

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in special session on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 at 6:00 PM remotely.

Board members present: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino

Board members absent:

Administration present: Dr. Serino, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance, Mr. Petronio, Athletic Director and Mr. Pietrasko, Director of Infrastructure and Security Technology

Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Rich Murphy commented on the board's vote tonight on playing football this fall. He is a father of a senior football player who has been playing since the age of seven. He urged the board to consider very seriously going with the decision of the CIAC. He felt it is very important for the mental health of the students. He felt that the kids were essentially promised they would be able to play if they did everything they had to do and the CIAC would make the decision as to whether football was played or not. Mr. Murphy felt it would be detrimental to their mental health for the board to not allow the CIAC decision to be the final one. He was worried about the mental health of all of the student athletes, but would accept the CIAC's decision to not play football because nobody would be playing football in the fall. Mr. Murphy felt it would be unfair to the community and to the children to do otherwise. He added that there are players on the team that need this season for athletic scholarship consideration.

Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education special session meeting - August 19, 2020

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Booth, to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2020 special session meeting, as presented.

Dr. Friedrich asked that the resolution that was read into the record be either bolded or put in italics.

In favor of approving the minutes of the August 19, 2020 regular session meeting, as amended: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.

Next Board Meeting - September 9, 2020 at 7:00 PM**Reopening Plan Update**

Dr. Serino reviewed that it has now been 166 days since they were last in school and tomorrow is the day that staff comes back. They continue to wait for more information on masks from the state, but do have information from Shipman and Goodwin. Addendum 8 came out on Monday, having to do with fire and school safety drills. A fire drill will still need to be held within the first 30 days of the school year, making sure everyone wears masks and keeps socially distant with multiple access points. A crisis response drill will be substituted for a fire drill once every three months. Evacuation and safety are the priorities, but social distancing should be enforced once students are outside. Lockdown drills will be conducted in the classrooms, while maintaining social distancing. Kids will not shelter or hide, but instead they will talk about how it would be done. They will continue table-top exercises and also talk about COVID-19. Fire doors must remain closed, unless self-closing. Classroom doors can be open as long as the building has a full sprinkler system and all doors must be closed upon leaving the room.

Tents have been ordered and will be installed at all schools but the high school. Each school has 12 picnic tables that were supplied by the Durham Fair Association and more are available, if necessary. Tent rental, at this point, is just under \$10,000.

They will make sure that parents have all of the protocols on masks. Shipman and Goodwin is waiting for specific guidance from DPH, but they do anticipate that by Friday. Re-opening plans are ready, but Dr. Serino would like a document specific to masks as well. There will also be an area in the student handbook about how it will be handled if a student is willfully noncompliant with mask expectations.

Dr. Serino also reported that they have received guidance on how the district is to respond to COVID-19 and she reviewed that for the board. Parents have received the information about how to self-certify on ParentSquare as of today. She also shared a presentation that was given by DPH and Yale School of Public Health. The presentation primarily talked about how schools' administrations and boards of education will decide on the different types of learning (remote, hybrid and in-person). The leading indicators include new community cases, test positivity, new hospitalizations and COVID-like illnesses. DPH has committed to publishing county-wide data every Thursday afternoon. Dr. Serino explained that they will hold the planning and response team meetings on Friday so that they can look at the data. Dr. Serino then shared the data as of August 13th. The presentation stressed mitigation strategies and added that close contact is now defined as within six feet for 15 minutes or longer, with or without a mask. If there is an identified case in a classroom, the Health Director advises that the entire class be quarantined. Dr. Serino feels that the district will find distancing to be a greater challenge as they contemplate going back to full in-person learning. DPH is not recommending temperature screening at this time in schools.

Mr. Moore asked what the length of quarantine would be for a class when a case is identified and Dr. Serino stated it would depend on the specific situation. Mr. Moore added that he went through the high school and was pleased at how clean it was. He felt that Mrs. Gaudreau and Mr. Croteau have done a tremendous job in getting the schools ready.

Dr. Taylor asked if there were further parameters about distancing in the classroom that would push the district to continue in the hybrid model vs. in-person and what teachers would be looking for. Dr. Serino explained that they are just not sure what they are going to see. She added that the kids stood in hula hoops during kindergarten orientation to keep them separated. Dr. Serino explained that she has to see

how kids are managing in the new environment, with social distancing, hand-washing and wearing masks, and will then bring that back to the planning and response team.

Mrs. Caramanello asked about band and chorus and if it will be in-person. Dr. Serino emailed Mrs. Schilling today asking for an overview and will share that information with everyone. Mr. Moore commented that there are a tremendous amount of restrictions on those types of activities and performances with audiences will probably not happen. Dr. Friedrich felt that it will be a huge challenge for music instructors.

