

Tawas Area Schools  
Special Board of Education Meeting  
August 6, 2020

A special meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Freel at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 6, 2020 through Google Meets or a teleconferencing method.

Roll Call:

Present: O'Connor, Klenow, VanderVeen, Ulman, Bruning, Edmonds and Freel  
Absent: None  
Tardy: None

Administrators Present: Klinger, Mochty, Bolen, Danek, Suttle

**POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS**

Mr. Klinger said Mrs. Bolen will present the positive highlight tonight. Mrs. Bolen said digital professional development opportunities have been available to our teaching staff to strengthen the virtual instruction process. She said staff go in through Google Classroom and have choice boards in a Bingo card fashion with links to choose from. Some options provide certifications in certain areas, along with Google apps, artifacts and other options. She indicated that staff members are taking advantage of the opportunity and some have completed their "bingo" card. Mr. Klinger thanked Mrs. Bolen for the presentation and for sharing it with the board.

Mrs. Freel then had each of the administrators and board members introduce themselves for those in attendance. She indicated that Public Comments would be moved to the end of the meeting, following Mr. Klinger's presentation of the Return to Learn Plan allowing for questions to be asked that aren't addressed in the presentation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Ulman, support by O'Connor to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2020 board meeting as presented. There were no additions or corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Motion by Klenow to approve the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$1,207,256.79 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$34,270.41. There were no sinking fund bills to be paid. She also moved to approve payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$131,184.42, the sinking fund expenses in the amount of \$9,600.00 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$276.18, as funds become available. Motion supported by O'Connor. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Committee Reports – None.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger said that the August State Aid payment, which is the final payment for the 2019-20 school year, will include a \$175 per pupil reduction, or \$211,773 revenue

shortfall to be accounted for in the 2019-20 school year. To offset this reduction districts will receive a new allowance line item called Coronavirus Relief Funds which are restricted federal funds equating to \$350 per pupil, or \$423,500 to be spent prior to December 30, 2020. The details regarding eligible expenditures have not been made available yet. The Coronavirus Relief Funds will be accounted for in the 2020-21 school year. As a side note, our final adopted budget for the 2019-20 school year included a \$650/pupil reduction or \$786,585. Mr. Klinger said this is good news as the reduction is much less than we had anticipated. Mr. VanderVeen asked what limitations are on the Coronavirus Relief Funds. Mr. Klinger said the Michigan Department of Education has not released that information yet but he will share it as soon as he knows.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Klinger said with the state releasing the Return to Learn Roadmap on June 30<sup>th</sup>, district leadership committees have been working to solidify our Return to Learn plan for this fall. He thanked everyone that was involved in creating the district's plan and said there were many stakeholders involved including community members, staff members, students, teachers and administrators. It has been a lot of work getting to this point. He said he is pleased that we have the ability to deliver both an in-person and a virtual delivery method with the use of our Tawas teaching staff, providing flexibility to our students and families, along with increased academic rigor.

Mr. Klinger began by explaining how instruction will be delivered during the various phases. In Phases 1-3, we will be in a full virtual model since face-to-face instruction is not possible. All inter-school activities will be discontinued and our teachers will deliver instruction through the Google Suite platform providing rigorous instructional time and frequency. Ongoing access to supplemental resources will be available and resources and staff will be available to support the social and emotional well-being of our students. Traditional grading will be followed and attendance will be taken in Skyward. Teachers will monitor student access and assignment completion and will provide weekly feedback while following pupil accounting requirements. Campus will be closed and only essential employees will be permitted on campus. Essential employees will be screened and tested if necessary. Chromebooks will be provided for all students K-12 and flash drives will be provided as needed for those without internet connectivity. Maps will be available showing free Wi-Fi locations and two-way communication will occur through virtual meetings, email, Skyward and other apps. Food service will be provided weekly via curbside pickup. Buildings will undergo deep cleaning and sanitizing to prepare for reopening.

