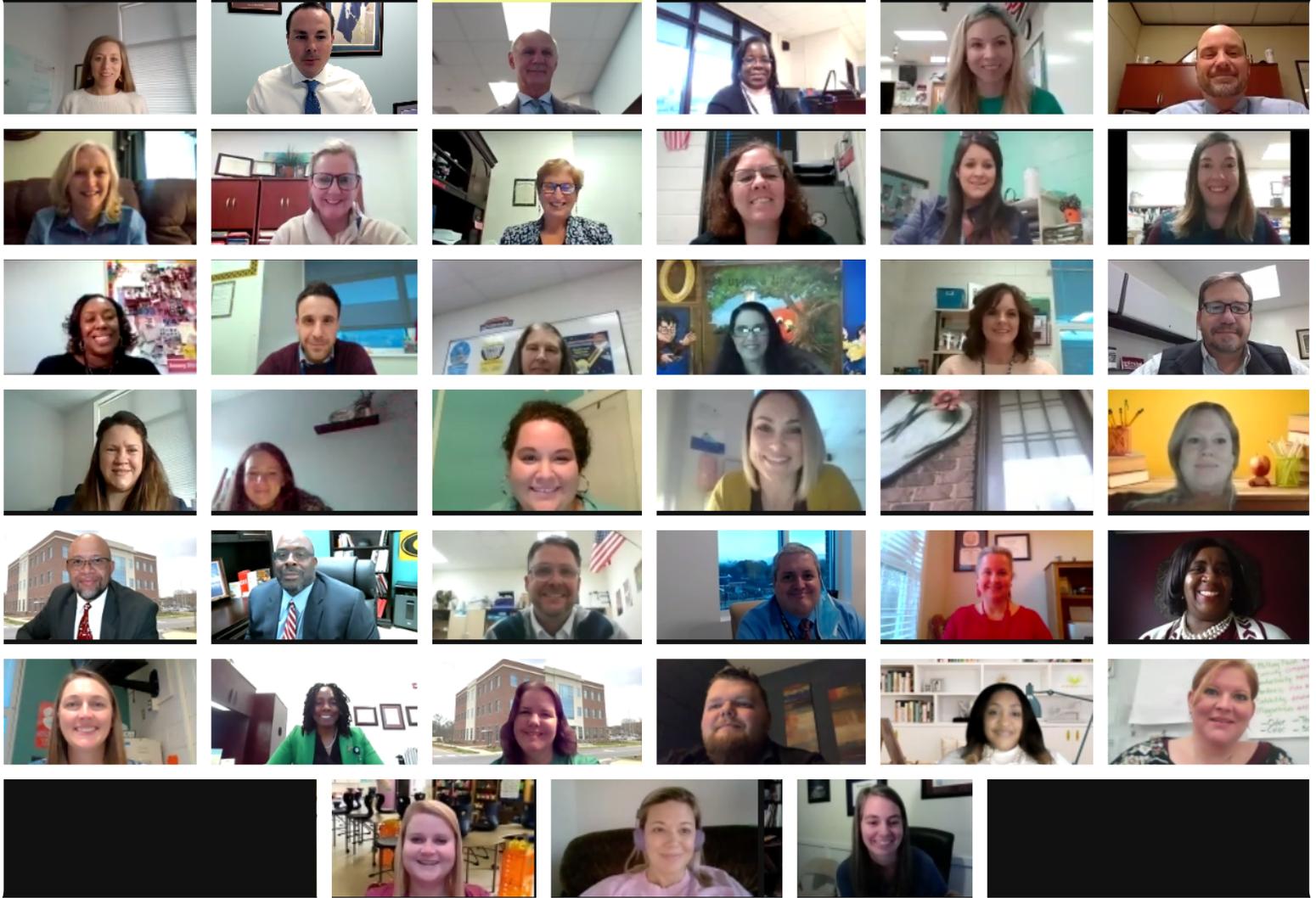


One Team One Mission One Rock Hill

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

January 20, 2021



ROCK HILL
Schools

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

ROCK HILL SCHOOLS DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM



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Thank you for all your questions. If you would like additional clarification on any question, please email the district staff member who directly oversees that specific area. Thanks for all you do to support our students. In the following pages, questions raised at the most recent Teacher Listen & Learn are answered. Due to the nature of some questions, we are not able to provide a complete response since we may not be aware of the context in which the question or concern is shared. If you desire additional information or have additional questions, please contact a member of Cabinet. Our team members are ready to assist you with more information. Please reach out directly via email or by phone by calling the Central Office at 803-981-1000.



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THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO COVID-19:

Why is the district responding to the requests of parents but ignoring their student's and staff's concerns, health, and safety when it comes to COVID decisions?

The district has made every effort to listen to the request of each staff member, parent, and stakeholder. Decisions are being made considering several factors including school-level data.

Looking at numbers at this school and comparing it to the COVID Dashboard, we can tell that numbers are skewed. For example, the attendance roster showed 34 B day students out on Friday for COVID quarantine, however, the dashboard showed 30 quarantined and 1 positive total for both A and B day. Is there a way to better monitor those numbers?

