



Board of Education Recap

July 28, 2020

Dear Vikings,

At the request of several people, the Board of Education met to hear a COVID-19 update and determine if their original plan to return to school was still prudent. After discussion and citizens' comments, a motion was made to return to school in an all "virtual, plus model." This will extend through the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year. The motion carried by a vote of 4-3.

I can absolutely empathize with the emotions people are experiencing (in support or in opposition to this difficult decision). I remain committed to working with our students, parents, and staff by enacting steps that will permit a rigorous and engaging virtual experience for our young people. A few random thoughts, please:

1. What is "virtual plus"? Our initial thought is to provide in-school experiences for some students with special needs, "at hope" students, students needing/requesting personal check-ins, and curricular areas that might need personalized and/or laboratory supports. The scope of students served will continue to evolve.
2. Professional development for our staff will continue to serve as a centerpiece to our planning efforts. In fact, all teachers have been invited to attend several evening training opportunities beginning the week of August 3. This, coupled with our annual "Viking Voyage Week" and pre-service week trainings, will go a long way in meeting the additional trainings our staff has been seeking.
3. Each of the 11 District level work groups are in the process of pivoting their workflow in response to last night's decision. Leaders from each of the following groups will be on hand to answer questions at the next Board of Education meeting, August 3:

Technology – Soon information will be shared about device dissemination	Infection and Mitigation Control
Mental Health and Wellness of our Students and Staff	School Libraries
English Language Learners	Students with Special Education Needs
Gifted and Talented	Co/Extra Curricular
Professional Development	Transportation
4K Programs	

4. To the last point, 4K program: each of our independent partner sites offer a terrific first learning experience for those adorable little faces. They have requested, and I support, continuing to operate their morning and afternoon programs (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday). We are continuing to evaluate how to provide transportation to those families who need it. No doubt, more information will follow.

I can fully appreciate there are many more questions. Rest assured members of our team will continue to collaboratively formulate responses and communicate them. If I, or any member of our team, can be of service to you, please let me know. I may be reached at 608-437-7010 or salernosteve@mhasd.k12.wi.us.

With deep appreciation,

Steve Salerno