Fall athletics update from CIAC/DPH and possible vote

Mr. Moore reviewed that the CIAC met with DPH and are continuing to work on options. As of now, DPH has not changed their position on high-risk sports but another guidance is expected this Friday or early next week. Mr. Moore suggested that the district stay where they are and if a change comes forward, they can have a special meeting.

Dr. Serino would like the board to understand the perspective of the district's coaches and the athletic director. Dr. Friedrich suggested that the district follow COVID rates among the towns that they play sports against as well as the towns that send players here. Dr. Taylor asked what the current status is for practices and Dr. Serino explained that DPH endorsed the CIAC decision about non-contact conditioning starting this week. District 13 has not started that yet and await the decision from the CIAC/DPH on fall sports. Dr. Taylor also asked if the board could have another vote after the decision on Friday and Mr. Moore agreed. Dr. Serino mentioned that soccer and cross country practices are slated to start on Saturday, August 29th. Dr. Taylor recalled some recommendations about seven-man football and non-tackle football and Dr. Serino did see that language as a potential compromise but felt that the district would need to talk about that further. Mr. Moore added that they have also talked about girls' volleyball being played outside. Dr. Serino also reported there was a conversation between superintendents and the director of CAS/CIAC and most volleyball coaches felt that playing outside was not a viable option.

Dr. Friedrich was surprised that football players are not having conditioning and Dr. Serino explained that it hasn't been sanctioned up to this point. Mr. Moore added that the number of people at practice has been reduced from 15 to 10. Mrs. Petrella was confused and asked what other schools in the area are doing and Dr. Serino explained that everyone is confused at this point. She will ask the athletic director to see what other schools are doing, but cautioned that it is constantly changing. Mrs. Petrella hoped that whatever decision the district makes is in line with other schools in the area. Dr. Serino added that they have received communication from parents stating that conditioning could begin, based on DPH recommendations, but she felt that it is best to wait until they see the guidance that is coming out on Friday.

Mrs. Caramanello asked when the board will convene again on this issue and Dr. Serino stated that they only needed 24 hours to notice a special meeting. Dr. Friedrich felt that football players should begin practice for sanctioned activities, such as conditioning, which helps reduce injuries. Mrs. Caramanello added that they had been conditioning and then stopped. Mrs. Petrella agreed with Dr. Friedrich in that there are a lot of things the athletes can be doing that are non-contact. Dr. Friedrich added that the board should be concerned for the emotional engagement of the student athletes and the district should think about offering anything that is safe for them. Dr. Serino confirmed that conditioning was held from July 11th until August 6th.

Dr. Friedrich hoped that Dr. Serino would feel the freedom to re-initiate conditioning practices which are within the DPH guidelines and offered to make a motion, if she would like. Dr. Serino wanted to wait to see what they hear on Friday and will have a conversation with the athletic director and coaches.

Dr. Taylor asked if the board is willing to have separate social distancing and mask policies for in-class situations vs. sports-related activities. He felt that whatever decision is made, it should be applicable to all sports. Dr. Taylor would be in favor of any type of conditioning that maintains social distancing in any sport. He did acknowledge that he has a different viewpoint and a different perspective, possibly because of his background. Dr. Taylor felt it was more important that the board discuss that type of scenario rather than what other towns or districts are doing as well as what DPH is doing. He is a little concerned that DPH took a stance and made a medical decision and is now negotiating with a body that is totally in the position of supporting sports.

Mr. Petronio joined the meeting at this point and agreed that this is a very confusing time. CIAC has separated conditioning from practices. He received an email from a sub-director of CIAC tonight and it explained that the Department of Public Health allowed the idea of non-contact conditioning. This has been referred to as summer conditioning by the district and has always been socially distanced. As of August 29th, all sports teams have been permitted to move forward with practices, however the format of sports, such as football and volleyball, has not been determined. Volleyball has been asked to do most, if not all, of their practices and skill work outdoors. Volleyball and football team practices are not supposed to happen until approximately September 13th. Right now, they can practice in cohorts of 10.

Mr. Moore summarized that he will bring this back to the board, once anything definitive is received from DPH and CIAC.

Discussion of YMCA childcare and possible vote

Dr. Serino explained that YMCA needs 20 children for a program, but are willing to take fewer to get it started. At this point, the district only has 11 children of staff members who would take advantage of the program. They have reached out to staff members once again and Dr. Serino will keep the board apprised.

Vote to increase substitute pay to \$100 for non-certified and \$120 for certified

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to increase substitute pay to \$100 for non-certified and \$120 for certified.