The district COVID 19 dashboard does not reflect the number of students or staff out each day and is not the same as a daily attendance report. Students and staff are only reflected on the dashboard once denoting if they are in quarantine or isolation and if they are positive. There are also times when the dashboard update is completed prior to all the data entered by the school nurses. School nurses are working continuously to document students and staff in quarantine/isolation. The dashboard is only updated once per day Monday - Friday. If entries are completed in the evening, those cases are captured on the update the following day.

Are we still considering the full 5-day return? The COVID-19 numbers are still getting higher and it will not be safe to bring everyone back.

Middle and high school students will remain on a hybrid A/B schedule while having access to teacher-led instruction five days a week beginning with the start of the second semester, as announced by Rock Hill Schools superintendent Dr. Bill Cook during the Monday, January 25 school board meeting.

This move comes as COVID-19 cases in the area continue to rise and coincides with the district's commitment to providing all students an opportunity for five days of continuous instruction. This model will increase touchpoints between students and teachers, which leads to increased student safety and accountability for daily attendance in the second semester.

This transition aims to improve the district's hybrid model by:

- Providing students with more synchronous live instruction when learning remotely,
- Providing students more timely access to their teacher through live lessons,
- Allowing students to learn alongside their classmates when learning remotely,
- Allowing all students to follow a consistent schedule for active learning, and
- Granting access to materials and archived video lessons online whether remote or in-person.

To accommodate this change, middle and high school teachers will have a professional development day on Monday, February 8, to become acclimated with changes to instructional delivery and the technology required for this remote learning model to be successful. Middle school students will complete remote learning lessons on February 8, while high school students transitioning from the Rock Hill Schools Virtual Academy to in-person learning will participate in an on-campus orientation. All other high school students will begin the second semester on Tuesday, February 9.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Why are we still in school currently if the numbers are steadily getting higher, more students and staff are being quarantined, etc.? It was stated before school started/at the beginning of the school year that we would be following DHEC recommendations, but that seems to be false, as we are now over 30% positive in York County, and still face-to-face. Why are we not responding appropriately with utilizing the virtual option, especially with a new (more contagious) strain emerging?

As a district, we continue to monitor the impacts of COVID on our students, staff, schools, and community. We recognize numbers in our community and within our schools continue to rise. With the rising numbers, it is difficult to determine if a COVID-positive individual contracted or was exposed to the disease at school. Community spread, as indicated by all DHEC metrics, is high. School transmission is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. We believe the best place for our students is to be in a controlled on-campus environment and in-person as much as possible for instruction and safe interaction with peers and teachers. There are a variety of metrics to be considered when making decisions about a return to remote learning or transition to any other instructional model. In addition to disease activity, we must evaluate the availability of teachers, substitutes, and other staff who are able to maintain the safety and operation of our schools and offices by assisting when and where needed to ensure in-person learning can continue. As was shared at our Board of Trustees meeting on December 14, there are several schools and classrooms that were approaching staffing levels that may require a temporary shift to a different learning model. We review student and staff data daily with Human Resources, Nursing Services, Instruction Division, and Communications Division team members along with affected principals to make determinations about continuing in-person learning at the classroom, grade, school, and district level. To date, we have quarantined entire classes and teams due to three or more positive individuals within the cohort of a class or team in a 14-day period. Additionally, we have suspended middle school athletics until second semester and all large gatherings during the first semester.

Is there any data about teachers or students contracting COVID from sick classmates or coworkers?

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to determine if students and staff contract COVID-19 from each other in the classroom. Students and staff only spend a portion of the day within our school building. If they go anywhere else in the community or if their families go out into the community they could easily come in contact with someone who has COVID-19. Contact tracing is completed as a mitigating measure to decrease the spread of COVID-19. School nurses work with SCDHEC to contact trace and to make sure close contacts are placed in quarantine to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within our schools.

What factors are used to determine COVID-19 closures for schools vs classrooms?

District administrators monitor district, school, and classroom level COVID cases each day. DHEC provides guidance related to the number of cases in schools and or/classrooms. If there are 3 positive COVID cases in a classroom within a 14 day period the entire class would be placed in quarantine. If the entire classroom is identified as a close contact with one positive individual the class would be placed in quarantine. School closures may be due to the number of COVID cases but are more likely due to inadequate staffing. If a large number of employees are in isolation or quarantine and coverage is not available, consideration for the entire school to transition to remote learning for a period of time is considered.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Students continue to come off the bus without a mask. Do bus drivers have masks they can give students that get on without one?

Yes, bus drivers have additional masks to provide to students that do not have a mask as they board the school bus. School staff assigned to bus duty should also have extra masks to give students if they get off the bus without a mask. The school nurse has cloth masks and disposable masks available for students and staff.

A few colleagues have expressed a desire for an anonymous question-and-answer through which they could ask questions of the district - specifically regarding COVID and school regulations - without the worry of being judged or reprimanded.

Formats such as the teacher listen and learn are avenues for employees to ask anonymous questions. Employees can always reach out to any district staff member with any questions. It is not reported back to school level/building administrators questions that are asked. There is no retribution/reprimand for asking questions. District administration supports the asking of questions. By working together to address concerns we can be better. Please reach out to the appropriate staff member.