In Phases 1-5, families may choose a virtual model of instruction. Students will be able to participate in board approved curriculum with increased rigor through ongoing access to supplemental resources. Resources and support will be provided for the student's mental health/social and emotional learning. Students will be expected to meet the requirements set by the class syllabus and pacing guide with Tawas teachers assigned as scheduled. There will be weekly teacher feedback and teachers will monitor and log two-way communication. Teachers will contact families for lack of student participation and they will monitor assignment completion and participation. Standard GPA and grading calculations will be applied. Mr. Klinger stressed that there will be increased academic rigor and family support and involvement will be necessary to support the virtual learning student.

In Phases 4-5 the district will follow MHSAA and State guidelines regarding athletics, clubs and extra-curriculars. Chromebooks will be provided for all students K-12 and flash drives will be available for any students who have poor internet connections. Food service will be provided weekly through curbside pickup. Meals must be preordered. Free breakfast will be provided for all students in the district and students at Clara Bolen will be provided free lunch. Middle school

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lunch price will be \$2.25 per student and high school lunch will cost \$2.35. In Phase 4-5, students that choose to, may participate in face-to-face instruction five days a week. Students will continue to practice virtual learning skills and become familiarized with several technology apps to build capacity if we must go back to Phase 3. Proper hygiene practices will be incorporated into daily schedules and curriculum. Traditional grading and attendance practices will be followed. Athletics will be offered per MHSAA guidelines which will follow a phased-in approach with different risk levels associated with the different sports. Field trips and assemblies are suspended in Phase 4. Screening and testing protocols will be based on health officials' and the Health Department recommendations and will include employees self-screening and families monitoring their child's health. The district will work with the local health department for contact tracing and isolation/quarantine practices as necessary and will work collaboratively with families. Parents need to monitor their children and if they are not feeling well they should stay home. Secluded "sick" rooms will be identified and staffed with "quarantine officers" in the buildings. Family members and guests are not permitted in the buildings except under extenuating circumstances, and approved guests will be screened and provided a face covering. Technology will be provided to all students and will be supported by staff. Mandatory face coverings and the use of hand sanitizer will be required on school buses, students will be assigned seats by family unit and windows will be down when possible to increase air flow. Students will be spread out 6 feet apart in cafeterias and gymnasiums for meals and clear sneeze guards will be in place in serving areas and tables. Custodial staff will clean high traffic areas often during the school day while cleaning all areas daily. Classrooms will have cleaning kits and staff will disinfect surfaces between classes. All products are EPA approved and are low or no odor. Staff and students will be required to wear face coverings and handwashing/sanitizing guidelines will be posted and encouraged regularly. Signage will be posted throughout the buildings. We have HVAC systems in place in our buildings and unit ventilators allow fresh air to be circulated in and out of the classrooms. We also have exhaust systems in place and if air quality gets too low we are notified. Filters are checked regularly and changed as needed. Windows will also be open in the classrooms as weather permits. Face coverings will be mandatory in the classroom since student spacing will be about 3 feet.

In Phase 5, we will continue to follow protocols outlined in Phase 4. We will reassess altered courses and curriculum as allowable. Athletics will resume based on MHSAA recommendations and the district will reassess whether field trips, assemblies and other gatherings may resume. Screening and testing protocols will continue the same as Phase 4 and we will reassess the protocol for parent and guest traffic in the buildings, which would include screening protocols. Meals would once again resume in a traditional cafeteria setting. Food service staff would continue to wear facial coverings and cleaning and hygiene practices would continue.

Mr. Klinger summarized by saying that in the Virtual Model during Phases 1-3, or for those choosing the Virtual Model in Phases 4-5, students and families should expect to see increased rigor and more student engagement. Families will need to be very involved in the virtual model to encourage student success. The district is following all requirements and as many strongly recommended guidelines as possible along with recommended guidelines throughout the plan.

