

The Re-Opening of Schools in Fall 2020

Presentation II

Wissahickon Board of School Directors
Special Public Meeting
July 13, 2020



7/13/20

1

Introduction

Purpose of Tonight's Meeting

- ▶ Provide a second update on the reopening of schools in the fall (follow-up to first update at 6/22/20 board meeting)
- ▶ Provide as many details as possible to help inform choices
- ▶ Share remaining major outstanding issues/challenges
- ▶ Answer questions

PRIORITIES (unchanged)

- ▶ Health, Safety & Well-Being
- ▶ Instructional Rigor & Excellence
- ▶ Flexibility (as much as possible)

Guiding Principles

- ▶ Be realistic as to what we can do—districts' capacities and leadership teams are stretched to the absolute max right now
- ▶ Follow the thousands of pages of “guidance” as best we can
- ▶ Accept a Continuum of Safeguards—recognize tradeoffs
- ▶ Minimize # of people in one place as often as practical
- ▶ Maximize Outdoor time (principals & teachers are hereby challenged)

Complications

- ▶ Official “guidance” is contradictory
- ▶ Official “guidance” changes almost overnight
- ▶ Spectrum of where the public is in terms of how to best respond to the various COVID-19 challenges (and passions run high on either end)

Options for Fall—Big Picture

- ▶ **Option #1:** 100% In-Person (every day)
- ▶ **Option #2:** “Hybrid” approach (some students in, some out each day)
- ▶ **Option #3:** 100% Virtual (every day)

Option #1—All Students Back

- ▶ The only in-person option available for students in Grades K-5
- ▶ **BREAKING:** No longer an option for students in Grades 6-12 (see below)

Option #1—All Students Back (Grades K-5 only)

What will it look like?

- ▶ Six feet apart as much as humanly possible, including classrooms, lunch, recess, etc.
- ▶ Limit movement as much as possible
- ▶ Get outside as much as possible
- ▶ Face coverings at all times (see below)

Option #2— “Hybrid”

- ▶ Not being considered for Grades K-5 (childcare, asynchronous learning)
- ▶ **BREAKING:** Now the “in-person” solution for Grades 6-12 (Governor Wolf’s mask order requires six feet everywhere, and secondary schools cannot comply)
- ▶ Not included in most recent survey—late development

Option #2— “Hybrid” (Grades 6-12 only)

What will it look like?

- ▶ Come to school every other day—stay home on the other day, w/ asynchronous learning from home
- ▶ Athletics/extra-curriculars a work in progress
- ▶ Face coverings at all times (see below)

Option #3—Fully Virtual

- ▶ Student is home every day, with 100% remote instruction
- ▶ Will be an OPTION for families (by semester)
- ▶ Will look different at K-6 level as opposed to 7-12 level, as follows:

Program Aspect	K-6 Virtual Program	7-12 Wissahickon Virtual Academy
Program Focus	Pennsylvania Standards-based Program	Pennsylvania Standards-based Program
Core Academics	Yes	Yes
Encore/Unified Arts/Electives	Yes	Yes
Lesson Format	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Provider of Instruction	Wissahickon Teachers	Program Facilitated by MCIU
Time of Delivery	Traditional School-day Hours	Flexible Hours
Access to Support from Wissahickon Staff	Yes	Yes - Math & Writing Labs in WHS / Office Hours
District Administrators/Counselors Available to Support Students	Yes	Yes
District-Issued Computer Device	Yes	Yes
Access to Extracurricular & Team Sports	Yes	Yes
Individual/Small Group Support	Yes	Yes
Special Education Accommodations & Supports	Yes	Yes

SURVEY RESULTS

- ▶ **June Survey**—which of 3 models for fall would you choose right now?
 - ▶ 43% preferred 100% in-person, 48% preferred hybrid, 9% preferred virtual
- ▶ **July Survey**—which of 2 models for fall would you choose right now?
 - ▶ 75% preferred 100% in-person, 25% preferred virtual (roughly same by school)
- ▶ July survey unfortunately did not assess preference for the hybrid approach at 6-12 (flaw—things are just moving too fast)
- ▶ Expectations about surveys—they are ways to gauge where families are, but they do not determine the ultimate solution—they inform it

Major Issue/Essential Question #1

FACE COVERINGS

- ▶ District leadership team believes face coverings (masks, face shields, etc.) are an essential element of the overall strategy to limit the spread of COVID-19
- ▶ Governor Wolf's recent order
 - ▶ Very restrictive—face coverings at all times when inside and <6 feet (w/ exceptions)
 - ▶ In place “until further notice”
- ▶ District's Plan for face coverings
 - ▶ Will comply w/ Governor's order as long as it is in place
 - ▶ If/when it is rescinded, face coverings will be required “whenever practical”
 - ▶ Face coverings will be required on buses at all times (except for driver when bus is moving)

Major Issue/Essential Question #2

BUSING

- ▶ Considered going from two bus tiers to four to help with distancing
- ▶ Four tiers would be good for distancing, but would have required Middle School to start 20 minutes EARLIER, two K-5 schools to get out later, and would have cost over \$500K (and not even sure we could get enough bus drivers to cover the extra time)
- ▶ July Survey indicated there will be a reduction in # of students on the bus (question flow was confusing, so exact impact hard to tell, but general sense was ridership reduction)
- ▶ As a result, recommendation is to keep busing at two tiers (with precautions such as 100% face coverings at all times, spread out as much as possible, keep windows open as often as possible, etc.)

Important Details/Other Matters

- Special Education—questions about individual situations will be resolved and communicated by Student Services Dept. in time for 7/31/20 decision (see below)
- Impact of Travel (14 day quarantine will be required)
- Quarantine (in general)
 - When is it required (positive test, close contact, travel)
 - How is it counted as an absence?
 - What happens to instruction while home?

Important Details/Other Matters (cont.)

- Nursing matters
 - Isolation rooms
 - Normal duties vis-à-vis new COVID-19 duties
- Staffing matters
 - Very specific human resources provisions from PA & DC in effect—we will work with staff to come up with the best individual solutions we can
 - Staff leadership has been involved to date, but many staff members will need time to process options
 - We stand ready to respond to staffing needs as best we can
- Large Gatherings (generally, out until further notice)

Important Details/Other Matters (cont.)

- Athletics—we will continue to operate under PIAA procedures/protocols
- Lunch
 - Will look and feel different than normal
 - Building-specific solutions to maximize distancing
- Supplies—things have been secured or on order, but suppliers cannot always guarantee delivery—we will have extra masks, cleaning wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.

Important Details/Other Matters (cont.)

- Cleaning procedures/protocols
 - Daily evening disinfecting
 - Disinfecting during 7am-3pm occupancy
 - Urgent disinfecting service
 - Personal Items

*****FURTHER DETAILS:** Please direct questions about specific details to your building principal—often, the “solution” is building specific and they will either know the answer or dig it out and get back to you as soon as possible

Moving Forward

- ▶ **7/20/20:** Board meeting to review and approve “Health and Safety Plan” (required by state)
- ▶ **7/31/20:** Deadline for commitments from families (opt for 100% virtual?)

Moving Forward (cont.)

- ▶ **8/7/20:** Finalize staff assignments
- ▶ **8/21/20:** Finalize student assignments
- ▶ **Week of 8/24/20:** Various staff training sessions
- ▶ **8/31/20:** Welcome everyone back to school!

QUESTIONS?