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THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO COVID TESTING & VACCINATIONS:

Are there any possible plans to provide COVID-19 Vaccinations for District Employees like we have the flu vaccines?

Currently, SC is in phase 1A of the vaccination process. This phase only includes school nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, and employees over the age of 70. The district is working with community providers and DHEC to develop a plan to vaccinate district employees once SC transitions to phase 1B. Staff working in the educational sector are eligible in phase 1B. Details of this plan will be shared with employees once we have more information from SCDHEC. Due to vaccine storage requirements and logistics of operating a vaccine clinic, staff may need to come to one central location to receive the COVID -19 vaccine.

I would like to know if the district has a plan for teachers to be vaccinated.

Rock Hill Schools is working with community partners to determine the availability of and timeline for administering vaccines once available. SC DHEC is currently in Phase 1A, and eligible employees identified by DHEC criteria have been made aware of their opportunity to register for an appointment to receive the vaccination. Phase 1B is designated for frontline essential workers, which includes firefighters, law enforcement officers, corrections officers, food and agricultural workers, USPS workers, manufacturing workers, grocery store workers, public transit workers, and those who work in the educational sector—teachers, support staff, and daycare workers. More than 1,300 employees have expressed an interest in receiving the vaccine when it becomes available through school district partners.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

What is the district doing to advocate for teachers to be vaccinated as soon as possible?

SCDHEC has created the rollout plan for the COVID-19 vaccine. Our school district is working with local partners to make the vaccine available for teachers as soon as SC moves into phase 1B of the vaccine implementation plan.

Are the rapid tests in every school at this point for teachers and students?

Rapid tests are available for students and staff at every school location for those students and staff that meet the testing criteria. School nurses are able to test those that meet criteria based on a "standing order" from a SCDHEC physician. School nurses must follow this physician order as it is written and may not test individuals that do not meet the criteria listed in the order. As of Wednesday, January 27, school nurses have performed 247 rapid tests with 58 positive results (23.08%).

Is it possible the Board of Trustees and/or Dr. Cook would send a letter of support, to the governor, for teachers to be prioritized in the state's vaccination plan?

Working with education associations such as SCASA, PSTA, and The SCEA, SCSBA, and our legislative delegation, we are making our voice heard on behalf of our employees. As shared above, we are in the final stages of developing a vaccination plan for interested team members through our community partnerships. As is the case for anyone interested in receiving the vaccine, the supply of vaccine doses must meet the public's demand. Rest assured in knowing your district leadership is advocating for you and will provide additional communication as soon as we are able. Dr. Cook has communicated on behalf of the district with state legislators, the state superintendent, and others to partner with districts.

Once the COVID-19 vaccine becomes more readily available, will teachers (and possibly students) be required to get vaccinated before attending face to face learning?

At this time, students and staff will not be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO TESTING, ACADEMICS, AND INSTRUCTION:

Have any state officials indicated that OUR STATE testing will be canceled this year? The State Website makes it look as if SC Ready and SC PASS will go on as usual.

State summative testing is dictated by the state and federal governments. The federal Department of Education rejected South Carolina's request for a waiver of state summative testing required under ESSA earlier this academic year. That said, the South Carolina House of Representatives Education Subcommittee was scheduled to meet virtually on Wednesday, January 20, 2021. One of the bills on the agenda was H. 3618 which requires students to be administered in-person high-stakes standardized tests this school year. It directs that test score results by grade level and student subgroups would be published on school report cards by October 1 but suspends school and district performance ratings. State teacher and administrator organizations sent out information to their members asking educators to contact their state representatives to vote down H. 3618.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Many ESE and ESL students at the middle school level were put into classrooms 5 day f2f without any instruction on how to handle that, given A day/B day schedules. This was poor planning especially given that the students are ESE and ESL, which requires more planning on the teacher's part. The concern is that any schedule change will be handled the same way. Will more direction be given regardless of the type of schedule change?

Thank you for your advocacy for our students. Before the ESOL students' schedules were changed in November, teachers, and administrators representing all five middle schools met to discuss the needs and concerns for returning to five-day instruction. The benefits of the ESOL students receiving daily instruction from their general education teachers and additional support from their ESOL teachers were the primary reasons for the schedule change. The expectation/direction is for all teachers to provide differentiated instruction (which can include small group instruction, varied tools, diverse resources, and accommodated assignments) to the ESOL students based on their English Proficiency level. This expectation/direction is the same no matter the ESOL students' schedules (face to face 5 days a week, A/B day, or remote). The above statements and information are true for our ESE students as well. The expectation is for the ESE staff to always provide differentiated instruction and accommodations as appropriate to offer a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

Are you speaking with teachers to get their information about the difficulties going back full time while remaining safe?

Our administrators are having ongoing conversations with our staff members to discuss safety concerns and measures as it relates to the five-day return to school.

As stated in the Return to School plan, will each school actually get a full 2 weeks notice before students come back full time?

