



May 21, 2021

Subject: Pandemic Advisory Health Committee Meeting Minutes (May 20,2021)

Attendees:

Dr. Paul O' Malley, Sandra Morris, Chad Posen, Andrea Prola, Ellen Wozny, Courtney Raschk, Jill Vonnahme, John Baar, Nadia Hussain, Nadia Qureshi, George DeTella, Millka Baetcke, Kyrsten Blackmon

Meeting Convened: 6:04 p.m.

Minutes:

Dr. Paul O'Malley welcomes members of the Pandemic Health Advisory Committee. He emphasized that the Committee will be presented facts and information from ISBE, IDPH, CDC, and the local health department for the upcoming school year. The Committee is assisting the District in forming a position on remote instruction so that the District can have an agenda item for the Board to vote on during the next Board meeting for the upcoming school year, and so the Superintendent can advise appropriately.

A Facilitated Discussion and Interactive Survey was conducted. The following terms and resolution were defined for purposes of the survey.

Pandemic Health Advisory Committee Mission Statement

ISBE Resolution: On May 19, 2021 ISBE unanimously approved the following resolution: Students who are un-vaccinated and under a local quarantine order **must be** provided remote learning.

Medical Exemption: "Consistent with the updated guidance from the CDC, students of families who are at increased risk of severe illness (including those with special health care needs) or who live with people at increased risk **must be** given the option of remote instruction.

Close Contact: Students who are un-vaccinated and under a local quarantine order **must be** provided remote learning.

Survey: Focus was centered upon the 2021-22 School Year Remote Instruction, specifically:

- Identification of three specific student populations who may require remote instruction.
- Students who have a qualified medical exemption
- Students who qualified quarantine order



- Students who are absent for other reasons

For students who have a **qualified medical exemption** or **quarantine order** the survey attempted.

- To identify whom would be responsible to verify the medical exemption or quarantine order.
- To identify who will provide remote instruction.
- To identify if special compensation is warranted for providing remote instruction.
- To identify parameters for return to in person instruction

Open discussion:

The following is a summary of the open discussion.

There needs to be contingency plan for the 21-22 school year because we do not know exactly how the next school year will go with vaccinations and medical exemptions, and other factors. Given the guidance, D53 will have to offer remote instruction.

More discussion is needed to answer the survey questions and there should be an ability to indicate “other” for questions that do not have this option.

- There should be more options for who will provide parallel remote learning. Teachers have stated that parallel learning is not the best course for teaching or learning.
- There should be a clear definition of who qualifies for medical exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Leaving the option of remote access open to a child who is not medically exempt or under quarantine guidelines potentially opens the district up for a very unclear policy of when students qualify as medically exempt and when they do not.
- If a student is missing for just an absence, it is a strong concern for teachers and students should not be given remote access for non-COVID absences.

Remote instruction should be offered to those who need it.

- What constitutes as a medical exemption? Lack of definition leads to vagueness.
- The remote instruction questions should be broken down to into separate health-related options vs. personal choices questions.
- The answers to these questions will influence the way respondents may answer who should be responsible for validating medical exemptions. If the District validates the information internally, they can be sure that the student is following the District’s guidelines. If it is outsourced to a third party, they may validate medical exemptions based on guidelines that are not in line with the District’s policy.

As medical exemptions are further defined, will mental health be included? Thinking about the holistic picture of children and their families and even from an HR point of



view, it would be important to include mental health conditions in the medical exemption definition.

A parent has stated that, from a medical perspective, how “return to normal” is in favor of kids recovering from trauma. There is research and evidence that supports how kids returning to in-person learning has a positive impact on their mental health and learning.

Need to consider teachers when talking about mental health support as a focus for the upcoming school year.

Closing Remarks:

The Superintendent thanked all for their participation and commitment to Butler School.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.