

Elementary Scheduling Work Group

July 7, 2020
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm
Minutes

Attendance: Dana Bailey, Executive Director of Special Services, Jodi Bongard Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, Donna Burns OT, Tera Coyle Principal, Evelyn Davies UNS, Callie Greenfield Student Interventions, Kathy Keegan Principal, Trisha Marshall South End Parent, Renata Minotte Corridor Parent, Susan Mundell Executive Director of Elementary Education, Christy Otley Principal, Courtney Teddy Science Tech. Teacher, Dayle Walters Music Teacher, Sandra Vanderzee Plateau Parent, Laura Maloney Administrative Assistant

PURPOSE/GOAL/MISSION OF THE GROUP

Provide ISD Superintendent and ISD School Board with a proposal for an elementary schedule/model for the reopening of school in the fall. One that is consistent and is driven from an education perspective in that **all students** need to experience quality instruction, regardless of grade level, and in a manner that maintains the best possible academic, social emotional, and physical health.

*It was determined by the Elementary Scheduling Work Group as part of the July 1 meeting that *Option 2 would allow all ISD students to experience quality instruction in a manner that maintains the best possible academic, social emotional, and physical health.*

**Option 2—Split/Rotating Schedule with students attending some days each week
Students would attend on consecutive days*

1. SCHEDULING ITEMS TO CONSIDER WITHIN OPTION 2:

- ~~Rotation of 2 days per week—alternating or contiguous~~ **Decision made on 7/2**
- Update on information received from steering committee
- PreK-1, or PreK-2, or PreK-3, attending 4 days per week. 4-5 attends 2 days per week
- Special programs attending 4 days per week? All programs? At every grade level?
- Staggered arrival/departure times
- Content priorities for in-person learning
- Specialists- how often, if at all, where will class be held?

Meeting began at 1:03 pm with the goal of making a decision/recommendation to the steering committee on which grade spas should attend four days a week in the hybrid model.

Recommendations on the other bullet items will be made on Thursday.

The charge for today is to narrow down whether PreK-1, or PreK-2, or PreK-3 will attend full time (four days per week), with 4-5 grades attending 2 days per week.

Information was shared from the steering committee to help guide the discussion and decision:

- Martin Turney, Executive Director of Finance & Support Services, indicated that 23 students in classroom would not work. 16-18 would be the maximum.
- Ron Thiele, Superintendent, agreed and in conferring with other Superintendents, they have decided the maximum number would be 18
- 18 student class takes the third graders out of the equation since class sizes are larger in third grade.
- There is no additional space for extra classrooms or staff

The following examples were shared to put the decisions in context:

- Clark Pre K-2 is 338 students plus $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 3rd, fourth and fifth graders is 210 for a total of 548 students in the building.
- Creekside: Pre K- 2 is 317 plus half 3rd through 5th is a total of 513
- 70-75% capacity with the Pre K- 2 model. Also took into consideration that we cannot mix cohorts.

The question was asked if these figures included special education students possibly attending more than two days. Yes.

Principals shared in a document about possible logistics and routines in buildings of different sizes, considering Pre-K through third grades returning four days. Items included:

- Start of day supervision and temperature taking
- Mask breaks; teachers could possibly do the mask breaks. It was indicated that that ideas has been brought forward in steering committee and they were looking into that.
- Lunch breaks and supervision – use of specialists and other support staff was discussed.
- Staggered Start Time – discussed alphabetizing students and siblings.
- For temperature taking and attestation recording:
 - Schools will have different styles
 - Entry points are different due to location – looking at one point of entry up to 8 different points of entry
 - Use of teachers was discussed
 - Use Specialists was discussed
 - Use of health room staff was discussed
 - Special Education Staff was discussed
 - Use of parents was discussed

Comments from individuals in the group regarding the principal document:

Reminder that specialists and therapists will have to deliver five days of SDI into four days so they may not be available for supervision.

Assuming lunch is in the classroom, possible considering it instructional time and then offering an extended recess that would be when teachers have their lunch.

