing outdoor events, teachers will need outside help. Chris: let’s bring it up tomorrow and discuss as a community.

Deposit for Spring Camp is fully paid.

New/Walk-on Topics:

Adjourn:

Diane: we have things in the DCS office that needs to be stored. (ex. Vases, pool noodles, etc) Staff Appreciation. Discussion around finding a storage space on campus for DCS items. Erin will find a space.

Chris: to add to notes to parents, when we send the the notes from tonight add a caveat that we won’t have a lot of time to discuss things, please do a tl;dr

Town Hall

Motion to adjourn: Barb at 8:09pm, seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm