

School Board Work Session
October 5, 2020
Comments from the Public

If we ended up not recommending moving to the next phase at the end of this nine weeks would we then hold off until the next nine weeks?

- This will be a situation that is always being evaluated. If no change was made entering the second nine-weeks, we would continue to evaluate the situation as we move forward. The most natural point to make a transition would be at the end of and beginning of a quarter.

From Monica to All panelists: (9:00 PM)

Is recess being considered for students at the APC/AES? My children many days do not have a break from sitting at their desk for the full time they are at school.

- At this time we are not considering adding a recess period during the time that the APC/AES students are in school. The time that students are in school and engaged in learning presently is not longer than students would normally be engaged without a break. We have encouraged teachers to incorporate brain/mask/wiggle breaks during the time students are in attendance.

From Krystyn Birt to All panelists: (9:00 PM)

Sports have successfully resumed for months full time, our kids have been in close proximity, but schools have yet to resume in full person....is there a possibility that we create a solution for kids to successfully go back?

- We have followed the guidelines provided from health officials for sports and for school operation. We will continue to evaluate the data related to COVID in our local area and gather input from health officials, and our community. All of this information is and will be utilized as we continue to engage in the planning process for this school year. With the unique nature of this school year we are in an ongoing process of planning and evaluating.

From Michael Hebor to All panelists: (9:01 PM)

Have other community facilities been considered as instructional spaces so we can go back to 5 day instruction? Can you release the studies on the capacities of our schools that have been done?

- The concept of utilizing other facilities was considered this summer during our planning for the 2020-2021 school year. There are a variety of issues, such as busing, safety, staffing, food service, etc. that make this consideration not feasible or practical.

From Caroline to All panelists: (9:01 PM)

I'm concerned about my student being adequately prepared to take an AP exam using the hybrid model. How are we monitoring the content being covered?

- Teachers are responsible for monitoring the content that needs to be taught and are responsible for ensuring the content that is required is taught.

From Alaina Schrader to All panelists: (9:02 PM)

Another thing to consider would be that while looking at Avonworth data is most appropriate, we do have many students who live part or half time with parents (divorced/ not together) who live in other areas as well.

From Amanda Berneburg to All panelists: (9:03 PM)

I've commented at other meetings, but it bears repeating: it's obvious how thoughtful and considerate our administration/board has been with making these difficult choices. In addition to the everyday jobs, our teachers and administrators have been doing an amazing job. thank you.
-Amanda Berneburg

From Stacy Faulkner to All panelists: (9:03 PM)

what is the reasoning for not sending all levels back at the same time?

- At the K-6 level, our current models (hybrid and virtual) are working and students are already attending 5 days a week. Considering a change and possibly bringing students back more days at the 7-12 level is to increase the amount of in-person instruction.

From Danielle Strobel to All panelists: (9:04 PM)

Are your numbers from mainline mama adjusted for zip codes that overlap with other school district? It seems as though the numbers would be inflated and would not be representative of Avonworth, if the zip code spans several school districts. I cannot access the school district dashboard now, but I know in the past the fine print listed that her data files are by zip code, rather than actual school district boundary lines.

- The fine print you are referring to is correct. The model includes zip codes for a school district. The creator points out the challenge with creating the model and that using zip codes is the best possible way to generate the data for school districts. This is one data point for us to consider and the best way to drill down the overall Allegheny County data to the most representative for our District.

From nicole.hahna@sru.edu to All panelists: (9:04 PM)

The district is doing an amazing job! Thank you for making data-driven decisions to balance the health & safety of faculty, staff, & students as well as focusing on how to best support students' learning.

From Carol Loutzenhiser to All panelists: (9:05 PM)

Has "broadcasting" the normal school day been considered so that both hybrid and virtual students can participate daily. This seems to increase content as well as lessen work on

teachers. in other words, the hybrid students would keep their same schedule but all classes (or most) would be broadcasted.

- Yes. This was considered this summer during our planning and is something we continue to discuss as an administrative team.

From Michael Hebor to All panelists: (9:06 PM)

The frustration is because the community does not see a plan going forward to a better situation...and the district keeps focusing on the past.