With regards to specialists helping it would be dependent upon FTE overload times if and when they are at their other buildings.

At recess supervision wouldn't need to be per cohort group, paras could monitor zones to remind students not to cross zones and stay 6 feet apart. There will not be a para for every single cohort. Training for students will be important.

When students are outside, we are doing the best we can where reasonable and feasible. Summer school recess shows that:

- Some students are not wearing mask and remaining 6 feet apart
- Some students are wearing their mask
- Kids were playing independently and running around
- In line, students are standing on staggered spots

We need to take into consideration our Northwest weather and that recess pick up and drop off might be tricky.

We can't use parent volunteers for the attestation piece. The process was streamlined at summer school. At this time we will not be using volunteers.

We are having staff take temperatures before they leave the car.

What about the schools that don't have parent drop offs they have walkers and bikers, what does that look like?

Has a decision been made where lunch will be served? Students will have to take off their masks if they eat in the classroom and we need to factor that in. HVAC systems meets the standard recommendations. Students will need to be six feet apart during lunch. Limit the time they have their masks off. It was also mentioned that student buying lunches could possibly eat in the lunchroom and have staggered lunches. That would increase supervision needs.

Discussion on Pre K-1 vs. Pre K-2 attending school for four days:

The goal of the meeting was reviewed which is to make a decision/recommendation to the steering committee on which grade spans should attend four days a week in the hybrid model. Will it be PreK-1 or PreK-2? Principals and Administration will figure out details.

Comments from Individual Committee Members:

No grade band should come more, all grades should attend two days a week. It makes more sense that everyone have an equitable amount of school, then add to it. Makes sense for when we go full distance learning in future, students will already be trained to do both, that makes the most sense.

It is more beneficial for students to have the maximum number of days at school. Four days going to school and one day training for distance learning.

When students come back to school teaching them the platforms will be part of the instruction. All students will be ready to move to remote.

Couple frustrations from parents - figuring out platforms, experiences differ from teacher to teacher, parents struggled to keep students engaged, social/emotional concern of students missing the social aspect of school.

The instructional group is working on what the online remote learning will look like.

Increases in COVID cases in younger students are making parents concerned about sending students back. Younger children may have a more challenging time transitioning back to school on more days after being home with their parents over the past several months. Starting slower makes more sense. Students will need to learn fairly quickly so everyone can navigate the remote learning.

Inconsistency in the remote learning and figuring out platforms from grade to grade has contributed to parents struggling to help their children engage. There is worry about social emotional health and the struggle of working parents.

I feel very good about getting all students in person two days a week. Getting them to engage with their new teacher and have experience in class. I'm hearing more and more from my parent circle that they are considering not to sending their children back at all. Younger children might have a harder time transitioning to going four days a week. Starting slower, everybody get used to processes, and gets some learning and have a plan in place. By starting slower and ramping up instead of pulling back is preferred. The Pre K-1 seems a better way to go.

A participant summarize key questions, what are we are trying to determine? Are we going to start school and then stop school and go to full remote? If that is the case how much do we want to have happened before that occurs? Do we want to maximize that amount of time kids spend in school before we have to go out for remote learning or do we want to count on the opportunity to add in students as it goes. What do we want to start with prior to going to remote learning?

American Pediatrics association is recommending three feet apart for younger students. Studies are showing the younger children in particular are not contracting the virus. Young people in their 20's are getting the virus. They are recommending all students go back full time.

The ISD survey shows the community wants students back in school. Early learning is important. Those students need as much time as possible before we shut down and go back to a full remote learning situation. There is no data that they are spreading the virus.

Take 2nd grade off table. 548 students in the building is too many for everyone to feel safe. We could pull in more of the 2nd graders who need extra support. Not so much pressure on building.

The numbers in Pre K-2 could be lower if 20 percent does not come back. 20 percent in the survey say not at all comfortable coming back. If parent knew the model it might change their mind to come back.

The survey data is not dis-aggregated by buildings so buildings have different needs. Some families need a safe place for their students. Pre K-1 needs consistency. I am on the bubble. It might not be great if we go big.