In favor of increasing substitute pay to \$100 for non-certified and \$120 for certified: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

A. Playground Committee Meeting - August 20, 2020

Mr. Yamartino thanked all of the members of the Playground Committee for all of their hard work. The playground construction at John Lyman School is nearing completion and is on time and on budget. Mrs. Booth added that it is scheduled to be finished on Friday and that mulch will need to be added before the kids can play on it.

Mr. Yamartino reported that the vendor for the playground equipment at Memorial has been selected and a purchase order will hopefully be issued before the end of the week. He is not sure when that will be installed. As far as the courts at Memorial, the committee has determined that the best option for the surface will be an asphalt surface.

The committee's next steps include reviewing the Brewster equipment for incorporation of some sensory elements, inventory of all playground equipment, courts and fields and creating a 20-year replacement and capital plan. They will also plan to coat and seal the courts at Memorial in the future as they cannot be done now within the available budget.

B. Policy Committee Meeting - August 26, 2020

Mr. Hicks reported that the Policy Committee met tonight and reviewed the child sexual abuse and assault policy as well as the reporting procedure. They also discussed the mask policy further and have somewhat determined that they will take the recommendations from Shipman and Goodwin as well as CABA and roll them into a protocol that will be sent to parents.

Mr. Hicks also mentioned that he and Mr. Moore have discussed emergency suspensions of policies during a pandemic. Many towns have passed this unanimously and it does give flexibility to the superintendent and administration should emergencies arise. He will forward this information to the board members.

Mr. Moore also reported that David Booth and Nima Patel are no longer interested in serving on the Finance Committee and two members need to be added. He also suggested that another board member serve on that committee as well.

Director of Finance's Report

Mrs. Neubig reported that the district is eligible for additional funding from the state and, as of today, that amount is \$380,000. That money must be used for very specific categories, including additional cleaning and safety personnel, transportation personnel, PPE and transportation. These expenses must be encumbered by December 31, 2020. Mrs. Neubig will save the FEMA reimbursement for the food service loss which will be reimbursed at 75 percent and will result in a net loss of about \$34,000. She also noted that lunch will be available on Wednesdays.

Mrs. Neubig also felt that transportation needs have been significantly reduced, at almost half. Bus routes will go live tomorrow morning. Mrs. Neubig stated that this will create a lot more traffic in and out of the schools. There is a construction update meeting tomorrow and she hopes to have an update then.

Public Comment

Anthony DeFilio, a father of five children, thanked the board and Dr. Serino for all they do. He noted that he is a football coach as well, but feels his comments involve all sports. He wanted to advocate for the kids and explained that football is so much more than a sport to the kids. Safety doesn't include only physical safety and mental stability is more important. He is an advocate for whatever the CDC guidelines end up being and if they feel that practice can be held in cohorts of 10, he would be for that. He has coached football for 11 years and has watched the kids grow and develop as well as get in trouble. He feels that football teaches them to be responsible, have a focus and watch each other's

backs. Sports are so important and if they are taken away, it will be detrimental to their safety. Mr. DeFilio hopes that board members have had the good fortune to coach because it's so gratifying. He respects the opinion that the board had last week, but noted that DPH/CIAC has apparently changed their mind about practices. He challenged the board to come and watch practices and emphasized that the coaches care about the kids. Mr. DeFilio encouraged everyone to listen to the experts. Regarding the physical safety concerns, he reminded everyone that conditioning is important before going out to play games. He also added that kids have been working very hard and it will blow their minds if they are told they can no longer condition. Mr. DeFilio reminded everyone of the relationships that are forged through sports. He stressed that the district can't be one of the only towns around that isn't playing football.

Matt Garretson, a football coach who was speaking as a parent, was confused at the fact that an indoor activity, such as band, would be okay but volleyball would not be. He wonders how the district is selecting what is safe for one thing, but not for another. He thanked the board for all they do for the children.

Rich Murphy, from Durham, could not agree more with Mr. DeFilio and Mr. Garretson just said. He hopes and prays that the board does the right thing by the children. As a parent, a coach and someone who has known many of the kids for a number of years, he felt that the kids deserve the opportunity to play. He asked the board to do their research, know what the CIAC is recommending and understand what DPH is recommending. He would hope that the decision keeps the best interest of the mental stability of the children in mind. Mr. Murphy is concerned about what's going on with COVID, but is more concerned with the mental status of the children. If the CIAC allows them to get on the field, the district needs to allow that to happen and do the right thing for the children. He too thanked the board for all they do.

Theresa Weimann, from Durham, is very concerned about what programming changes and flexibilities will be made with regard to extracurricular activities and specials. She believes that she and many other parents were misguided about the intent of the parent survey and what the hybrid model will be. She felt that many were not aware that distance learning would be part of the days off in the hybrid schedule. Her children were very overwhelmed with distance learning and hoped that programming would take that into consideration to give students the best day possible. She is also very concerned about assessing parent involvement as far as the delivery methods. She hopes that assessment of students and parents combined will be done on a regular basis. She also hopes that some of the funding is used for STEAM programs and extracurricular activities.

