

Special Board Minutes (Draft)

Thursday, January 7, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.

Administration Conference Room

Present: Donna Yellow Owl-Chair, Wendy Bremner, Brenda Croff, James Croff, Kristy Bullshoe, Mistee RidesAtTheDoo. Virtual: Brian Gallup, Rae TallWhiteman (5:53 p.m.).

Ms. Yellow Owl called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve the agenda with no changes. Second by Ms. Bullshoe. All in favor/Motion passed.

Public Comment: None.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

COVID-19 Vaccination: Superintendent Hall met with classified and certified negotiation teams and is working on language for the addendum to the MOU; a draft of the language proposed is attached but not final. Superintendent Hall stated that she strongly suggests that everyone take the vaccine; however, people can decline due to underlying health issues. A final draft will be brought to the 1/27/21 board meeting to be approved. Ms. Yellow Owl did not feel anyone who does not want the vaccine should be required to take it but it would be great if all want to. Superintendent Hall stated she has met with Roberta Wagner and they plan to have 200 vaccines plus another 100 the following week and the district has 420 employees. IHS Director, Garland Stiffarm, has said that the Indian health service sometimes has extra vaccines at the end of the day and that are offered to others that want them. Superintendent Hall will let all know when the vaccine is available for staff. John Salois stated that the certified staff is willing to agree to an addendum to the current MOU for the vaccine and noted that BPS can only encourage staff to take the vaccine. Classified has not contacted all their members yet. Ms. Bremner requested a staff survey to get an idea of what the numbers will look like for the vaccine. Superintendent Hall will instruct principals to take care of the surveys in their buildings and keep the board posted. Jennifer Wagner stated that the hospital gets their tests from the Federal Government and Roberta Wagner's comes from the State; the hospital and tribe are working together and the Tribe will receive their vaccines this weekend and Indian Health Service has 200 vaccines now. Mr. Stiffarm is made aware two-days prior to receiving the vaccines. IHS is administering the vaccine now to IHS employees, the nursing home, and 75 years plus. Superintendent Hall will work with Roberta Wagner to determine who will be in the first group for the school and noted that some staff may have already taken the vaccine; those who have paid for the vaccine can be reimbursed with the. The new Governor has already put in place that 60-69 with underlying health conditions can get the vaccine now. Ms. Bremner asked that the school have a plan in place to administer the vaccine.

ITEMS OF ACTION

Blended Learning Model for Students PreK-12 Beginning Second Semester 1/25/21: Ms. Yellow Owl stated that this meeting was for Winter Sports but she had two (2) board members request this item be placed on this agenda. Superintendent Hall stated that administration has scenario 2 which highlights BPS Re-Opening Plan Proposal. Dennis Juneau stated that the staff hybrid model requires staff to be in the building two days (16 hours) per week working remotely. The date proposed to begin this transition is January 11, 2021. Mr. Juneau noted that there is a process in place for staff to work remotely, a COVID pandemic plan, and they must work directly with their building principal/director. Scenario 2 plan requires that students be in the classroom for two days per week in assigned cohorts. Students will be distance learning the remaining days of the week. The date to begin this transition is being proposed for January 25. The BPS re-opening plan proposes that students and staff begin the transition from Scenario 1, Distance Learning and from Scenario 0, stay at home order to Scenario 2, the Blended Learning and Staff Hybrid model. This proposal does include the option for staff to continue working remotely if approved by their administrator, and for students to continue with distance learning for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. Our proposal is based upon the numbers of active Covid-19 cases on the reservation and on the need of our students to get back into the buildings. There is a need for the students and staff to begin having the