As we have done previously with announcements for the return of Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade and the return of Third through Fifth Grade (and select middle school students), we will provide advance notice of any return to five-day on-campus in-person instruction. We believe this time frame allows for both staff and families to make necessary adjustments to schedules and be prepared for a return to campus. On January 25, Dr. Cook announced that middle and high school students would remain on the hybrid A/B schedule, but shift to a continuous five-day learning schedule through technology available to both students and teachers.

Other than MAP testing, will there be other district-wide assessments in May/June (F&P, state testing, etc)? When will testing dates and testing windows be set and released to staff?

As of now, all assessments required by the state are ongoing as normal. Conversations gathering stakeholder input will be forthcoming and shared with all when dates are finalized. Flexibility will be of most importance this testing season as it has been all year. Changes to testing requirements from the SCDE have been continuous throughout our year so far and more may be forthcoming. A specific timeline is not possible at this time as there are so many unknowns. Current assessment information has been provided to school principals, assistant principals, testing coordinators, and instructional leaders.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Has the district considered the unknown impact on choice programs and increased enrollment/staffing if families affected by the repurposing choose a program? Will the deadline be extended to provide these families ample time to consider.

Although the deadline for applying for choice programming for 2021-2022 is set for February 28, if a decision regarding changing attendance zones or school closure has an impact on this process, we will monitor and make any decisions necessary that align with the adjustments, if any, our district will take with any redistricting. We are also in the process of preparing for an interest survey in current and future choice options.

Again, the current deadline for applying for choice programs in the next year remains at February 28. However, for any students currently attending a close that may close there will be an extension to the deadline for families interested in exploring a school of choice option.

As cases for COVID 19 rise, has there been any consideration to move to remote learning for a period (for example, 2 weeks of remote learning) to slow down the rise of the numbers?

As we have shared previously, our commitment remains to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff. With the mitigation measures we have instituted -- plexiglass shields, face-covering/mask requirement, enhanced sanitation -- and the partnership with and cooperation of staff, we believe it is best for students to continue our current learning models.

Other states are beginning to have conversations regarding the science of reading (SoR). Where does SC stand on SoR?

The SCDE has been in the midst of this conversation surrounding the Science of Reading. Pending legislation, there will be more forthcoming from SCDE as it relates to phonics instruction and the science of reading.

Post-COVID, will there be changes made to learning or will we go back to "business as usual?"

COVID is going to have a lasting impact on our students' learning moving forward. While the district looks forward to returning to business as usual, it is very likely students and teachers will need extra support to address COVID loss. The Instruction Department is already mobilizing to begin to address needed support. Further, COVID has presented opportunities for positive changes to our instructional practices. For example, we have heard that the infusion of technology to meet the needs of students in small groups or one-on-one has been well received.

We know that there are budgetary concerns and cuts across the board due to the pandemic. How can we ensure moving forward that the arts continue to be funded in a way that helps us meet the growing needs of our students? For example, many of our students are showing concerning/increasing signs of social and emotional issues that the arts programs have proven to be an outlet for.

The arts have always and will continue to play a vital role in Rock Hill Schools students' academic and social-emotional lives. We understand the growing needs of our students as well as the critical role of the arts; the district is committed to ensuring student access and continued strengthening of our related and performing arts programs. Additionally, the district maintains a close relationship with the York County Arts Council in order to remain affiliated with local and state arts programming.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Are there ways to augment the budget to provide for more individual supplies, programs, and technology for the logistics of the virtual and hybrid environment?

Yes. We have made modifications in our current budget to assist with supplies and materials in both face-to-face and virtual. CARES funding has also been allocated to support instructional materials. This will continue to be the focus as we look at future Budgeting. Each school and department is currently submitting preliminary budgets for the 2021-2022 school year.

If the virtual school program is to continue, how can virtual students be able to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities at school?

Current Virtual Academy students are able to participate in extracurricular activities at their assigned schools.

How will the virtual school impact arts programs in terms of recruitment and retention?

As schools have had to shift to remote and virtual formats, the district understands the concern of our arts program directors and teachers regarding recruitment and retention of students in programs like band, orchestra, visual arts, and theater. Every effort is being made to provide current students what they need to participate in and support program recruitment within current constraints.

Now that VA will be a school of choice, will teachers be able to request a VA assignment? If so, when will those positions be available?

If there are vacancies in the Virtual Academy, those positions will be posted. Once those positions are posted, teachers will be able to engage in the transfer process.

Will Virtual Academy continue next year? And if so, is there a plan to specifically dedicate teachers for related arts classes in the Virtual Academy?

At this time, we will continue the work in providing Virtual Academy as an option in Rock Hill Schools. Currently, a committee of administrators and teachers are meeting and working to determine what virtual options will “look like” for 2021-2022. Of course, how the pandemic affects our schools, as well as the impact of a vaccine, could determine what the demand for the Virtual Academy will be; however, we do recognize that virtual education has made an impact upon our school system and we are preparing for the furthering of this educational experience. Our planning efforts will include considering the need for dedicated art teachers within the total virtual program.

Will teachers get another laptop or a monitor to help with remote teaching in the event that we move to virtual learning again?

We currently do not provide an additional laptop or monitor for teachers in a virtual learning environment. If there are additional technology needs, please communicate those with your principal.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

If schools go remote, will we be doing the same thing as virtual teachers now?