Candice Burritt asked Dr. Serino if a child will be quarantined due to seasonal allergies or if they will need to exhibit more than one symptom. Dr. Serino will reach out to Mrs. Burritt directly with the information.

Kirsten Olszewski, from Durham, is very grateful that orientation has been happening for kindergarten students but is very concerned over the fact that there has been nothing for children going into Memorial or Strong. Her son has a special needs plan and has received no orientation going into his first year at Memorial. She has also not heard much about testing and evaluating the children. She is looking forward to seeing the changes in distance learning, but does feel like her kids had difficulty with it in the spring.

Theresa Weimann, from Durham, echoed the statements of the two previous callers and would also like to see some guidance and commitment to the temperature policy. Pediatricians will not see children for every fever and would like to know if it would be for fevers related to COVID symptoms as far as

returning to school and getting a doctor's note. Mrs. Weimann noted that they have also not received updated IEPs and it is very concerning. She hoped that there would be flexibility afforded to all students.

Dean Fontano and Nate Jalomo both seniors who play football, wanted to speak for the team and say that football means a lot to them. They have been preparing a lot in the offseason and worked out whenever they could. This would be their last shot to be able to show colleges what they have and that they are able to play at the next level. They felt that if football is taken away, a lot of opportunities, including being able to go to college, play football and make their families and coaches proud, would be taken away as well. To them, it's not just a game. It has built a lot of relationships and is more of a family than just a team. He added that he felt that a lot of the students would not still be in high school without football. Nate stated that they are from East Hampton and play for Coginchaug. The bond they have formed with the students in such a short amount of time is crazy and it feels like they are being ripped away from their family.

Terrence Murphy, a senior football player at Coginchaug, stated that he's been playing football since he was 12 years old and has worked hard for years. He has two older brothers who had great high school experiences. He has always looked up to high school football and was anxious to be a senior leader. He felt it would hurt all of the athletes to have their season be over before it even starts. He felt it was ridiculous that cross country, track and soccer kids can be out there practicing when football can't.

Adjournment

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to adjourn the special meeting of the Board of Education.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
Alwaz First

Public Comment Received Via Email

From:

Date: August 26, 2020 at 4:42:18 PM EDT

To: rmoore@rsd13.org

Subject: BOE Budget items

Dear Bob –

These are some items I would like to see considered for the RSD13 budget for this year or next year –

Touchless toilets, faucets, soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers, etc to reduce contact and germ spreading.

Owl cameras (or similar) for our classrooms – <https://www.owl labs.com/blog/k-12-meeting-owl>

Consider doing a pilot in each school this fall to see if these videocams will work better for remote/distance learning. I know there is a cost to it, but we're also getting some money from the government for Covid. If you haven't seen Owl cameras, one of the TV stations showed a demo of it being used in Florida public schools. The teacher can walk around the room and everything they write on the white board or show in the classroom can be seen by the students at home. If we're going to do more remote/distance learning this year, I feel it should be synchronous, not asynchronous. We are short changing kids at home with asynchronous teaching. When we had distance learning this past spring, our son was teaching himself the material and only spending about an hour a day to complete ALL of his assignments (and he is not speedy). We can't go on this way, our children will fail and there will be long term consequences if we do. If the State of CT is preventing synchronous teaching due to privacy laws, then we need to fight to get the right to do it.

If we end up moving to ALL distance learning this year, or if the number of kids in the classrooms is significantly reduced due to the hybrid model, I question whether some of the resources used to help teachers in the classroom are still needed.

Sincerely,

Kari Sullivan

From:

Date: August 26, 2020 at 3:59:21 PM EDT

To: rmoore@rsd13.org

Subject: BOE Meeting tonight

Dear Bob –

I read that the Reopening plan update and Fall Sports update is on the agenda tonight. I want to encourage the BOE to continue to support the reopening of our schools on Sept 3 for students and to approve all Fall sports that the CIAC recommends.

If some sports are being cancelled by CIAC and some are being allowed, please do not cancel all of our sports, offer the ones that are permitted. We need Fall sports, intramurals and after school clubs. Our kids have been lacking mental and physical stimulation and interaction with their peers. And we need our children back in school full time safely and as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Kari Sullivan

On Aug 25, 2020, at 2:38 PM, nick Faiella <> wrote:

i don't disagree but we need to do what everyone else is doing otherwise there is no one to play

On Tue, Aug 25, 2020 at 2:37 PM Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org> wrote:

Nick

I actually think we should move baseball to this fall and football to spring, baseball seems to have very low risks if we keep the fans at bay

Bob

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 25, 2020, at 2:32 PM, nick Faiella <> wrote:

Bob,

Please don't get me wrong, I am not advocating that football be played in the Fall, IF sometime in early 2021 is a viable option.