option of completing the 2020-2021 school year in the classroom in a blended learning model. The BPS COVID Pandemic plan is finalized and will support students and staff in every building. The plan consists of prevention, monitoring, tracing and closure process. Highlights for Scenario 2, Blended Learning, plan: A) Each building/campus has a plan that specifically aligns to their students, staff, and developmental needs & contains guidance for: instruction, covid building prep, covid emergencies, daily schedules, process for remaining distance learning and working remotely. B) Each plan has an attendance component that defines Connection and Engagement, a parent/guardian orientation to the device & the online platform, structured communication home to families, ongoing support from teachers & support staff. C) Each building has a foundational number for staff who will be requesting to continue working remotely & the number of students who will remain distance learning. D) Transportation is finalizing plan for bussing, there are two cohorts-A & B. Cohort A is "In Town" & Cohort B is "Out of Town plus Flat Iron", the re-shaping of the routes is being completed to align with the rosters being built by each building. Every bus has been equipped with plastic dividers. E) Food Service will deliver meals & snacks to the classroom in grades Pre K-8 on M-T & Th-F. BHS is finalizing plans for meals. Wednesday will be the delivery day for meals for each week. F) The overall district schedule is being proposed as Cohort A-Monday & Tuesday and Cohort B-Thursday & Friday with Wednesday & Saturday being deep cleaning days. G) The daily Instructional Day will be 9-3 across the district. There will be a staggered drop off schedule for the buses and a specific entrance chosen along with an entrance for parent drop offs in the AM. The PM bus run will follow the same process in reverse order. The detailed, minute by minute plan is being finalized depending upon the combination of needs of transportation and each building. H) PPE's have been delivered to every building including: hand sanitizer, sanitizing stations outside classrooms/in hallways, plastic desk dividers, masks, and signage. Additional PPE's for student & staff use are stored at the administration building & maintenance and available upon request. I) Next steps include, but are not limited to: finalizing numbers for students & staff for on campus, building rosters, preparing a parent/family orientation for blended learning, assigning duties as needed, developing all needed communications for PR. The BPS Attendance Committee has been working diligently to implement the Covid Attendance Addendum. Each building has specific numbers for the following data points: • 10 or more absences • Perfect Attendance • No Contact • Possible Drops • Transfer Out • Transfer In. Each building has collected these numbers and have identified the students who align with these selected data points. Only students and families who have exhausted every attempt made by the school district to be connected to school are being dropped and referred to family court. Also, attendance monitoring support relationships are officially being established with Blackfeet Housing & Manpower. February 1st is count-day and the BPS plan is to provide the option for students to return to the classroom in person to increase our total numbers of enrolled BPS students in the district.

Attendance numbers for each school: BMS, 10 or More Absences-54, Perfect Attendance-7, No Contacts-35, Possible Drops-35, Transfer Out-20, Transfer In-3; Napi: 10 or More Absences-36, Perfect Attendance-57, No Contacts-36, Possible Drops-36, Transfer Out-19, Transfer In-17; BHS: 10 or More Absences-240, Perfect Attendance-3, Possible Drops-121 Drops (82), Transfer Out-49, Transfer In-65, BES: 10 or More Absences-124, Perfect Attendance-59, Possible Drops-73, Transfer Out-13, Transfer In-16; VC/KW: 10 or More Absences-31, Perfect Attendance-Not Tracking, No Contact-11, Transfer Out-11, Transfer In-4. Totals: 10 or more absences-485, Perfect Attendance-126, Possible Drops-276, Transfer Out-112, Transfer In-105. The administration proposes to get students and staff to come back into school, and noted that dates have been proposed in the plan. If necessary the changed date would be February 1, 2021. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that there are 9-new active cases in the community and asked what is the limit the school is looking at in active cases. Mr. Juneau stated 25 - 40. Superintendent Hall stated that the numbers were lower in December stated that these are the numbers previously stated and if the numbers go up, the district can shut down. Ms. Yellow Owl noted that there are 48 cases with 9-new cases announced today. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that she would like plans that are complete and finalized. Superintendent Hall stated that as soon as the board gives approval, those plans will be ready with details. Bus route details are ready with Flat Iron listed as out of town in order to keep numbers equal. Reid Reagan stated that the installer for the air purifiers is not available until Monday and will be installed within next week if all goes as planned; the door thermometer is not ready as they are waiting for internet cables. The drivers will all have thermometers on the buses and will be contacting extra staff; all teachers will have thermometers as well and they are working with CDC guidelines on this. Ms. Bremner stated that the plans are

