

## **Social and Emotional Well-Being for Students, Families and Staff Sub-Committee**

July 22, 2020

Attendees: Kim Mikolajczyk, Chair, Principal at McDonald Elementary, Cassie Lum, parent, Meghan Raney, school counselor at Lena Whitmore, Mandy Strey, MSD Prevention Coordinator, Vickie Green school psychologist.

Introductions-Introductions were made and the purpose of the meeting was discussed to help produce bullet points and recommendations to submit to the Oversight Committee.

### ***Bullet Points for Oversight Committee:***

- \*Well-communicated district plan(s) (i.e. "if this happens, then we will do this").
- \* If physically safe, even in a small group, students, parents and staff need time together to build relationships and allow opportunities to create lines of communication.
- \*Make education/learning opportunities as equitable as possible (consider internet access, scheduling when parents work from home and/or have more than one child in school, students receiving multiple services)
- \*Clear communication with staff on safety materials provided and teaching/working options (on-line, in-person, leave of absence).
- \*Questions arise: If there are on-line only learning for some, how will that impact case load and class sizes.

### **Minutes:**

Update from Kim: district watching #s; health of community is the focus; committees formed: teaching learning assessment, finance & work force Jen Johnson, Tech-Charlie Gerkie, SE Well-Being, Communication, Sp Programs-Shannon, Operation: Transportation Charlie, Health & Safety-Bill Holman, Attendance Kendra, Xtra Curricular-HS athletic director-

Committees have Admin, community members, certified & classified staff.  
Some people were assigned to committees, others were invited, some people specifically asked to be on a committee.

Purpose-dive into this topic- task to create bullet points and present to oversight committee

Oversight committee-all district administrators, 2 board members, school nurse, Dr. Summer Day, Lacey Watkins, Pres., MEA.

This fall is different from the spring because relationships between parents/teachers/students already existed in spring, this fall new relationships will need to be developed. Trauma associated with COVID-19, everyone going through grief cycle, on individual, family, organization, i.e. school dealing with this. Children deal with grief differently. The COVID19-event hasn't ended so the grief cycle cannot be completed.

Connection, sense of community, building relationships is critical. Teachers didn't always "teach" during Zoom meetings but relationships were continued with students and family.

Oversight meeting on Monday-everyone wanting to know about the fall, but difficult to make a decision now when COVID19 is still on the rise. School Board meeting tonight and discussion will be on how U of I is opening this fall.

One option discussed is that every student comes one day a week for the first few weeks of school. Allows for relationships to start right at the beginning of the year. Lewiston School District has three levels: Green (all students in school), Yellow (½ days elementary, secondary a/b days), Red (all on-line instruction).

All suggestions are on the table for discussion, including on-line.

Kim: Asked the group what suggestions can we make?

Casie: Connections need to be made for students, not necessarily just "teaching."

Kim: Connections at the elementary level aren't the only place where administrators are concerned about making connections. The alternative high school principal discussed the fervent need for his students to have connections with others. MHS principal expressed great concern for the incoming Freshmen's need to make connections.

Vickie: Time for students and staff to just have time to share concerns, experiences, and not have "teaching" be the focus, but just building relationships/rapport/comfort spaces.

Mandy:ACT concept -action communication therapy-create safe space for all. Individual "vision boards" used. Expectations not about learning, but building connections.

Kim: Need a vision for what **can** happen such as LWS's plan in their color codes-an "if this, then this" so everyone knows ahead of time what the plan is.

Question: Is Adventure Club an option to use alternative locations during the school day to provide care to students at a lower ratio than they usually do?

Cassie: Good if the district does create an "if-then" plan.

Meghan: Parents are already asking about school as they need to make plans.

Parents frustrated in the spring about the type/amount/expectations of work sent home. Also concern from students especially from students who received work from gen ed, special ed, Title I.

Kim: Internet connection a problem even with hot spots provided and having several children in one household scheduling problematic. Working parents and parents who may have difficulties helping students with their work.

Adult concerns, staff with compromised health systems or living with someone who does, masks (district has purchased masks), legality of having people working with known medical conditions.

On-line option for these teachers- Leave of absence option or other employment options.

### **August 4, 2020 Committee Meeting**

Members Present:

Kim Mikolajczyk, Principal McDonald Elementary, Committee Chair  
Bill Homan, Principal MMS  
Natalie Stone, Counselor MMS  
Megan Raney, Counselor Lena  
Diana Hicke, Counselor MHS  
Vickie Green, School Psychologist, elementary (Lena/McDonald)  
Jayme Baker, Parent, UI faculty  
Jennifer Mylan, Parent, middle/high school  
Cassie Lum, Parent, elementary  
Carri Lipe, District Intervention Specialist  
Miranda Strey, Prevention Coordinator

Introductions Kim thanked committee members for volunteering; diverse group with dual roles (professionals and parents, stakeholders)

Goal: Provide recommendations to District Oversight Committee regarding return to school and ways to address ongoing needs with various methods of instruction/service delivery, with an emphasis on considering social/emotional learning and wellness of students, families and staff.

**Committee Recommendation #1:** Determine process and schedule for connecting with students and families in person, if safety and local guidelines allow, during the early period of the school year.