Nick

On Tue, Aug 25, 2020 at 2:23 PM Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org> wrote:

Nick

Thank you for your thoughts and suggestions.

The Board has spent virtually all of its weekly meetings since March on working toward a safe reopening of school with our administration on policy, budget and participation in weekly administrative planning sessions and union negotiations.

The Board's action on fall sports is consistent with all of its actions to follow public health guidance and requirements in preparing to open schools. The Board's resolve to the Administration was to follow the State Department of Public Health's guidance with fall sports as it will be in other extracurricular activity including concerts and plays. If the SDPH and CIAC agree on different Guidance in the coming days, we will continue to evaluate it.

The administration has taken extraordinary steps to prepare for school and protect the safety of our students and teachers and staff. The measures include reducing class size by the hybrid schedule, creating cohorts of students, cleaning buildings, reducing touch points, securing proper ventilation, masks and social distancing everywhere all the time, and on and on. We should not and cannot jeopardize the efforts of the safety of all our students, faculty and community by the desire to engage in normal fall sports while we are under these abnormal conditions.

You know that I am the grandfather of three Cuginchaug athletes and two Strong athletes who have already missed their Spring sports. But protecting their health is, by far, more important.

Bob

Sent from my iPhone

> On Aug 25, 2020, at 10:33 AM, nick Faiella <> wrote:

>

> Bob,

- > I think at tomorrow's meeting you all need to clarify the resolution that you passed last week. According to Norm Hicks, the resolution was non-binding (he said that repeatedly) and per other comments in the minutes it was essentially a voice of support for the DPH view on Fall Sports vs the CIAC's direction.
- >
- > However, based upon communication recently received from the Athletic Director, this was either interpreted by the school as BOE policy or so unclear as to what it means that he is not aware what the schools position is so we need to wait till the next meeting.
- >
- > I think the resolution created the confusion that the rest of the BOE clearly articulated was their fear. You can't adopt a policy regarding the season and freeze it when the two parties (CIAC and DPH) are actively negotiating a potential start to the season. The situation remains fluid and yet you froze the school up based upon a resolution using yesterday's facts.
- >
- > If in fact the resolution is non-binding, then it is really just posturing and wasting a lot of time that the BOE should be using to figure out how to open the schools and educate our children safely.
- >
- > At the end of the day, as it pertains to Fall Sports, RSD13 should be doing what everyone else does and abide by the DPH and CIAC guidelines rather than trying to create our own path forward. Anything else would perpetuate the widely held belief that RSD 13 does not support athletics in the District.
- >
- > The same goes for music and choir, we should do what everyone else is doing regarding these high risk activities.
- >
- > Regards
- > Nick Faiella

From: Heather Garretson <>

Date: August 26, 2020 at 4:49:19 PM EDT

To: "rmoore@rsd13.org" <rmoore@rsd13.org>, "nhicks@rsd13.org" <nhicks@rsd13.org>, "cgeraci@rsd13.org" <cgeraci@rsd13.org>, "mbooth@rsd13.org" <mbooth@rsd13.org>, "mcaramanello@rsd13.org" <mcaramanello@rsd13.org>, "vfriedrich@rsd13.org" <vfriedrich@rsd13.org>, "ryamartino@rsd13.org" <ryamartino@rsd13.org>, "ataylor@rsd13.org" <ataylor@rsd13.org>, "jroraback@rsd13.org" <jroraback@rsd13.org>, "lpetrella@rsd13.org" <lpetrella@rsd13.org>

Subject: Fall Sports

To the Board of Education:

I am writing to you today as a wife of a coach and a parent of 2 high school student athletes in this district, one of which is a senior. I was extremely disappointed last week at the way the discussion regarding fall sports was handled. It was evident that there is a strong bias against football. As a board, you are charged with looking out for the best interest of ALL students, not just a select few (my perception was that everything would be done to ensure band and chorus could be done safely because they are so "important to our district" but we will just put a hard stop to football because you would just rather not deal with it).