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Mrs. Freel said the meeting will now be opened to questions from the public. She asked that they use the chat feature in the virtual meeting, if possible, or phone questions would also be accepted. She asked Mrs. Bolen to read the presented questions to Mr. Klinger so he could respond. The first question asked was whether a student can start in the virtual mode and then come back to face-to-face instruction. Mr. Klinger said yes, that is acceptable. Our teachers will be providing the virtual instruction so a student is not locked in to a semester commitment either way. We don't

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want students changing on a daily basis so we ask that families give us a few days' lead time to make the change. If students attend virtually are they allowed to participate in band and choir? Mr. Klinger said that if we are in Phases 4-5, students will be allowed to come in for band or choir, based on advice from legal counsel. Are students at Clara Bolen eligible for the virtual option? Mr. Klinger said elementary students also have the option of face-to-face learning or virtual learning. Those teachers would be available for assistance during their prep periods. They would provide instruction through the Google Suite and would likely upload videos and slideshows for the students to watch. Is the district providing Wi-Fi hotspots? Mr. Klinger said we have looked into that, and it works quite well if there is good internet connection. However, if there isn't a strong signal, a hotspot won't work either. If a family is in an area with good signal strength and bandwidth, we would take a look at that. Who will be providing virtual instruction? Mr. Klinger said our Tawas teachers will be providing the virtual model of instruction which will allow for more consistency. What if a bus driver tests positive? Mr. Klinger said if anyone tests positive we will work the Health Department to follow the necessary requirements. Mr. Cory Upper from the local Health Department addressed the question as well. He first thanked Mr. Klinger for the work he has done putting the plan together. He indicated when the Health Department learns of a positive case they will contact the school immediately to determine who to notify to begin contact tracing. They will have the person quarantine at home for 14 days from the last contact they had with the infected person. They will work with those affected on an individual basis and will only share allowable information. They will also work with the school to be sure everyone is notified if they were exposed. Will the district force students to be tested? Mr. Klinger said no one will be forced to be tested. The Health Department has protocols in place and we will follow their guidelines. Will students be required to wear masks in gym class? Mr. Klinger said students will be expected to wear masks in gym class unless they can be outside and/or they can maintain at least 6 feet of distancing. Will pep rallies and football games be allowed? Mr. Klinger said rallies will not be allowed in Phase 4. We will follow MHSAA guidelines regarding athletics and they will decide if football season will be played by August 20<sup>th</sup>. They have various risk categories in place and will make decisions on the individual sports. How will school start on the 31<sup>st</sup> if we can't have in-person orientation? Mr. Klinger said we are providing options for the students and they will have a brief orientation session. We are trying to be cautious and keep the buildings as sanitized as possible so we can offer both options to start the year as discussed. It is a very fluid situation. Will there be a quarantine room? Mr. Klinger said there will be a quarantine room in each building. The media center will be used in the high school to start with but we are also completing a building matrix of any open rooms throughout the day. What about students that are medically unable to wear a mask? Mr. Klinger said students will not be required to wear a mask if they have medical documentation stating that. Will band class be offered? Mr. Klinger said the band will be outside when weather permits and when it doesn't it will be held inside and the curriculum will be altered for a classroom setting. Who decides if students should be sent home based on symptoms? Mr. Klinger said staff will make that determination, as they have in the past. How will lockers be used by students? Mr. Klinger said students in the elementary school will move as a cohort group to and from their lockers. Middle and high school students have more specific courses that require them to move more often. Hallway traffic will flow in one direction on each side and we will require spacing between students. Locker use will be greatly reduced and students will be able to access them in the morning and again after lunch for afternoon classes. Will there be aides on buses to monitor face mask use? Mr. Klinger said there will not be aides on buses as we don't have enough employees to do that. Will students wear masks in classrooms? Mr. Klinger said face coverings will be required in classrooms where 6 feet of distance cannot be maintained. There will be "mask breaks" for the students to remove them when possible. Will there be portable sinks in classrooms that don't have them? Mr. Klinger said all classrooms in