Connection and building relationships between students, families and their educational team is critical to support student success and emotional wellness. Relationships need to be established to set the stage for engagement, and to help orient students and families to the new platform, routines and expectations.

Elementary Option: Have a different small group of children attend per grade level each day for the first two weeks; invite parents in for orientation these days as well; keeps numbers low and allows for more personal connection.

Secondary Level: Consider having students/families attend by grade level or possibly by subject level. Needs further vetting. \*\* Special emphasis needed with new 6th graders and new 9th graders, who have not yet established norms within their new school and do not have connections with their teachers/staff.

**Committee Recommendation #2:** The District as a whole and each school needs to determine ways to engage with and partner with families, support them and provide channels for regular 2 way communication.

Due to individual family circumstances, multiple means of communicating/connecting need to be in place. Some families will not be able to come to an orientation session because of work, scheduling or health concerns; some families want to make all of their connections remotely and want the online option only.

**Committee Recommendation #3:** Oversight Committee needs to determine the process for the district as a whole to communicate what the policies are, how and when to communicate and how to implement and enforce.

Regular, clear and consistent communication is critical.

Bill Homan shared Covid-19 Screening Document for Parents, Covid -19 Exclusion/Stay at Home Document for Students and Staff, and advised that the Health and Safety Committee is now working on the Masking and Distance Protocol Document. Such documents will help make expectations very clear and promote consistent practices across school buildings. Families want clear guidance and this will help alleviate some anxiety about protocols, norms and expectations.

**Committee Recommendation #4:** District will need to address the challenge of how to streamline expectations as much as possible; consider grade level expectations, subject level expectations, consistency across curricula.

Example: Regular communication from grade level teams, when implemented last spring at the middle school, helped get information to parents in a predictable, scheduled and consistent manner. The Committee determined that subcommittees for elementary, secondary, and staff might help the larger committee address each group's needs and brainstorm recommendations most effectively.

Broke up into smaller groups; some members assigned who had left meeting.

**Elementary Subcommittee: Kim, Cassie, Meghan**

**Secondary Committee: Jennifer, Carrie, Bill, Mandy, Diana**

**Staff Sub Committee: Natalie, Jayme, Vickie**

\*\* Next Large Group Meeting: Wed Aug 12th 9 am\*\* Kim will send invite, smaller groups to meet prior to next Wed Aug 12.

Kim will send group the link of where other committee's notes are posted, so members can review what other committees are recommending.

Dr Bailey will address public comment/survey results in Board Meeting tonight. Any announcements/decisions made will help guide committee work in the next few weeks.

Ideas/Questions for discussion:

From Meghan: Questions for Supporters of School Openings:

- If a teacher tests positive for COVID-19 are they required to quarantine for 2-3 weeks? Is their sick leave covered, paid?
  - If that teacher has 5 classes a day with 30 students each, do all 150 of those students need to then stay home and quarantine for 14 days?
  - Do all 150 of those students now have to get tested? Who pays for those tests? Are they happening at school? How are the parents being notified? Does everyone in each of those kids' families need to get tested? Who pays for that?
  - What if someone who lives in the same house as a teacher tests positive? Does that teacher now need to take 14 days off of work to quarantine? Is that time off covered? Paid?
  - Where is the district going to find a substitute teacher who will work in a classroom full of exposed, possibly infected students for substitute pay?
  - Substitutes teach in multiple schools. What if they are diagnosed with COVID-19? Do all the kids in each school now have to quarantine and get tested? Who is going to pay for that?
  - What if a student in your kid's class tests positive? What if your kid tests positive? Does every other student and teacher they have been around quarantine? Do we all get notified who is infected and when? Or because of HIPAA regulations are parents and teachers just going to get mysterious "may have been in contact" emails all year long?
  - What is this stress going to do to our teachers? How does it affect their health and well-being? How does it affect their ability to teach? How does it affect the quality of education they are able to provide? What is it going to do to our kids? What are the long-term effects of consistently being stressed out?
  - How will it affect students and faculty when the first teacher in their school dies from this? The first parent of a student who brought it home? The first kid?
- 30% of the teachers in the US are over 50. About 16% of the total deaths in the US are people between the ages of 45-65.

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From Jennifer:

- Sign-ups for small socialization groups, same kids/family everytime?
    - ◆ Same classroom/teaching group
  - Stress of students in homes with high amounts of domestic violence:
    - ◆ How is it this going to impact disclosure of Covid symptoms?
    - ◆ Food/safety concerns of students in unsafe homes
  - Family stress of having multiple kids in one family:
    - ◆ All kids on the same AABB schedule?
    - ◆ HS student stress for helping “teach” younger siblings while doing regular homework
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From Vickie: Class Check-In Survey for students with categories -“How are you feeling today?” (with response choices), “What questions do you have about school?”, “What concerns do you have today that might limit your participation in learning activities? (concerns about sick family members, lack of working space at home, computer access), “Ideas for easy, fun ways to connect with each other?”, “What can I do to support you today?” (Making Caring Common, Harvard.edu).

-groups/clubs for students, i.e. Pokeman, STEM/STEAM

-SEL needs: Autonomy, Belonging, Competence

### **August 12, 2020 Meeting**

**Subcommittees went over discussions and recommendations for each of the elementary students, secondary students and staff. Those documents are in different folders titled as such.**