You stated last week that you intended to follow the guidelines of the DPH, as set forth in their August 13th statement, independent of what the CIAC decided to do. You cited the fact that other towns had already cancelled sports for the fall. However, in contrast, those towns cancelled ALL fall sports, not just volleyball and football. The examples cited are also large cities with multiple schools with hundreds of more students than we currently have in Region 13. There is no comparison. In last week's meeting, concern was voiced about the level of contact in football and bringing the virus back into the school. This is ridiculous--ANYONE can bring the virus back into the school; it is airborne. Soccer players DO make contact with other players. They are running and breathing with their mouths open in close contact to other players. Band members are blowing air and spit into their instruments, many of which can not be covered with caps. Runners congregate in large groups at the startline--even if you limit start numbers, there is still a risk that someone will be closer than 6 feet without a mask on. Teachers and students alike have lives outside of school. They go out into the community on the weekends. What about district students who have brothers who go to Xavier or other private schools that pull students from all over the state--these schools are still playing football. Anyone of them could bring it home to their siblings who could bring it to school. All of these are "risks" right now. To use the fact that football is full contact (by the way, most players have a face shield, ALL have mouth guards, and many wear gloves) is unfair at best. In addition, should we not be concerned with their mental health as well?

Our numbers in the state are at an all time low. These athletes have been practicing together all summer without issue. There have been "high risk" sports taking place all summer long including basketball, volleyball, lacrosse, and hockey with no data to support an impact. In fact, my younger son played AAU basketball for a good part of the summer without issue. The majority of the state is following the guidelines set forth by the CIAC, despite the DPH recommendations. Remember, these are recommendations, not laws. My son, as a senior in discussions with colleges to play football for them and continue his education, deserves the same opportunity to participate in his senior season as the majority of the other athletes in this state will be afforded. This is a decision that should not be made by you as a board ; we as parents should be able to decide if it is safe for our own children to participate or not, just like parents have the choice to participate in hybrid learning or distance learning. Let's be honest, if you are truly concerned about the risk of transmission of this virus back into the schools, then you as a board should really be cancelling ALL fall sports, not

just football and volleyball. I urge you to consider my position and the rights of all students in this district, whether in sports or the arts, to be able to participate in what they love.

Heather Garretson

From:

Date: September 1, 2020 at 10:41:28 AM EDT

To: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Subject: Re: Coginchaug Football

Thank you so much Mr. Moore for your prompt response. This is such wonderful news, my son will be thrilled!

Thank you!!

Brandy

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2020, at 10:39 AM, Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org> wrote:
Brandy

Conditioning and practice by AD and coaches starts for all sports including football on Thursday.

Bob

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2020, at 10:33 AM, Brandy Kauffman <> wrote:

Good Morning,

As of 8/24 the CIAC approved the continuing of conditioning for student athletes under the guidance of the Department of Public Health. I'm inquiring why there has not been this approval for the Coginchaug football program? The back and forth and seeing other sports continue on all summer has taken a tremendous toll on the already unease of these young adults and it is very important for them to return to the normalcy they had when they were conditioning previously.

Please advise when we can expect the team to take the field again.

Thank you,

Brandy Kauffman

From: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>
Date: September 1, 2020 at 10:56:15 AM EDT
To: sebby manning <>
Subject: Re: Fall sports

Sebby

The Athletic Director will be sending out the schedule today and conditioning and practice for all sports will start Thursday.

Stay safe and follow the protocols in practice.

Bob Moore

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2020, at 10:52 AM, sebby manning <> wrote:

Good morning Mr chairman, My name is Sebby Manning, a senior at Coginchaug and my team and I are wondering when we are going to be able to start practicing for the fall season ? I know that there's a way

that we can have a safe season this year you guys just need to put faith in the athletic director, coaches, and students athletes because there is nothing we wouldn't do to get back on the field right now.

Thanks for your time.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Karenmbuckley14 <>
Date: September 1, 2020 at 10:53:52 AM EDT
To: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>
Subject: Re: Fall Sports

Thank you for the prompt response. I will look forward to hearing the details and to seeing the kids outside.

Karen

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Date: 9/1/20 10:46 AM (GMT-05:00)

To: Karen Buckley <>

Subject: Re: Fall Sports

Karen

Conditioning and practice starts for all sports on Thursday including football. Letter from Athletic Director should be our today with schedule

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2020, at 10:43 AM, Karen Buckley <> wrote:

Good morning,

I am following up on my email from last week. I was unable to attend the meeting due to a conflict and have not received any information from the school since last week as it relates to sports. I am wondering why our students are not conditioning/practicing when most other schools seem to be permitting this to happen and it worked out fine for RSD13 this summer? We can only start to get back to "normal" when we phase things in. There is less risk in conditioning than students riding the bus or all using the same stairwell at CRHS (as is planned). I understand the desire to reduce risk but it is time to get kids back to physical activity in a "planful" way. If a parent has concern for their child, they can chose not to have their child play (as many have done in deciding not to attend school in person). I am very concerned about the mental and physical health implications of our students when we are not appropriately balancing the COVID-19 risks with all others. I would encourage the board to allow conditioning and all fall sports, including football, to move forward, effective immediately.

