

Special Called Work Session Board Meeting Highlights
November 2, 2020

The Gates County Board of Education met in a special called work session on Monday, November 2, 2020, at the media center at Gatesville Elementary School. Chairman Ray Felton called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The following board members were present: Mr. Ray Felton, Mrs. Glendale Boone, Mr. Leslie Byrum, Mrs. Sallie Ryan, and Mrs. Amanda Pacitto.

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Amanda Pacitto seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

There was a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Felton asked Dr. Barry Williams to start the meeting.

On October 9, 2020, Dr. Williams was tasked with moving aggressively toward Plan A. Governor Cooper directed that public school districts can choose to implement Plan A for elementary schools (grades K-5). Plan A consists of open schools for all students in grades K-5. Plan A continues to include important safety measures like face coverings for all students, teachers and staff, social distancing, and symptom screening, but does not require schools to reduce the number of children in the classroom.

We have worked collaboratively to develop a DRAFT Plan A for the elementary schools. Plan A is not an option for middle school or high school at this time, however we have updated our DRAFT Plan B for these schools as well. Moving to Plan A and/or Plan B takes planning, especially with instructional delivery models and transportation, mainly because parents still have the option to have their children stay in 100% virtual/remote learning.

Today we will present our DRAFT Plan A and DRAFT Plan B. We will also seek your approval to present these plans to parents and to ask parents to choose which option they will select for their child, face-to-face or virtual/remote only. The parent choice for their children will be implemented **when and/or if** the board of education elects to move to Plan A and/or Plan B. Once these numbers are obtained, we will further clarify the instructional delivery for presentation to the board of education.

Dr. Williams then asked Mr. Jeremy Wright, Student Services Director, to speak about health and safety. Mr. Wright provided Symptom Checklist Ticket Booklets for the board members to review. These checklists are for the parents to complete daily, certifying their child has not tested positive for COVID-19, has not been in contact with anyone with COVID-19, and does not have any symptoms. These tickets will be required for bus riders and car riders.

Other Items of Interest:

- We have a good supply of masks (5 for each student) and more have been purchased – also face shields will be provided for those that request
- Signs directing the use of face coverings have been posted

- Arrows have been added to hallways and other areas to maintain social distancing
- We have thermometers for all locations- 10 to 12 per school
- Hand sanitizers and cleaning solutions have been purchased
- High touch areas will be cleaned frequently during the day, in the classrooms and on buses
- We have purchased fog cleaning machines to deep clean the buses
- We have deep cleaning 360 machines for use at the schools, after the students have left
- We plan to minimize switching classes
- Meals will be Grab and Go, and also in the classrooms
- A quarantine room will be designated for each school, in case a student displays symptoms during the day, until a parent/guardian can be contacted. The student must be picked up from school
- Seating Charts on buses and in the classrooms to help with contact tracing, in case needed
- Extra PPE has been provided for school nurses for the quarantine rooms
- Family groupings will be allowed on the buses
- The Tool Kit provided by the CDC was very helpful in determining the safety requirements needed

Mrs. Gail Hawkins, principal at Buckland Elementary, and Dr. Shawn Wilson, principal at Gatesville Elementary, presented information regarding Plan A for the elementary schools:

- Face-to-face learning 4 days per week – Tuesday through Friday
- Monday will be Flex Day to allow for tutoring, ect.
- School Day is 8:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Both schools estimate 50% of students will return to face-to-face, but will have better numbers once parent agreements are returned
- Temperatures will be taken prior to students entering building
- Grab & Go Breakfast
- Lunch – Pre K, K & 1st in Cafeteria – 2nd Grade through 5th in classroom
- Recess by Grade Level but each class separate – will not use playground equipment – use games that allow social distancing
- Masks can be removed outside (with social distancing)
- Suggested use of lanyards to prevent masks from being mixed up
- Cleaning will be a team effort – will create a schedule for bathroom cleaning
- Buses will be loaded by grade level with 5th starting at back of bus to limit passing – 1 child per seat with family grouping allowed
- Crucial for parents to return agreements
- Suggestions for using numbers for car rider pick-ups
- Meals free for all students

Mrs. Kelly Eure, principal at Central Middle School, gave the following information regarding Plan B for the middle school:

- Many committees worked on plans

- Group A Students will attend face-to-face on Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- Group B Students will attend face-to-face on Thursdays and Fridays
- Mondays will be workdays and can be used to assist students
- Temperature checks prior to coming into school
- Tickets presented by Mr. Wright will be used for bus riders and car riders
- Car Riders will go to cafeteria
- Radios will be used to send car-rider students out
- Buses will be loaded with social distancing
- Grab & Go Breakfast
- Lunch in classrooms
- 6 classes per day
- Teachers will remain in their classrooms
- Students and teachers will clean desks and high-touch areas after each class
- Will allow extra time in schedule for switching classes to allow for cleaning
- One-way halls will be difficult, but will utilize two-way with social distancing and following arrows
- Seating charts for each class – every other desk
- 8-9 am – Planning Time
- Home base begins at 9 am
- School day ends 2:30 to 2:45 pm
- Expect probably 50% to return to face-to-face, but will have updated numbers once agreements come back

Mr. Jonathan Hayes, principal at Gates County High School, gave the following information regarding Plan B for the high school:

- Monday will be remote learning day
- Group A students will attend face-to-face on Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- Group B students will attend face-to-face on Thursdays and Fridays
- Classes begin at 10:00 am and end at 3:10 pm
- Each class will be one hour
- Estimate 260 students to return to face-to-face – approximately 130 per day on campus
- Tickets will be collected and temperatures taken at four entry points with staff covering
- Unload one bus at a time
- One-way hallways with options for lunch time so students don't have to exit building
- Grab & Go Breakfast
- Car riders can enter through front entrance for Grab and Go Breakfast
- Lunch schedule with 2nd block
- Signs posted for face coverings and social distancing
- Assigned seats on the buses
- Buses cleaned after unloading
- Teachers and students will clean after each class

Dr. Williams finished with a few points:

- Plan A & Plan B will be posted on the website
- Schools will have information meetings for parents on Wednesday 11-4-2020 and Thursday 11-5-2020
- Parent Agreements are due back on 11-20-2020
- Several challenges: 1) Number of meals to be delivered to determine bus routes
2) Bus routes to be determined once we know how many students will be riding buses
- December 7, 2020 – Special Called Meeting to decide on Plans
- Partnered with Duke University to help with problems that arise
- Must put safety first
- Obligation to educate students
- Virtual students will have to come on campus for testing

Board members were concerned about the ventilation system and Mr. John Greene, Maintenance Director, assured that this will not be a problem. They also noted that parents, students and staff, all have to do their part to make this successful. We will need some form of compliance monitoring.

In closing, Dr. Williams thanked the school administrators, teachers, and central office staff for developing their plans. We are working to develop effective plans for our schools and our students and teachers that can accommodate individual needs and desires. The adversity we face with the pandemic, can either destroy us, define us or develop us. And while the pandemic has put all of the Gates County Schools' family in a precarious situation, I feel confident in our schools and the instruction they are providing our students, both now and in the future.

There was some discussion concerning sports at the community center, and the board agreed that they can have sports with all safety guidelines followed.

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Leslie Byrum seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote and the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, Chairman Felton adjourned the meeting at 10:23 a.m.