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Clara Bolen have sinks but not all of the middle and high school classrooms do. When students rotate into those classrooms they will have the opportunity to wash their hands. There will also be hand sanitizer stations in multiple locations throughout the building. How many times is the air circulated in the classrooms per hour? Mr. Klinger said he didn't know that number, but it is circulated on a continual basis. We have a very good ventilation system and if air quality falls below a certain level we get a warning so it can be addressed. Will special ed IEP's be followed if a student is in a virtual setting? Mr. Klinger said IEP's will be followed whether the student is face-to-face or virtual and we will work collectively with the caseload provider, the special ed director, teachers and the family to support the student. When can families begin to choose the virtual option? Mr. Klinger said it is available now and will be ongoing. He asked that families let us know as soon as possible so we can schedule appropriately. What will the virtual option schedule look like? Mr. Klinger said the virtual option will provide for more freedom and a flexible schedule. Families will not need to follow a bell schedule while we are in Phases 4-5 while face-to-face instruction is also occurring. However, they will need to follow a bell schedule if we are in Phases 1-3 since all students will be following the virtual option. Students will have contact with teachers through Google Meets and phone calls. They will have access through Google Classroom, videos, etc. and flash drives if they don't have internet connectivity. Mr. Klinger stressed that parents will need to be very involved in this option as the academic rigor will match the face-to-face learner expectations. Will homemade masks be acceptable and when will that requirement be relaxed? Mr. Klinger said homemade masks are acceptable and the requirement won't be removed unless we move into Phase 6. Are there teachers assigned specifically to the virtual instruction? Mr. Klinger said our Tawas teachers will be instructing both face-to-face and virtual learners. Is there a possibility of a hybrid model? Mr. Klinger said the hybrid model was discussed but it is not as flexible as a virtual model. A schedule would still need to be followed and day care would be needed for some families on the face-to-face days. He said he has listened to several webinars and feels the two options we are suggesting will be a better fit. He said we want to provide what's best for the whole child; not just academically, but we want to offer safe social and emotional support, along with food service availability. Will 5<sup>th</sup> grade students switch classes? Mr. Klinger said 5<sup>th</sup> graders will travel as a group to other teachers but we will try to limit intermingling. Will students still be able to attend IRESA tech programs? Mr. Klinger said yes, his understanding is that the CTE programs will still be offered. They are also planning to offer a virtual option. Will the virtual option have a camera in the classroom? Mr. Klinger said in Phases 1-3 teachers will use Google Meets to connect with students. In Phases 4-5 there will not be cameras in the classroom, but instead there will be pre-loaded videos, presentations and independent work for the virtual students. Flash drives will be provided for those students that don't have internet, and teachers can make phone calls to families during their prep period. Will virtual option students be able to walk at graduation? Mr. Klinger said yes. Will middle and high school students have the option to take the same classes regardless if they are virtual or face-to-face? Mr. Klinger said yes, the same classes will be offered for both options. Will there be middle school sports? Mr. Klinger said we will rely on MHSAA to make that determination and we will follow their guidance. Will students at Clara Bolen need to wear masks at recess? Mr. Klinger said if there is more than one class at outside recess then the students will still need to wear a mask. Mrs. Danek is working on a recess schedule to try to provide for some mask breaks. Will there be staggered drop-off and pick-up times? Mr. Klinger said there will not be staggered times but we will use all entry and exit areas to help prevent congestion. How will the district handle the substitute teacher shortage? Mr. Klinger said this problem is real and has been ongoing for some time now. We will continue to use our 3<sup>rd</sup> party group to employ substitutes and it will be an all hands on deck approach to cover vacancies. We will do the best we can to support each other in the buildings. What is the definition of close contact when someone tests positive? Mr. Klinger asked Mr. Upper to address the question. Mr. Upper said "close contact"