On December 15, 2020, principals received District Remote Learning guidelines. This document was provided to school administrators should there be a need to shift to remote learning. Principals were provided this document to establish remote learning expectations aligned with the district; to communicate with teachers, students, parents, and their communities; and to structure their school systems, activities, and work during remote learning. While this plan may have been shared directly with teachers, principals were encouraged to discuss the plan with teachers prior to distribution. Further, it was announced on January 25, 2021, by Dr. Cook that unlike the first semester that saw middle and high school students complete independent assignments at home on their off-campus day, the second semester brings the excitement of being able to connect with teachers each day through live video conferencing. This change will allow middle and high school students to receive five days of continuous learning.

Would it be possible to change the schedule so that 02/03 and 02/04 are half days? 3rd/4th block students are taking their exams on 02/01 and 02/02 so there is no reason for them to be at school on those afternoons. Their semester effectively ends after the exam. Since our first half day, 12/18, was a C day, allowing a half-day for B-day on 02/03 and for A day on 02/04 will allow us to follow guidelines for half days as each group is only getting 1 half day.

Based upon principal input and request, we have already made recent changes to the current schedule once in order to accommodate the exam schedule.

Would it be possible to eliminate MAP testing for the spring semester?

Discussions have been ongoing on this subject. This formative assessment provides our schools and district faculty and staff with important information on current student levels that are used to guide student instruction. Although FAST Bridge is considered a screener, we do administer it three times a year in kindergarten providing us with data in the area of Reading and Math for 2020-21. This same cohort will be assessed in first grade using FAST Bridge in Fall 2021 in Reading (we have the option to add math). In first grade, this Cohort will take MAP Fall/Winter/Spring (Reading and Math) and we will collect Instructional Reading Levels. It is our recommendation that current Kindergarten students do not participate in MAP testing during the spring semester based on this information. MAP assessment results are currently used for grade 3 students for Read to Succeed identification and progress monitoring as well.

The district is considering Spring MAP assessment in middle schools for similar reasons as elementary. This formative assessment provides our schools and district faculty and staff with important information on current student levels that are used to guide student instruction.

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What is the plan for high schools going back 5 days in February? If we decide to stay with a hybrid model, does the district have a better plan for holding students accountable on their "at home" days? The attendance surveys essentially let the students off the hook, being counted present while doing absolutely nothing academic. This has presented huge difficulties throughout this semester. Also, there seems to be no accountability for being absent.

Middle and high school students will remain on a hybrid A/B schedule while having access to teacher-led instruction five days a week beginning with the start of the second semester, as announced by Rock Hill Schools superintendent Dr. Bill Cook during the Monday, January 25 school board meeting.

This move comes as COVID-19 cases in the area continue to rise and coincides with the district's commitment to providing all students an opportunity for five days of continuous instruction. This model will increase touchpoints between students and teachers, which leads to increased student safety and accountability for daily attendance in the second semester.

This transition aims to improve the district's hybrid model by:

- Providing students with more synchronous live instruction when learning remotely,
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- Granting access to materials and archived video lessons online whether remote or in-person.

The Office of Student Services recently released a clarification on attendance procedures to principals. Further, students with chronic absenteeism are subject to attendance laws and interventions.

As the district considers employment needs for the upcoming school year, has there been discussion regarding additional district and/or school level interventionists to support students and close the gap related to the pandemic?

Central Office staff and administrators across the district are currently reviewing prioritized budget requests for the 2021-22 school year. Requests are submitted from both the school level and collectively by all levels. As with all prioritized requests, available funding will have an impact. At this time, interventionists are a top priority item based on input from elementary principals. Additionally, it is a desire by the district to reduce class size. We will use some of our new ESSER 2 (CARES Act) funds to hire additional teachers and staff to address learning loss.

Will we administer F&P this school year?

The initial reason the decision was made not to use F & P this year at the elementary level was due to the text not being accessed digitally; so, this would not have been an option for Virtual Academy. In moving forward for next year, we will discuss options for the VA related to this assessment.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

What did December MAP scores look like across the district comparative to fall? Were there strong gains?

Our Research Specialists are currently updating reports based on Fall and Winter MAP administration results for pre/post-analysis. We are collaborating with NWEA to ensure the accuracy of mid-year MAP reports.

When are we getting Aristotle for monitoring our students in the virtual and hybrid setting? This definitely should have been a priority before the school year started. So many students are failing because they simply sit on the screen and pretend to do work. Actually, they are playing video games and looking at YouTube. We need monitoring software ASAP.

Aristotle is a great tool and its implementation is a priority for Technology Services. As we moved forward with the implementation of Aristotle, we identified a few gaps in our digital ecosystem that limit our ability to install software on computers that are not attached to our network. As a result, we are moving forward with the implementation of Intune as a mobile device management tool. Once Intune is ready, we will be able to install software and support every device. Our team is focused on a strategy of meeting short and long-term needs, so Intune will help up deploy Aristotle moving forward.

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THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO FACILITIES:

Will air purifiers be readily available for each classroom?

Currently, our Energy Manager is bringing in outdoor air that meets ASHRAE requirements for COVID-19. At this time, air purifiers will not be available for classrooms.