From Maureen OConnor to All panelists: (9:06 PM)

mental health is very important - could you please address? these kids are at real risk

From CHebor to All panelists: (9:06 PM)

There are churches that would offer up space in the area (Baptist church, Christ Church), you have to be open minded to different ideas to get back to face to face.

From Carol Loutzenhiser to All panelists: (9:06 PM)

This question is for AHS & AMS and the issue with lack of work.

From Rachael MacKenzie to All panelists: (9:06 PM)

I appreciate the care and caution your are taking in making these decisions. There are parents in the community who still take this virus every seriously and we are happy to hear you are not rushing into anything. Thank you!

From Hannah Valeriano to All panelists: (9:07 PM)

when will the survey come out?

- We are planning on getting this survey out as soon as possible.

From CHebor to All panelists: (9:07 PM)

When will that plan be ready?

- Our administrative team has not stopped planning since March and we will continue with planning until we have all students back in our schools 100% of the time and on a normal school schedule. Planning for any model of school operation must take into consideration transportation, campus traffic, staffing, scheduling, rosters and assignment of students to classes/courses, food service, safety, instruction, technology, daily operation considerations, etc. Every decision for a potential model or change creates an impact on all of the above. We have considered multiple models and continue to work out logistics in anticipation of a move to any of the models we have considered.

From Ronald Antkiewicz to All panelists: (9:08 PM)

with a lesser degree of live instruction and increased asynchronous self non-guided assignments, are there changes in the grading system? Clearly many students may fall behind with less live instruction.

- We are not considering a change in our current grading system.

From Anna Marie White to All panelists: (9:09 PM)

Thank you for all you do! Happy to discuss with anyone from my background as a primary care physician. Thanks again!

From Ronald Antkiewicz to All panelists: (9:11 PM)

My above question was in regards to the AHS Hybrid model.

From Vicki Carlson to All panelists: (9:11 PM)

Welcome to Avonworth Mr. Bandi!!

From Danielle White to All panelists: (9:13 PM)

Congrats Beau and Vicki!

From Melissa to All panelists: (9:17 PM)

PSAT was on a wednesday. It was moved to Saturday to cut down on number of people in building.

From Carol Loutzenhiser to All panelists: (9:23 PM)

what was the answer regarding the athletic coaches. I couldn't hear

From Keera Dwulit to All panelists: (9:25 PM)

Thank you!

From CHebor to All panelists: (9:38 PM)

If we have sports like we do, we should have 5 day in person learning.

From nicole.hahna@sru.edu to All panelists: (9:40 PM)

Yes—context & confounding variables are important. Safety is the most important.

From CHebor to All panelists: (9:43 PM)

You need to let us know what criteria ("the numbers" you refer to) you are using to make the decision to go to 5 day face to face learning. So you need to consider the parents more in these decisions.

- There is no specific number/criteria established for making a decision. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has provided guidelines to consider regarding instructional models. This can be found here:
<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/Pages/DeterminingInstructionalModels.aspx>
- Dr. Ralston shared this website on October 5:
<https://mainlinemama.com/pa-covid-19-school-reopening-school-district-zip-code-dashbboard/>

From CHebor to All panelists: (9:56 PM)

But there are still restrictions in the outdoor sports too.

melissa 08:13 PM

There is little to no structure with in the hybrid model at this time. I can speak for my son, while he continues to be successful in his academic career, he struggles with stress and time management. He is in all ap or honors classes and works 7days a week on his class work. I would like to know what is being implemented to help support students struggling with this? Any suggestions to help these students feel more self empowered? To help build upon their self efficacy?

- In the current hybrid model teachers have office hours which can be utilized by students to meet with teachers virtually to get support, ask for concepts to be revisited or retaught, to ask questions, etc. We are aware of the struggles some students are having in this model and current planning is focused on improving this model.

Julie Kolenda 08:37 PM

I am concerned that with this current model there is limited teaching/lectures but plenty of busywork and assignments that don't really ensure that learning is taking place.

Caroline 08:40 PM

I would like to comment that there are assignments for the Wednesday virtual days for hybrid students but they are no where equivalent to what a day in school would be like. There is no instruction/discussion/q&a etc. Also, this varies with course/teacher etc.

tony trovato 08:42 PM

What date were these surveys conducted? So why did schools like, Montour, WA, Eden Christian, Shadyside Academy, and Central Catholic start back to full-day, 5-day instruction, using the SAME DATA.