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is considered when someone spends more than 15 minutes within 6 feet of an unmasked person who has tested positive. The Health Department would have to make that determination and sometimes someone beyond 6 feet could also be considered “close contact” depending on the situation. The nurses at the Health Department will determine that. Is this the same policy for all infectious diseases? Mr. Upper said no, there is a guideline for each specific disease to follow. The COVID guidelines are based on symptoms and the timing of those symptoms. Generally, 10 days after the onset of symptoms and at least 24 hours without a fever or respiratory symptoms, and without taking medications to improve those symptoms, will allow a person to be cleared. Will one positive case of COVID shut school down? Mr. Klinger said we would not be required to close school for one positive case. However, it would have to be considered because families would be concerned and may not want to send their student to school. He could see moving to a full virtual instruction model until the buildings could be thoroughly cleaned and some time had passed, possibly 14 days, before resuming in-school instruction. Will teachers provide virtual students assistance only during the teacher’s prep period? Mr. Klinger said this will be worked out by the individual teacher. They could also provide assistance during tutoring hours. What will the screening look like for a student that doesn’t feel well? Mr. Klinger said we will use the screening document provided by the Health Department. We would put the student in the quarantine room and check their symptoms. We would call their family to inform them and have them pick the child up. Would the parent be contacted first before anyone else? Mr. Klinger said yes, absolutely. How many students will be in each class? Mr. Klinger said that will vary depending on how many children choose the virtual option. We can fit 30 students in a classroom spaced 3 feet apart. How are we allowed to have more than 10 people indoors at a time? Mr. Klinger said we are allowed to open school through the guidance of the governor’s Executive Orders. If we don’t want our student to wear a mask during gym class is there an alternative? Mr. Klinger said students should start with their normal planned schedule. If we are able to provide spacing outdoors for students that would allow them to remove their masks during gym class, we will. Other than that, they would be required to wear a mask. Will students move to the “specials” classes or will the teachers move? Mr. Klinger said students may stay in the classroom and we could have the teachers move from room to room. Or, we could have students move as a cohort group to a new classroom which would also work. Can students go to school if they have common cold symptoms? Mr. Upper addressed the question and said that should be decided on an individual basis. Many common cold and allergy symptoms are very similar to some of the COVID symptoms such as a cough, runny nose and sore throat. If a student doesn’t have a fever and has no known exposure they could attend school. He would suggest the parent screen their child for any unusual symptoms to the child. If there is any doubt, the student should stay home and err on the side of caution. Can backpacks be used to carry books to class if locker breaks are being reduced? Mr. Klinger said at this time backpacks will not be allowed to be carried throughout the day. Individual situations can be discussed with the building principal if needed. For the safety of everyone he believes it is best not to bring backpacks into the classroom. If students choose the virtual option will they still attend orientation? Mr. Klinger said yes they should still attend so they can pick up their device and have their picture taken. Can students wear face shields in lieu of a face mask? Mr. Upper said face shields are not recommended by the CDC as a replacement for a face mask. Face masks protect others around you, but don’t protect the wearer from others. It prevents droplets from spreading from the person wearing the mask. He doesn’t feel face shields are as protective as a mask. How will the district enforce wearing a mask, and what are the repercussions if a student doesn’t wear one? Mr. Klinger said the student handbooks addresses the issue and it will be reviewed on an individual basis. Is the SAT testing scheduled for seniors? Mr. Klinger said there will be information on that coming soon as some assessments are being rescheduled. We will administer the assessments if possible. If a class is quarantined, will teachers need to use their sick days? Mr. Klinger said we will be following the