The ParentSmart and Adult Education programs fulfill two common and very important services for the community. Each provides English Language Proficiency classes for the non or limited-English speaking population within the community, as well as provides academic support for individuals seeking to earn the equivalency diploma (GED). What separates us is the childcare component provided by ParentSmart and not available in the Adult Ed program. Question: Can consideration be given to finding a suitable location and space within the district to merge the two programs in an effort to maximize resources and better serve the community in a common location?

We are looking at all options currently. We will meet with our staff and stakeholders to develop the best plan for our students, staff, and families. Discussions have taken place concerning these two awesome programs and we would hope that the decisions made in the future will continue to offer these programs in a central location.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

How can the school district encourage the HeadStart staff to comply with the COVID-19 protocols and procedures?

Support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap and water, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, masks (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.

Wearing face coverings reduces the spread of COVID-19. If worn properly, face masks, surgical masks, or respirators may reduce the chance of spreading a COVID-19 infection between you and those around you. The CDC provides information on Using PPE and Considerations for Wearing Masks.

District administration can meet with HeadStart to discuss concerns about their staff not following the appropriate COVID-19 protocols.

What is the state of the 10-year plan for Northwestern High School and the renovating of the fine arts auditorium spaces?

The bond was scheduled to be voted on at the end of March 2020. Unfortunately, concerns with COVID-19 and the Governor not allowing elections at that time stopped the vote. It is our hope that we will be able to discuss another bond program with our community in the future and at that time, we would look at projects that could affect our fine arts programs. In the meantime, school and district administration will meet to discuss the needs and include as part of the proposed budget to address some needs.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO COMMUNICATION:

Is there a way to better communicate to the teachers the decisions that are being made as normally teachers are finding out at the same time parents do? Can a better method of communication from the Central Office to teachers and staff be considered? At this point, many teachers feel that they are getting information through rumors and social media sites instead of direct communication from the Central Office. While we understand that decision making at this time is difficult, this leaves teachers in the dark about what's being planned and makes the district look bad when we are asked about plans others have heard of through social media of which we have no knowledge. Teachers should know information before the community at large.

It has been our practice to share information in the following order: Board of Trustees first and then principals. The expectation is that principals share information with his or her staff in a timely manner. We are constantly evaluating our communication practices and appreciate this opportunity to consider additional steps to ensure information is delivered directly to employees. We will continue to share information directly with the general public and other interested stakeholders through our website, social media channels, and our mobile app.

Teachers and staff are concerned about the COVID dashboard not being updated regularly or being updated incorrectly.

The dashboard is updated each weekday by Mr. Frost and Mrs. Kirell with information available to them. This is a cooperative task involving each school nurse, and information published each day presents new data that was reported on that day. The dashboard does not reflect "active" cases. Rather, it presents a cumulative total by location for the current week and school year. The two-week trend tables reflect a two-week summary data for each area: positives, quarantines, and isolations. It may appear the trend has dropped significantly within the current two-week period. Please note the current two-week period is not complete and changes each day as new daily counts are added.

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In light of the fact that we do not have public performances, is there a medium that the district can use to establish a wider audience for our programs and through the community?

The district's social media platforms and web streaming service can be used by school groups for performances. There is, however, the caveat that all broadcasting rights for music and scripts be secured by the school. Often the rights to perform a live event for a live in-person audience does not extend to online broadcasts. If interested in exploring options, please contact Mr. Frost or Mr. Sheffield in the Marketing and Communications office.

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THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REASSIGNMENT:

Are the proposed zoning changes taking into account demographics (race, social-economic make-up, etc)?

School capacity, the minimum student movement, and minimum school impact were the criteria for options 1-3. All options include a review of demographic data and the impact on a school.

When will the final decision be made for elementary school realignment?

All options presented would be effective for the 2021-2022 school year subject to Board approval.

Will the attendance realignment plan begin in the fall of 2021 or is there a possibility it will be delayed until the following school year due to COVID?

With the exception of upfitting that would be required at a yet-to-be-determined location to prepare for the expansion of 4K, all options presented would be effective for the 2021-2022 school year.

If we switch Pre-K to full day--is the new school ready for that? (i.e. big classrooms for equipment/supplies, small bathrooms IN the classrooms, what will 3-year-olds do?..)

Depending on the decision, renovations would be needed at all existing sites that could be used as a Pre-K facility. Once the Board makes a decision regarding school options, discussions will begin about the possible sites for the repurposing of existing buildings.

What will transportation look like for Pre-K students at the new school?

Transportation would still be provided for all Pre-K students.

Will the school be ready for the short summer? Enough time to move out old teachers and bring in new ones?

The District's goal would be to expand Pre-K beginning in August 2022.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

Regarding the elementary school realignment options, how were the two schools (Finley Road and Rosewood) selected in the options for closure and/or repurposing?