very good but she has objections to the dates submitted and asked the Board to consider changing both dates. Ms. Bremner read findings from the Mt. Dept. of Health from March to October; living in shared housing, multigenerational housing, chronic health issues, the reservation has lost over 40 people to COVID 19 and until staff is vaccinated and has moved through the second vaccine, she feels BPS is not ready to open. COVID 19 in Montana is on rise again with 713 cases today and over 1000 deaths. Ms. Bremner felt that the school is not ready to open yet. Ms. RidesAtTheDoor felt that there needs to be an option for those staff and students who want to go to school. Ms. Croff stated that she looks at the stats all the time and feels scared to do this but also is scared not to do it. Ms. Croff felt that 276 kids is too many to may or may not be dropped and BPS has not been able to contact them; these are kids who are at home being abused and/or neglected. Ms. Croff stated that she asked for this discussion because she feels the district needs to provide an option and if it is not to open up right now, kids will still have the ability to stay home. Ms. Bullshoe stated that her family has been affected and she has many welfare checks to do on kids and also stated it is devastating to see what is happening to all kids and not knowing who is taking care of them and if they are in a safe place, and where are they eating, they have no water and no lights and no meals in their homes; kids are just out there. Ms. Bullshoe stated that if the board says yes and allows the blended model, the district needs find solutions and remedies and remember that they are here to help the kids; if the district does not go to a blended model, the counselors need to step-up and check on our kids because many of them are not being checked on. Mr. Evans stated that just about everything is covered in the blended learning model as well as safety measures and he supports going to blended learning and feels it can be done safely throughout the whole country. Mr. Evans stated that there will be things that come up but by not opening we are letting our students down. Students have jetpacks that don't work at their homes and they have a tough time doing classes and they only live a few miles from town. Mr. Evans felt that it is time to open the schools. Ms. TallWhiteman stated that she wants to see a clear plan but felt that the dates are premature and asked for staff numbers who want to return and wants to give options to staff who don't want to return. The district needs to have a soft opening and have staff and students who want to come in to school, and wants to treat school as important as sports. Ms. TallWhiteman felt that the McKinney Vento program and Technology are not meeting the districts basic needs and wants to see the doors open to kids for food or necessities each week. The district should have checked on these kids first and made sure they are okay. Also, Ms. TallWhiteman felt that the potential dates should not be pushed because of count date coming up and focus on making contact with the 276 students not accounted for and keep all safe. Mr. Gallup stated that there is still a tribal stay at home order until the numbers go way down and when the tribe moves into Phase 2 the school will be ready and he will support some type of blended learning. Mr. Gallup also asked for numbers of staff who want to return to work.

Superintendent Hall stated that KW/VC blended learning model will have 50 students in, 50 out; 23 certified staff in, 10 out. BES 87 students in, 112 remote; 27 certified staff in, 9 out. Napi 110 students in, 189 remote; 18 certified staff in, 12 remote. BMS has 50 students in. BHS 158 students in; 27 staff in, 10 certified staff remote. BHA 70 students in, 30 remote; 100% staff in. Babb 24 students in, 11 remote; 100% staff in. Colonies 2 TAs in, 2 teachers remote. Ms. Yellow Owl asked what happens if 5th grade students want to come in and the teacher doesn't. Dennis Juneau stated that there will be "buddy" teachers which is one of the finalizing step to give an accurate picture. Mr. Juneau stated that the administration team has set numbers and have met to detail plans. Napi, KW/VC have rosters built and the remaining schools are working on their rosters; there is a lot of planning in place that is not finalized yet. Sicily Bird stated that students are paired with a buddy teacher they are familiar with, if their teacher is not available. Classrooms will be capped at 10 per class and go into remote learning classrooms. Superintendent Hall stated that the internet at BMS may be ready January 25 in the 7th grade pod. Ms. Croff asked to start with opening WBH or Napi and have school for a while, and if it goes well, then add another school. Superintendent Hall stated that it will create an unfair labor practice to have one part of school open and not the others; have asked to do a hybrid model for individual students to come in and tutor so we could start helping those kids that are really falling through the cracks before a blended learning model starts. Mr. Juneau stated that buildings are setup to tutor students now. Ms TallWhiteman stated that she heard OPI okayed the district to use last year numbers for the count date. Superintendent Hall stated that legislature approved schools to use Impact Aid counts from last year but she will look into what OPI is doing. Ms. TallWhiteman stated that kids are starving; Browning is 80% food insecure and Lynne Keenan has confirmed the high number of food insecure kids. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that the district has provided for students' food, clothing, technology, etc. but feels