Karen Buckley

860-575-8346

On 08/26/2020 4:25 PM Karen Buckley <> wrote:

Good Afternoon,

I wanted to send you a quick note in advance of the meeting tonight. I am aware that DPH and CIAC are still in discussions. I would like the board to support return to conditioning/ practice for students at a minimum while other decisions may be pending. The district did an excellent job in how they handled conditioning all summer and I see no reason why this cannot continue - even if fall sports may not go forward or may be delayed.

As you may know, my job provides me with current scientific information as well as the current CT data for COVID-19 and daily interaction with CT DPH and state government. At this point, I am supportive of returning to conditioning and the plan to play fall sports, including football, (with the delayed game starts - which allows for CIAC and the schools to adjust and react - much like the hybrid learning plan.) While other discussions go on and decisions are pending, the students should be able to condition in the manner/system already used by the district. This will provide a healthy outside socially distant activity for students who desperately need it.

No one is saying rush into things or that we should not respond if things emerge, but we need to start to gradually work back to a more normal lifestyle for our students. If we can send students back to a classroom where the 6 foot social distancing at all times may be difficult, we can figure out conditioning outside. We can phase in the return to sports just like other learning. I would encourage you to exhibit leadership in the face of the bureaucracy and do so.

Be well and stay safe,

Karen Buckley

Parent of Dalton Bates (football)

From: "Fornabaio, Michael" <>

Date: September 1, 2020 at 12:30:31 PM EDT

To: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Sports practices

Appreciate it.

From: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 12:29 PM

To: Fornabaio, Michael

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Sports practices

Michael

Practice and conditioning starts on Thursday for all sports. Schedule for practice is being sent out by

Athletic Director today. Board resolution is still in force and we await any change from the State Department of Public Health on the playing of football and volleyball this fall, but conditioning and practice in cohorts begins 9/3/20.

Hope this helpful
Bob Moore

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2020, at 11:44 AM, Fornabaio, Michael <> wrote:

Bob:

I'm a reporter with Hearst Connecticut Media and GameTimeCT.com. We've been following how schools are handling the pandemic and following along with the board. Sorry to throw a list at you, but... As we understand it, Coginchaug teams aren't currently practicing. Is that accurate? If so, is that related to the board's resolution from a couple of weeks ago, or did that decision come from somewhere else? Had teams been conditioning or practicing and stopped? And when will practices begin (or resume)?

Appreciate it,

Michael Fornabaio

Connecticut Post

From: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>
Date: September 2, 2020 at 5:01:41 PM EDT
To: Kari Sullivan <>
Subject: Re: Question - school calendar

Kari
That is correct.
Bob

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 2, 2020, at 3:41 PM, Kari Sullivan <> wrote:

Dear Bob -

Is the district planning to adjust the school calendar and move professional development days and teacher conferences to Wednesdays to reduce the impact on the days the kids are in school (or at least balance it with the number of holidays so that each cohort has equal number of days spent in the classroom)?

Kari

From: Kathryn Serino <kveronesi@rsd13.org>
Date: September 2, 2020 at 5:26:24 PM EDT
To: Kelly Davis <>

Cc: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Subject: Re: Fw: Reassessment metrics

Hi Kelly,

Thanks for reaching out with your questions. We too use metrics for measurable outcomes including the percentage of students who reach goal or the percent of growth target achieved for SBAC as well as so many other areas where we set a measurable goal or outcome from student based outcomes in special education that are written into an IEP as well as bigger outcomes including areas like student attendance, bullying complaints, average score on AP tests.

In terms of the decision-making for when to shift to full in-person and when to shift to full distance learning, there are a number of measures and considerations so there is not one single quantifiable indicator in our decision-making. However, last week we did receive from DPH the Mitigation Strategies, Community Spread and Decision Making guidance from DPH. Each Thursday afternoon we will receive county data on new community cases per 100,000, test positivity, new hospitalizations per 100,000 and Covid-like hospital visits per county. The guidance reviews case rate and risk level and has an interpretation for whether those numbers favor in-person, hybrid, or remote/full distance learning. Each week's data will be compared to the previous week's data in order to determine any trends. As Mr. Moore noted we also will look at more qualitative data relative to this leading and secondary indicators shared by DPT including the district's ability to meet and sustain the mitigation strategies such as case identification and isolation, physical distancing, face coverings, hand washing, cohorting, improved ventilation, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting. In addition to these other two major data sets, I will need to determine the viability of my workforce e.g. do we have the teaching force to meet the needs of in-person teaching and learning in the event of general illness, illness to COVID, family members' illness due to COVID, extended absence due to the need to quarantine (in the myriad scenarios that warrant a 10 day day isolation to a 14 day quarantine.

