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Reopening Task Force

Focus Group Summary Report

Introduction

The district's process for planning for reopening includes the creation of a Task Force to outline plans that align with state and federal guidelines, along with consideration for nine areas determined by the New York State Education Department. These areas include, (a) health and safety, (b) teaching and learning, (c) social emotional needs, (d) special education, (e) social emotional needs, (f) bilingual education, (g) digital equity and access, (h) budget and fiscal, (i) transportation, facilities, and nutrition, and (j) staffing and human resources. The Task Force work includes five major components, (1) data collection, (2) committee work, (3) focus group work, (4) Town Hall input, (5) submission of a preliminary plan to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), and (6) the creation and dissemination of a final Reopening 2020-21 Blueprint for Success document to the community.

Each focus group reviewed the Executive Summary of the work of the district committee's for Operations, Health and Safety, and Teaching and Learning. Focus group members then participated in a Thoughtexchange that asked, "What are your thoughts regarding reopening planning for the 2020-2021 school year?" The focus group work culminated in a virtual meeting that used a **SCAN** (**S**ee the issues, **C**larify the issues, **A**ssess priorities, **N**ext steps) protocol to capture the most important ideas regarding reopening for each focus group. Summaries of the top themes for each group are presented below.

Four focus group meetings were held as follows:

Support Staff Focus Group on July 13, 2020 at 9:30 am

Parent and Community Focus Group on July 13, 2020 at 1:00 pm

Teacher and Administrator Focus Group on July 14, 2020 at 9:30 am

Board of Education Focus Group on July 14, 2020 at 1:00 pm

Focus Group Top Priorities for Reopening

Support Staff Top Priorities

- Ensuring the health and safety of staff and students
- Understanding changes to in-person school/work upon reopening
- Importance of effective communication
- Ensuring that all voices are heard; no idea is too small

Parent and Community Top Priorities

- Ensuring the health and safety of staff and students
- Identifying what school looks like for in-person, hybrid, and remote learning
- Improving remote instruction (accountability, communication, teacher preparedness, parent support, technology, student feedback)
- Ensuring that student social emotional and mental health needs are addressed
- Supporting and meeting the individual needs of all students

Teacher and Administrator Top Priorities

- Resuming in-person instruction for students
- Ensuring the health and safety of staff and students
- Managing student routines, including supplies and materials to minimize the spread of COVID-19
- Addressing the human resources needs of employees
- Considerations for special area instruction to ensure safety while supporting these important areas of instruction

Board of Education Top Priorities

- Ensuring the health and safety of staff and students
- Ensuring high quality instruction during potential periods of remote learning
- Preparedness for potential closures
- Meeting the social emotional needs of students, staff, and families
- Addressing the human resources needs of employees

Next Steps in Reopening Planning

- District Committee Executive Summary Report (complete)
- Focus group Summary (current document - complete)
- Communication with stakeholder groups (ongoing)
- NYSED Reopening plan submission deadline – July 31st
- Governor Cuomo decision on school reopening – First week of August
- Reopening – A Blueprint for Success – August 2020