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CDC and Cares Act guidelines regarding this issue and the details are still being worked out. Will there be technology support for virtual students? Mr. Klinger said there will be tech support available for those students. Will teachers divide their time between face-to-face students and virtual? Mr. Klinger said they will need to balance their time between both groups because in Phases 4-5 they will be instructing both. When we are in Phases 1-3 everyone will be in a full virtual mode. Will there be orientation for elementary students? Mr. Klinger said we are working on the details for that. He said staff will meet students as they arrive so they can help get them to their classroom. Will teachers be required to wipe down surfaces before the next group of students enter? Mr. Klinger said teachers will be asked to do that and it will be an “all hands on deck” approach. Are Care Act funds able to be used to hire additional staff for the classroom? Mr. Klinger said not at this time. The funds are being used for technology purchases, cleaning and sanitizing supplies and for social work support for the students. Must students be in face-to-face learning to take AP classes? Mr. Klinger said no, AP classes can be taken virtually. Will Co-Op be offered to virtual students? Mr. Klinger said yes. Will middle school students have some time outside? Mr. Klinger said yes as time and weather permit. Why are we not basing decisions on local cases and data? Mr. Klinger said we are required to use the state data; it is out of our control. How will teachers handle the extra responsibilities? Mr. Klinger said it will be a team effort with everyone supporting one another. Will After School is Key be available? Mr. Klinger said that administration will be reaching out to staff and we will offer it if possible. Who do we contact to inform of our option? Mr. Klinger said to contact the building principal. When will elementary students know who their teacher is? Mr. Klinger said that should be available a week or so before school starts, but hopefully sooner than that once all of the classes have been balanced based on the student’s choice of instruction. Will art be offered virtually? Mr. Klinger said yes, the curriculum may need to be adapted accordingly. Will absences be counted against students whether they have COVID or not? Mr. Klinger said we will still need to follow state guidelines regarding absenteeism, but there will be open communication and we will need to work through those situations. Will there be an evening time available for device pick-up if parents can’t attend during the day? Mr. Klinger said there will be alternative makeup times. Will classes be live-streamed for the students in the virtual mode? Mr. Klinger said no, not at this time. Will families still be able to call in with bus changes? Mr. Klinger said we are hoping to limit that so we can have a consistent schedule to follow if possible, but we will be flexible. Why not shorten the school day to give teachers more time to teach both? Mr. Klinger said we have shared staff in the buildings and we would need to limit class offerings if we did that. Will K-4 students wear masks? Mr. Klinger said yes, they will. Can CARES funds be used to supplement teacher salaries? Mr. Klinger said some funds can be used for salaries but specific guidelines need to be followed. Is the first day of school still August 31<sup>st</sup>? Mr. Klinger said yes it is. Will college classes still be available for students to take? Mr. Klinger said dual enrollment classes will be available. Could we keep the 7-period day but shorten each hour to give staff more time to work with virtual students? Mr. Klinger said that might be a possibility but he will need to check into that further. Will parent/teacher conferences be held virtually? Mr. Klinger said they may be held virtually. Will Clara Bolen students be taking Chromebooks home daily? Mr. Klinger said no, those students will have a device to keep at home and will have a different device to use in school. That concluded the questions submitted through the chat feature. Mrs. Freel asked if there were any questions from those connected by phone. If there were, they should state their name and they would have up to three minutes to speak. Mrs. Hinkley asked how students in the digital photography class will be able to edit their projects if the student is in the virtual mode. Mr. Klinger said we may need to adjust and adapt our curriculum to accommodate certain courses. She also asked if a student is sick with a cold for 2-3 days if they can change to virtual for those days they are out. Mr. Klinger said the family should call to inform the school if the student is home sick and we could likely load assignments in Google classroom so they can access assignments. Mrs. Lentz

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said the board needs to hire paraprofessionals to help teachers as they can only do so much. The teachers just found out tonight they would be providing instruction to face-to-face learners and virtual students. Mr. Klinger thanked her for her comments and said the board will consider and look at all options. Kala Avram said she has a 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grader returning to school and thanked Mr. Klinger and the board for the information tonight. It was very well thought out and she appreciates all of their work. She made a suggestion to possibly allow students to carry backpacks. Jessica Hinkley asked if she carools to school with friends if she is restricted from being with them during the day. Mr. Klinger said there are no restrictions about carpooling but locker use will be very limited and students will move from class to class during the passing times so there won't be much time to mingle. She was also concerned that her books would be too heavy to carry around without the use of a backpack. Mr. Klinger said they will continue to look at things moving forward. That concluded the question and answer period.