The capacity of elementary schools, age and condition of buildings, and the reassignment of the fewest number of students were considered in the proposals. There are multiple factors that have been used to look at the inclusion of these specific schools in the options for consideration. The schools are all over 60 years old as of 2020 (Finley Road is 63 years old, Rosewood is 60, Belleview is 65, and Richmond Drive is 71). Each of these schools is underutilized for its capacity. Currently, Finley Road is 46.2% capacity with face to face and virtual, Rosewood is at 58%, Belleview is at 55.4%, and Richmond Drive is 58.6%. Finley Road and Rosewood each have pockets/segments included in their small enrollment numbers which means they receive students not immediately connected nearest the school. Moving the pockets will further impact underutilization. Finley Road currently has an enrollment of face to face of 158 students who attend daily, Rosewood has 239 face to face students, Belleview has 196 face to face students, and Richmond Drive has 239 face to face students. All 4 schools are Title I schools, and each school receives additional funding to support students. Each of the schools is also racially imbalanced at higher levels than many of the other elementary schools. Recent capital improvements to existing buildings were also taken into consideration. For example, Ebenezer, Ebinport, Northside, Oakdale, and Sunset Park have each received significant capital updates in the last five years. The district's ten-year facilities plan includes decommissioning Finley Road and Rosewood within the next few years. Students from Rosewood were already scheduled to attend a new Northeast Elementary School if the March 2020 bond referendum was held and passed.

If Rosewood is repurposed, what will happen to the elementary IB program? What will happen to the Finley Road building if it is not repurposed for a 4K program?

The district's goal is to develop clearly articulated program pathways, equity for all students and families, and overall program improvement. A needs and interest assessment will be conducted by the district to determine options for the IB program. No decision has been made for Finley Road.

If the realignment options move forward, what will happen to CDC students? Will they be moved to Finley Road or Rosewood? And if so, what happens to the CDC building?

The district will evaluate all buildings for possible repurposing and decide in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and all stakeholders what best options exist.

Having a Pre-K class at ATC is essential to the success of the Introduction to Teaching Program at ATC. The 4K class at ATC provides valuable training for our high school students who plan to become professional educators. Also, the high school students teach the ATC 4K students to gain valuable academic skills. Please elaborate on the future plans for the 4K class at ATC.

The Pre-K program at ATC will be considered in the district's current work in expanding Pre-K programs. Value to growing potential teachers and the Introduction to Teaching program is certainly a goal of the district. Options for the program to remain at ATC or as part of a Pre-K center option will be explored.

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

How will Mt. Holly teachers be affected by the restructuring model? How will you decide who to move to other schools if that decision needs to be made?

Dr. Cook has made it clear that teaching positions and other staff positions are secure for 2021-2022 regardless of elementary reassignment. Each year, teachers are able to express an interest in moving to a new school, and we do not foresee any changes to that established practice this spring. Discussing potential movement of staff is premature at this point considering the Board of Trustees has not yet voted on a proposal. We will not know the full impact of staffing needs until a proposal is approved and intent forms/contracts are returned for the next school year.

Many of my colleagues are concerned about the elementary school rezoning plan and how it will affect the ParentSmart program. Specifically, if the program will remain at Sylvia Circle or be relocated to another site.

The ParentSmart program is an invaluable resource for the students, families, and staff of Rock Hill Schools and the community. Conversations have been held with the ParentSmart leadership regarding how we can support making the total program even better. Location and resources will be considered as the district continues to make decisions related to facilities and programming.

Is this the best time to consider full day/moving schools when we are still in a pandemic? Why are rezoning and increasing schools' enrollment size being considered at this current time? The pandemic is still prominent, thus mandating class sizes to be smaller for the safety of staff and students?

Discussions concerning underutilized schools have been taking place for several years and were part of school and community presentations during Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 regarding the ONE Plan. Our Board of Trustees is interested in examining options to address underutilized schools at this time. Proposals are not linked to impacts being felt from the pandemic and mitigation measures we have put in place. The goal of the district is to continue to reduce class sizes from pre-COVID pandemic levels and space does allow for these options.

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THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED IN RELATION TO BONUSES AND SALARIES:

I recently read in the news that Greenville County Schools are giving their teachers a \$1,000 bonus. All York County districts except ours received a bonus last month. These other districts were subjected to the same budget freeze that our district was, which you claimed previously was the reason for our lack of such a bonus. Can you please help us to reconcile these contradictory pieces of information?

Districts have addressed the financial challenges presented by COVID and the lack of an approved state budget differently. Locally, one district used funds to provide an "experience credit" in lieu of the step raises that were frozen by the state. As you will read below, our district is thrilled to again reward all eligible employees with a bonus pending approval by the Board of Trustees on January 25. In October 2019, Rock Hill Schools was the first in the county and among the first in the state to announce a bonus in the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, please see the recent proposal by Dr. Cook that the Board approved on January 25.

If the bonuses are approved, is there a definite date employees can expect to see the money?

Rock Hill School District is pleased to show its appreciation to our 2,400 dedicated employees with options for a bonus and early commitment incentive. If approved on Monday, January 25, certified staff would receive a bonus of \$1,500 and support staff would receive a bonus of \$750 for the dedication and commitment to our school district for the 2020-2021 school year. The bonus would be paid in March.

