

MA (Cont. from 1)

Herrera provided a summary of the research and parent and student surveys used to guide decisions. The

general feedback is that parents favor returning full-time and having a choice in whether to wear masks. The mask preference was strongest at lower grade levels. She noted that a second survey

showed a lower preference for masks. She also reported that 52% of parents wanted a full time in-person schedule; 28% wanted to be full-time with the option to go online if the situation changes, and 6% preferred distance learning with limited screen time. The staff was also surveyed as to their preference on mask wearing and what would make them feel safer.

The board was provided with all survey results along with over 800 comments. Generally, more parents and students preferred not to wear a mask while faculty preferred mask wearing, especially at the higher grades.

Learning plan options

Miller said that he felt the CDE would give the school latitude around student count for distance learning, and that he felt the MA plan was good. He advised the board to give the school leadership latitude to make decisions about things such as when parents could change learning models and how the car line procedures work. He said they should approve the plan in principle without getting into the minutiae. Miller said that while everyone wants kids to come back and feel normal, staff members also need to feel secure. He said they should not be quick to discard mask requirements even if the governor doesn't extend his mandate if it makes people feel safer. He noted that the school already impinges on people's liberty by requiring uniforms and dress codes, though that is for culture while masks are for safety.

Miller said he wanted to make sure MA could continue to offer education and not shut down and to expect that the situation would change. He said that other layered controls could be added on to create a safe haven. Herrera reiterated that while there is a government mandate, people will have to wear masks. Miller said the executive order had to be treated as though it was the law as it was issued under emergency powers. He said the school needs to uphold the law but also doesn't have police powers if someone doesn't or cannot comply.

Pre-school Director Mia Phillips reported that preschool is considered an essential business and would remain open even if there were a shut-down. She said that preschool was making accommodations such as removing porous toys, moving furniture, and redoing nap times and adult-child ratios. They are creating primary care groups, each of which has primary caregivers. Classrooms will look more normal, there is no mask requirement for kids; teachers will wear face shields and masks. She said that a fence was installed by Eagle scouts on the pre-

school playground to allow two groups to be out at the same time.

MA elementary Principal Charlie Richardson said that elementary would be offered either in-person or live-streamed. He discussed allowing parents to choose one model and change to the other model, preferable on a quarterly basis. Elementary students will be able to use the multi-purpose room (MPR) for lunch. Kids will be dropped off and go through a thermal scanning machine and spread out between the MPR and the gym. The kids will be released one class at a time to go to their rooms. The plan is that teachers will wear masks but the kids, who are under 11 years old, will not once they are in class. They will be able to switch rooms for specials (elective classes) and go out to recess but will be asked to wear masks during transitions. At the end of the day, Richardson said, they are considering staggering pickup.

For middle and high school students, Principal Julie Seymour presented four options: in-person; at-home synchronous learning (live); at-home asynchronous (recorded); and at-home independent learning with MA curriculum and scope. She talked about two possible plans, one that provided a more normal experience with more risk of quarantine or a second one that was more conservative and used cohorting.

The board preferred the first plan, in which students would not be in cohorts and would attend school on a regular schedule, Monday through Thursday in-person with Friday at home for support/office hours. There would be social distancing in classrooms, with masks. There would be layered protection to maximize the potential to stay open. This includes assigned seats, one-way hallways, no use of lockers, health screening and temperature checks upon arrival. Lunch would be in classrooms, windows would be open for ventilation, and there would be extra personal protective equipment for teachers. This would still allow band, choir, and PE following all guidelines for the National Association for Music Education (social distancing, nylon coverings for instruments, and use of the gym).

The MA board unanimously approved the learning plans as presented, selecting the less restrictive middle and high school plan, with the additional instruction that if there is a change in the state mask mandate, the board will meet to reconsider the plan. For the latest detailed plan, see: <https://bit.ly/ma-bts>

Highlights

The following items were highlighted at

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