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The board members then began discussion on the plan. Mrs. Ulman asked questions first. She asked if we will be taking student's temperatures. Mr. Klinger said based on recommendations from the CDC and the Health Department we will not be doing that. They feel there would be too many inaccuracies and it would promote students congregating in a group. She asked if a student gets COVID and they need to quarantine if they can switch to virtual learning. Mr. Klinger said yes, they will continue learning and they can be switched to the virtual mode. It should be a fairly seamless process. She asked if we can get a waiver for state assessments, and how we would evaluate teachers if we don't have assessment results. Mr. Klinger said there has been talk of assessment waivers for the MSTEP. We would still have our NWEA assessment results but there is work to be done. She asked if 3 feet distancing is safe. Mr. Upper from the Health Department said every school is different and the district needs to make the best decision they can to keep students as safe as possible. Face coverings will help. Mrs. Ulman said she supports Mr. Klinger and the administration in all of their efforts. She asked if there will be enough passing time to clean the classroom surfaces and prepare for the next group. He said he believes there is and we will provide gloves, mask, shields, and the cleaning products for the staff to use. Some slight adjustments may be needed. Mr. Couch is using EPA approved cleaning products and he has researched them and is aware of dry times, etc. to be safe. Mrs. Bruning asked about absences for students that might have asthma or allergies and if they will be referred for truancy if they also need to be off for COVID symptoms. Mr. Klinger said we don't intend to cause any purposeful hardship on families and we will need to be flexible and work with them on a per pupil basis regarding absences. Open communication will be key. If the student moves into a virtual mode and complete their work, they wouldn't be considered absent. This is new to everyone and we will need to adapt and adjust. Mrs. Freel asked about mask breaks, and how often they might be offered. Mr. Klinger said we hope to offer mask breaks for all students at some point. It might be outside or maybe in a classroom when appropriate spacing can be maintained. Mr. Upper said a safe distance without a mask is 6 feet. He would prefer that the breaks occur outside or in the gym or cafeteria where there is more space. When students are indoors they should have a mask on at all times, if possible. Mr. Upper said a fever is a critical symptom, and students should stay home if they have a fever, whether it's due to COVID or not. If a student has COVID symptoms the family should contact their medical provider to see if the student should be tested. Mrs. O'Connor was concerned about students carrying all of their items from class to class without the use of a backpack. She wondered if we could consider allowing students to carry a backpack if it is clear/see through. The CDC guidelines suggest a concern with taking items back and forth from home and sharing items such as clothing, pencils, phones, etc. Mr. Upper said the primary form of transmitting COVID is through respiratory droplets, not sharing items, but less contact is best.

## NEW BUSINESS

He said masks should be cleaned daily and some students may need multiple masks throughout the day if it becomes soiled. Mrs. O'Connor asked if there is some support training for families whose student chooses the virtual mode. Mr. Klinger said yes, there are tutorials on how to use the various digital pieces. Mr. VanderVeen asked if it is possible to shorten the quarantine period or if the entire 14-day period is necessary. Mr. Upper said the entire period is necessary because an exposed person could develop symptoms anywhere from 2-14 days following exposure. Quarantine starts with the last exposure to the infected person. He said when a person is no longer symptomatic and has been free of a fever for at least 24 hours, without medications to relieve it, they can return to work or school. Mr. VanderVeen asked if we could live stream a teacher's class period or record it so it could be played later. Mr. Klinger said there are FERPA issues with doing that as a student might be recorded without permission. He said clips of the class activity might be an option but we don't want to have cameras running the entire class period. Mr. VanderVeen asked how staff will be able to provide 52-minute class periods for the virtual students. Mr. Klinger said virtual students will be required to do their work independently and may not follow a bell schedule while in Phases 4-5. Mr. VanderVeen asked if 48-hours is the required amount of time needed to change from one option to another. Mr. Klinger said that is what we are planning at this time. We need to have time to make the changes on our end and make teachers aware. We can be flexible on this but we don't want students changing frequently. Mrs. Klenow said she would like wording added to the plan that windows will be open when weather permits and she would like all students K-12 to have mask breaks when possible. Mrs. Edmonds thanked Mr. Klinger for the great presentation. She confirmed with Mr. Klinger that in Phases 1-3 all students will be in a virtual model following a daily schedule that will have increased rigor, with student engagement. It will be an increased workload compared to the spring virtual model. She said she understands that we can't violate FERPA by recording teachers where students might be in the picture, but wonders if we could be careful to just film the teacher without any students being seen. Mr. Klinger said we will look into that possibility as an option. Mrs. Edmonds said the clear backpack model might be a good option that we could consider. She asked about the 6-foot distance in the classrooms versus the 3-foot recommendation made by the American Pediatric Association. Mr. Upper said younger children are somewhat less likely to spread and acquire COVID. Mrs. O'Connor said she recently listened to a presentation by a viral specialist that said a study has shown that children under 5 are as much if not more likely to contract and spread the virus as older children and adults. Mr. Upper said information coming from the CDC is changing daily and it can be difficult to keep up. Mrs. Freel asked about students that can't wear a mask and have medical documentation not to wear one; should they be distanced 6 feet from others? Mr. Klinger said we aren't going to isolate those children but we will attempt to move them far enough away if we can. The spacing we can provide will be contingent on class sizes. Mrs. Klenow said we voted a few weeks ago to follow CDC guidelines for students in grades K-5. She asked what they are now recommending and if it is in line with the State Roadmap. Mr. Klinger said the State Roadmap follows the CDC guidelines. Mrs. Danek said students in K-5 don't need a face covering if they don't come in contact with other classes. Governor Whitmer has ordered face coverings for all students on buses and in common spaces. Mr. Klinger said we are trying to keep everyone in a safe environment as much as possible. He said the State Roadmap is based on CDC feedback. The plan states that K-5 students will not be required to wear a face covering unless they are 3 feet or less from other students, which will be the case for our students. Mr. Upper was asked to clarify that information. He said if students are less than 6 feet from one another, which would be considered "close contact", they should wear a mask. Mr. Klinger said he will amend the plan to reflect that students in grades K-5 will be required to wear face coverings unless they can be 6 feet apart. Mrs. Freel asked Mr. Klinger if we should offer a hybrid option to provide more spacing for students and staff. Mr. VanderVeen said we are offering a virtual option, and he feels that should be sufficient.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Motion by Ulman, support by O'Connor to approve the district's Return to Learn plan as presented; all K-12 students will be required to wear a face covering where 6-foot spacing cannot be met. Yes: Bruning, VanderVeen, Klenow, O'Connor, Ulman and Freel. No: Edmonds. Motion carried. Mrs. Edmonds indicated her vote was based on the fact that she would prefer to follow CDC guidelines as strongly recommended and not require K-5 students to wear face coverings.