- We cannot speak to how other districts came to the decision to start with full, 5-day instruction. We can state that data, as well as circumstances are different for each district and will certainly impact the decisions made by each district.

tony trovato 08:46 PM

As a former teacher, how can you ensure that our children are getting 180 days of curriculum with only 2 days a week, face-to-face, instruction. There is NO WAY. Put our children first!

tony trovato 08:48 PM

Do you have vertical teams to ensure curriculum mapping?

- Yes

ttro 08:52 PM

So why did other schools in Allegheny county START the school year with 5-day in-person learning?

- We cannot speak to how other districts came to the decision to start with full, 5-day instruction. We can state that data, as well as circumstances, resources, and staffing are different for each district and will impact the decisions made by each district.

Lindsay Wolff 08:52 PM

You said 'if the data supports' returning to school... what data & what are the benchmarks you will use to support that decision?

- There is no specific number/criteria established for making a decision. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has provided guidelines to consider regarding instructional models. This can be found here: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/Pages/DeterminingInstructionalModels.aspx>
- Dr. Ralston shared this website on October 5: <https://mainlinemama.com/pa-covid-19-school-reopening-school-district-zip-code-dashb oard/>
- In addition to this data, Dr. Ralston is in regular contact with epidemiologists/health professionals at the Allegheny County Health Department. Input from these health professionals is data that will factor into all decisions that will be made.

Caroline 08:54 PM

My student is in group A and had the same work over the course of a week as those in Group B. This doesn't seem to be like multiple lessons being taught or planned for during the week. These are groups A/B in a hybrid model.

tony trovato 08:55 PM

So, stop "multiple models" and just do full-day OR virtual. EASY

Stephanie 08:56 PM

Thank you all for your service.

What would be the threshold or key data data indicator that would prevent our kids to return full time?

- Information regarding the data that will factor into decision-making was shared above.

Anonymous Attendee 08:56 PM

Our district has school issued laptops, yet you're not using the technology! So DO synchronous!

Anonymous Attendee 09:00 PM

Avonwoth school district only have 82 cases since March

Anonymous Attendee 09:00 PM

No Deaths

Jenn 09:00 PM

A major challenge I see based on my HS boys experience, is how one can fairly assess a students ability as there is no substitute or comparison to in-person instruction. Is it fair for a student to be failed in a class, or grossly fall behind, due to equity issues of (parents) time to assist? Some digital assignments are extremely clear and others are not. Furthermore, some teachers are extremely responsive and others don't respond for days. In an environment where it can be 3+ days before a student has an oppty to physically speak to a teacher for assignment clarification, you can understand why many students are struggling. I don't believe the burden of being part-time educators should fall on the parents, not should the student be penalized for unclear instruction or too heavy of a courseload. I support students going back to school full time and (or) re-evaluate how students are graded and assessed.

Anne 09:01 PM

If the classrooms in the hs are equipped with web cams to use synchronous learning, why arent we using them? The kids are getting stressed out trying to teach themsevles.

- This question was addressed above.

Anonymous Attendee 09:01 PM

That's why it's the parent's choice: Virtual or Full Day

Anonymous Attendee 09:02 PM

It seems like Avonworth is the only school doing asynchronist learning through the hybrid model. No wonder teachers need 16 hours a week to prep... so inefficient. Why not do synchronistic learning and teachers don't need to repeat themselves? Make everyone be on the same page.

- Questions from someone not identifying themselves will not be answered. Please identify yourself at future meetings if you wish to receive a response.

Anonymous Attendee 09:02 PM

Avonworth: 82 cases No deaths, since March

ttro 09:05 PM

So why and how are other districts handling the logistics of going full-time? Is Avonworth incompetent?

- This question was addressed above.

Anonymous Attendee 09:06 PM

I appreciate your concern for social distancing, masking, etc. But, the reality is that the second kids are off the bus each day they are playing together in the yard, going to sporting practices, etc. In fact, there is a group of high school boys that go golfing together every Wednesday because there is no learning on that day.