To further show our support and to address the Board of Trustees' goal and Superintendent Dr. Bill Cook's focus area of Recruitment & Retention, employees will be eligible for an additional amount for early sign-on. Certified staff would receive \$500 and support staff would receive \$250. In order to receive the additional amount, employees must return their signed contract/agreement for the 2021-2022 school year no later than April 15, 2021. This early sign-on bonus would be paid to eligible employees in June.

This benefit is valued at \$4,058,000 for all eligible district employees.

Will teachers receive their full salary while quarantining, taking care of dependents who are sick or quarantining, or while sick themselves?

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) required certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Employers were required to provide employees with up to a maximum of ten days of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis. This provision ended on December 31, 2020. In light of the federal expiration on December 31, 2020, the Board of Trustees approved the expansion of the Employee Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) of the FFCRA through June 30, 2021. The District is continuing to grant eligible employees the emergency paid sick leave for up to a maximum of ten days, at no cost to the employee when the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantine and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis. This includes eligible employees caring for dependents that are quarantined due to COVID-19. This provision only applies to eligible employees who have not exhausted their ten days of emergency paid sick leave provided by the FFCRA prior to December 31, 2020. This provision does not apply to an employee who is unable to work because of caring for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

We have heard of the state "unfreezing" teacher pay. What is the district's plan for getting that money to the teachers?

On January 12, House Bill 3609 (H. 3609) was introduced in the House and referred to the House Ways & Means Committee. H. 3609 is a joint resolution "to restore teacher step increases that were suspended by Act 135 of 2020 due to financial uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 virus, by appropriating fifty million dollars to provide for teacher step increases for the 2020-2021 school year." Employees eligible for a step increase for the 2020-2021 school year must receive a one-time lump sum payment no later than June 15, 2021, for the full step increase. The House Ways & Means Committee approved H. 3609. This bill now goes to the full House to debate. The District will continue to monitor H. 3609 as it moves through the House and Senate.

(Continued on next page)

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

We have heard of the state "unfreezing" teacher pay. What is the district's plan for getting that money to the teachers? (Continued)

If this bill passes through both the House and Senate, as it was amended by the House Ways & Means Committee, eligible employees will receive a one-time direct deposit for the amount of the step increase and will be paid no later than June 15, 2021. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

Per H. 3609, the legislation will fund this teacher step increase by appropriating fifty million dollars from the State's 2018-2019 Contingency Reserve Fund. The fifty million dollars is from non-recurring revenue. Districts are asking Senate Finance to amend H. 3609 to include language for the State to fund this step increase with recurring dollars in FY 2021-2022.

Can you provide an update on step increases for teachers? If they are reinstated, are they only going to be funded for this year?

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How are remaining funds from CARES being distributed?

The District's CARES Act spending plan focuses on the following identified needs:

- IDEA assessments
- Improving adult education participants access to education services
- Professional development
- Virtual program coordination and development
- Tutoring services
- Wrap-around services for homeless students and students in foster care
- Cultural competency training related to achievement gaps
- Cleaning supplies and PPE
- Back the Pack program support
- Student classroom supplies
- Technology devices and curriculum platform
- Mental health services
- Summer learning programs

TEACHER LISTEN & LEARN

What happens to a staff member who has to quarantine multiple times using the allotted COVID-19 time (80hours)? Specifically, those staff members who are unable to work from home due to the nature of their job. Will those employees have to use their own sick time? Will pay be reduced (I've read somewhere about a 2/3 pay reduction.)

If an employee has exhausted their ten days of emergency paid sick leave, any additional absences relating to COVID-19 will be charged to the employee's sick leave balance.

OTHER QUESTIONS/TOPICS:

Why is there a short summer? Will we be given an extra personal day to take during the school year? Is this really fair to ask of teachers after a long, hard year?

The short summer is due to the later start we incurred this year due to the effects of COVID-19 (we began September 8th). As we must provide 180 school days for students according to calendar law, this has caused our school year to extend into mid-June in order to meet this requirement. We have been conscientious about the time and days afforded to teachers during the academic year (for example, please note a long weekend afforded during Memorial Day Holiday in May).

This year, we have relied upon and utilized our school nurses more than ever. Can we look at adding recognition for school nurses at the end of the year? Something similar to ToY.

Entering the current school year, the Human Resources team expanded employee recognition programs beyond the traditional teacher of the year program. One of the areas added was "Support Professional of the Year," and Ebinport Elementary School's nurse Rhonda Cranford was selected.

What are current district policies with faculty/staff members absent due to COVID-19 health issues or exposure?

The district is following the guidance provided by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). In light of the federal expiration of FFCRA on December 31, 2020, the Board of Trustees approved the expansion of the Employee Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) of the FFCRA through June 30, 2021. The District is continuing to grant eligible employees the emergency paid sick leave for up to a maximum of ten days, at no cost to the employee when the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantine and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis. This includes eligible employees caring for dependents that are quarantined due to COVID-19. This provision only applies to eligible employees who have not exhausted their ten days of emergency paid sick leave provided by the FFCRA prior to December 31, 2020. This provision does not apply to an employee who is unable to work because of caring for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

Was there feedback to the district about the "treat" in December?

Several communications of gratitude were received from staff members about the "treat". Feedback was also shared that employees would receive other "treats" or to consider incentives to express appreciation. We are thankful for all feedback.

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