Benchmark - students need to read to learn by third grade. That is a sense of urgency. Worries me not to include the second graders.

We should take into consideration that with better formed and tight distance learning program they may not miss out.

Remember we are not all coming from the same social economic situations. Some families need students in school in order to work. Medical data shows the children are no longer in danger. Kids are out playing in their neighborhood and are not staying home.

Some parents are at home assisting with remote learning and some students are on their own trying to figure out how to do it. Varied community.

Parents have the option not to send their students.

Concern for the ECE students and special education students, medically fragile students the bigger the population the more exposure to COVID. ECE has their own paras are they going to be pulled to do temperature checks, lunch duty? A larger populations of students makes me worried.

There is support for this population – the classes start the year with small numbers and students are split between two sessions. Best for them to get as much touch points with teacher as possible. Medically fragile students may not be cleared by medical professionals to come to school so we will need to plan for at-home learning for these students. Pre-school experience can't be in cohorts because new students join all the time on their 3rd birthday.

I am really in the middle. My role is to make sure their social emotional needs are met. Confident in whatever structure we decide on. Our staff will do a nice job at whatever task they are given. I am swayed to being conservative. Smaller number of students. Pre K-1. I vote for the less. Two days a week for everybody feels ok.

I appreciate hearing everybody thoughts regarding students not social distancing for whatever reason. Our district has agreed to follow CDC guidelines and local health guidelines. It says six feet apart with kids and masks. I have a hard time visually seeing that happen in Pre K-2. Hard to maintain guidelines that our district said we should follow. Perceptions influence parents, staff and students feeling of safety. Would not like to see staff call in sick and take a leave of absence, which in the long run hurts the students. Pre K-1 slower start and do it really well. Work on training for remote learning for when we have to be out again.

Thinking through an equity lens make our decisions perhaps for our most vulnerable populations. We will then be offering good education for all. It maybe we have to allocate resources differently based upon the needs of the schools. Not on equal basis needs of the school.

School is not going to be business as usual. There will be a variety of innovative ways that school is held.

Whatever the outcome is we will do what needs to be done. We are committed to do what is going to best the best for all kids and do it well.

When we were planning summer school we got to the point some days where we said maybe we should not be doing this. There is a lot to consider and put together to make students, staff and parents feel safe. Our effort is to do this well and maintain confidence.

Summer school is housed at Clark. We had 67 kids and it took us 25 minute to do the temperature checks the first day but then by day two it dropped down to 12 minutes. We will figure out our systems.

Asking for your recommendation.

Vote: Pre K - 2

- 7 thumbs up
- 2 thumbs sideways

Sideways votes discussion:

- Will support whatever is decided.
- Staff were fearful in March and we were running on a skeleton crew. More students will create greater fear. There were 67 pages of concerns in staff survey.

Vote Pre K - 1

- 8 thumbs up
- 1 thumb sideways

Discussion:

- No data showing that K-2 are the most at risk by not coming to school. The only data we have is that the 3rd graders start reading to learn.
- Prefer Pre K-1 model, but could live with the Pre K - 2 model. Then allow the steering committee to take this information and go further to come up with a plan.
- Can we have this many students in building and follow the CDC guidelines and ensuring the staff are safe?
- Most neighboring districts have approved Pre K - 2. One district has approved Pre K- 1.
- There was 90% according to staff survey plan to return, but many had concerns.
- Five to six hundred kids during the day is what I will be seeing. My job is not confined to one class. Not comfortable having second graders it is just too much.

Vote Again – What is the best model for ISD to move forward with?

- Pre K - 1 – 8 thumbs up
- Pre K - 2 – 3 thumbs up

It was voted upon Pre K -1 would be the Elementary Work Group recommendation.

Input will be given to the steering committee and they will move forward with the final decision.

The facilitator thanked the group for working through that decision. It was acknowledged that everyone is trying to do what is best for our students.

Discussed the agenda for the next meeting. We will not be making decisions just recommendation i.e., at risk students, on-line learning, supervision, lunches, what will the day look like.

Meeting adjourned 3:40