

Work Session – October 7, 2020

Unapproved

The Charles City Board of Education met in work session on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 in the North Grand Building cafeteria. President Mack called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Present by zoom: Board members; Dight, Rottinghaus, Bergland, and Freund (arrived 12:04 p.m.) and student member Ruzicka. Absent: none. Staff members present included Superintendent Fisher, Board Secretary O'Brien, and Communication Director DeVore. Also in attendance were seven staff members and James Grob, Charles City Press (via zoom).

High School (HS) and Middle School (MS) teachers were in attendance to present information on a plan to safely reopen.

Renee Boss, LeAnn Smith and Lyndsay Staudt from the MS provided information. MS students are having a hard time in the hybrid model and bringing them back would help. If they return they could switch back to hybrid in 1 or 2 days since they know it now. Sixth grade could be brought back safety now. In a survey of 17 MS staff, 70.6% are in favor of return to school in full and of those 76.5% like a phased in return, 6th grade on October 19th and 7th and 8th grade on October 27th.

Sarah Downing and Jim Lundberg from the HS provided information. Seeing students more would be helpful. The hybrid has been difficult at the HS. If we go back, there will be less time to meet with School to You students. The staff appreciate the Board's pause on making a decision. They would like to move to a revised modified schedule. Grades 9 and 10 will begin four days per week and grades 11 and 12 three days per week in-person learning beginning October 27th. The HS modification is due to environmental factors within the HS campus that are necessary to keep students and staff safe.

The Board asked questions.

Bryan Jurens, HS Principal, explained how lunch and passing times could be done safely. He would support the HS revised modified schedule. Student class schedules could stay the same.

The teachers in attendance left the meeting to return to class at 12:25 p.m.

Tom Harskamp, MS Principal, stated some 5th and 6th graders are struggling with the hybrid. These grades do not have passing time, so could remain safe if they were to return full time. The 7th and 8th grades would need to take over additional spaces such as the gather space and gymnasium for social distancing.

Superintendent Fisher explained the 6-12 hybrid matrix. This matrix is a decision making grid using student 5-day rolling absence rates and the Floyd County community transmission rate per public health. The grid shows levels of absence and transmission and when on-site learning and hybrid learning take place. The Board asked questions. They requested that the grid be modified to grades 7-12 and 6th grade be allowed to return in person. Superintendent Fisher stated he will take what he has heard today and put it in a document form and submit for feedback. The Board will take action on a plan at the October 12th Board meeting.

President Mack adjourned the meeting at 1:14 p.m.

Terri O'Brien, Board Secretary