As you know from reading the communication from the district you know that we have a Planning and Response Team that began meeting in early March and has generally met on a weekly basis since then. That team will shift its meeting day from Tuesday to Friday to review the DPH data and discuss the other areas I have mentioned so that we are able to make an informed decision after 3 full weeks of school. There are also many types of transition models we are considering in terms of transitioning to more in-person learning which could include but is not limited to adding grade levels where there are fewer total number of students per class and gradually adding back grade levels. If you have been in our classrooms and are familiar with our furniture you will know the social distancing challenges we face.

There has not been a single decision since we began this journey including what bathrooms to leave open, what cleaning schedule to follow, whether to switch from Merv 8 filters, how to transition students through the hall, which rooms to use as the isolation room that have been hasty or based upon emotion.

The decision to shift in either direction or stay in a hybrid model, as we are starting tomorrow, will be purposeful, deliberate and based on data.

I am available for a phone call next week Kelly if you would like to talk.

Kathy Serino

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:26 PM Kelly Davis <> wrote:

Good Evening,

I am following up on my email from yesterday and the response I received from Mr. Moore.

While I appreciate the response I perhaps wasn't clear in my questions.

I'm asking for what numbers you will be using to make the decisions.

For example:

Will it be an increase in case numbers such as 5 or fewer new cases in the school district over a four week time period to allow for in-person full classroom five days per week?

Will it be a case positivity rate of less than 1% for a period of 4 weeks to determine when to loosen the distancing restrictions?

As a healthcare professional, we are disciplined to write goals that are objective and measurable to determine if our patients are making progress towards their goals. Without specific objective numbers, how can these decisions to return to normal schooling be made? I'm certain that without these metrics and criteria specified beforehand, these decisions will either be made hastily or on emotions and that is not sound policy.

Thank you,

Kelly Davis

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Kelly Davis <>

To: Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org>

Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020, 08:47:37 PM EDT

Subject: Re: Reassessment metrics

Thank you for your response. Unfortunately, this does not answer my question.

I will follow up with Dr. Serino directly.

Thanks again,

Kelly

On Monday, August 31, 2020, 08:07:15 PM EDT, Robert Moore <rmoore@rsd13.org> wrote:

Kelly

Thank you for your questions. I talked to Dr. Serino today and she will be happy to talk to you directly if you have more questions, and asked me to respond to you today.

What are the metrics that will be used to evaluate a change in the hybrid schedule? 1. The status of COVID spread in the community... each Thursday the State Department of Public Health will provide the up to date disease statistics In Middlesex county.

2. The number of cases of COVID among our students and faculty, and our ability to maintain or expand student enrollment and delivery of in person instruction.

3. Our space and the ability to maintain appropriate distance in classrooms and other space including cafeterias and hallways.

4. Our ability to maintain clean and disinfected school buildings with increased enrollment, and

5. Most important, how our students and faculty have performed under our rules by maintaining their distance from each other, wearing their masks, staying home if sick or exposed, quarantining when required, etc.

While there is no precise measure of success in keeping COVID from the schools, the metrics for decision to change to full time or go to full virtual will include analysis of all of the above.

I hope this is helpful.

Sincerely

Bob Moore

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 30, 2020, at 9:47 PM, Kelly Davis <> wrote:

To Dr Serino, and BOE members,

You have stated that you will reassess the hybrid school model after a three week time period. What metrics will you be using to complete this reassessment? I have not seen any information on this topic in the recent available BOE meeting minutes or in any email correspondence from the school district. I have seen charts on how you will determine a move from in-person to hybrid to full distance learning. But no information on determining a move in the other direction.

What criteria will you use to determine a move from hybrid to in-person, from in-person to no masks, from no group gatherings to lunch in cafeterias and assemblies, etc? Will it be data from state-wide, town-wide or district staff and student population only? Will it be new cases, or percent case positivity rate, hospitalization rate, deaths?

Given the current data from the state DPH as of August 27th, Durham has had a cumulative confirmed case number of 46 cases and Middlefield has 20 confirmed cases. Durham has had 1 confirmed death and Middlefield has none.

[COVID-19 Tests, Cases, and Deaths \(By Town\) | Connecticut Data](#)

As of 8/16 Durham has had 4 new cases out of 220 tests performed with a percent case positivity rate of 0.5% and Middlefield has 0 new cases out of 99 tests performed.

<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/COVID-19-case-rate-per-100-000-population-and-perc/s22x-83rd>

We can look to the state in general to see that going into a lockdown with no clear, outlined, objective, and definitive plan on how to determine when to lift restrictions has not worked out well. Nothing in this life has a one-size-fits-all answer. We need the BOE to consider what is going to work best for our district rather than following a state-wide plan determined by the Department of Education or DPH that may work better in counties harder hit like Fairfield or New Haven.

I would appreciate a response to this email, even if the honest answer is "We don't know yet."

Thank you,

Kelly Davis