Mrs. Freel said this is a work in progress and we need to be understanding. This is not easy for anyone but we all want the same thing – what's best for kids – so we need to work together to make that happen.

## **INFORMATION & PROPOSALS**

Administration – Mrs. Mochty said the reason backpacks were not being recommended is due to it being a safety concern. She said many of our student's textbooks are in a digital version, but there are some that they still need to carry to class. She asked if a student has an asthmatic condition if they might be permitted to wear a face shield rather than a mask. Mr. Upper said that might be an option if the parents, the medical provider and the school come to agreement on that, on a case by case basis. Mrs. Mochty said orientation begins on Monday and PD begins August 25<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Bolen thanked the board for allowing her to share the PD opportunities the teachers have. Mrs. Danek said there may be an increase of absences and the truancy task force will be meeting to discuss how they will handle this and see if it can be relaxed.

From the Board – Mrs. Edmonds thanked Mr. Klinger and everyone on the team that worked so hard on this plan and congratulated them on a good job. She also thanked Mrs. Bolen for handling the chat questions and sharing them with Mr. Klinger. She is happy that our teachers will be providing the virtual learning option to our students. Mr. VanderVeen thanked everyone and said he looks forward to the Town Hall meeting Mr. Klinger will be presenting next week. Mrs. Klenow thanked the administration and the parents for a great graduation ceremony and Project Graduation. She said they were both very nice and were appreciated by the students. Mrs. O'Connor thanked everyone that has been working extra hard to make things come together including transportation, food service, custodial, technology, administration, teaching staff, and especially Mr. Klinger, for putting the plan together! She said we all need to be leaders and good examples to others. Mrs. Ulman thanked Mr. Upper for participating tonight and answering questions. She thanked Mr. Klinger for all of his hard work on this. She thanked everyone that attended the meeting tonight and said everyone is working to make a safe learning environment for all students. Mrs. Freel said everyone compromised tonight and we will need to continue to do that. Everyone may not agree on each item or issue, and sometimes we need to agree to disagree. She thanked everyone for attending and showing their interest.

## **ADVANCE PLANNING**

Mr. Klinger said he will host a virtual Town Hall meeting next Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. to present the plan to the community and have a question and answer period. He said we should plan to schedule a second meeting this month, on the 24<sup>th</sup> where we hope to hire a teacher. He also would like to schedule a personnel committee meeting in the near future.

Motion by Klenow, support by Ulman to adjourn at 10:42 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.