that counselors need to be out there working with the court on the 276 kids that have not been contacted because those kids still need an education. Ms. Yellow Owl does not feel the district is ready to start on January 11 or 25 and stated that there is not enough finalized to move forward but agrees to take steps in tutoring as long as the district follows MTSBA and fair labor practices. The tribe is not moving into their next phase and there are 48 active cases today which is over the 40 discussed. The district needs to educate selves and work with community to wear masks, stay at home, and stop socializing with families; just go to work and go home. Superintendent Hall stated the count dates are October 5, 2020 and February 1, 2021. If there is a huge decrease in the budget, the reserves will cover it. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that the air purifiers need to be installed in all buildings before opening the doors and asked if daycare will open too. Ms. Bremner asked to waive the date of 2/1/21 and check with OPI because they recognize Naïve Americans are in danger. Mr. Gallup felt that Montana's new governor will not recognize the tribe's stay at home order and BPS is one of the only schools still in remote learning and feels they will force schools to go to a blended learning model. Ms. TallWhiteman feels it is not safe to open yet and asked for a potential date where staff is working toward opening; according to the chat, a lot of people have changed their minds about opening now. Mr. Evans felt that the district should open 1/25 and if not ready, shoot for another week, but they need to draw the line now. Ms. Croff suggested to make a motion to change the dates, have a soft opening, and push into the future and have on the January 27 board agenda; the date does not need to be written in stone. JoAnne Grandstaff stated that she has been talking with two (2) teachers to not quit as they do not feel safe opening. Ms. Brmener suggested a January goal and get everybody immunized first and move forward on January 27; this will give administration time to finalize everything; plan to have an outreach and work with groups like CPS and other necessary people. Ms. Bullshoe removed her second; Ms. RidesAtTheDoor removed her motion. Motion by Ms. Croff to modify the blended learning plan presented by administration and bring back to the January 27 board agenda with finalized plans, with the goal to get the first vaccine for staff, and have a soft opening on 2/14/21. Second by Ms. RidesAtTheDoor. Superintendent Hall suggested working toward February date for tutoring with staff coming in as in the beginning of school year. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that if this does not work, the administration will go back and set new dates. Mr. Evans and Ms. RidesAtTheDoor asked to look at cases again if the numbers are low by 1/12/21 and move the date up. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that she will put something on the agenda for discussion. Motion passed with Donna Yellow Owl, Wendy Bremner, Brenda Croff, James Evans, Kristy Bullshoe, Mistee RidesAtTheDoor, Brian Gallup, Rae TallWhiteman voting for.

Winter Sports: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve Winter Sport changes. Second by Ms. Bullshoe. Public participation/Board discussion: Ms. Yellow Owl stated that the Activities Director has concerns from coaches, ADs and MOAs regarding guidelines from previous meetings and reviewed each question.

1) Swing Players: all teams have swing players and those games need to be played in the same gym as the JV and Varsity players are on both teams. Ms. RidesAtTheDoor asked if equipment can be installed in the other gyms to be watched on NHSA. Mr. Holm will be asked to work with Pikuni Press regarding equipment. All board agreed by consensus to allow JV and Varsity to be played in the high school gym.

2) BPS does not allow visiting teams to have spectators however, the other schools have one bus for their teams and the JV and C squad have to remain on the bus during the varsity games; can they sit behind their teams and watch the other games. All board agreed by consensus to allow the other teams in the gym to watch as long as they remain on one side/upper side, wear their masks and social distance.

3) Per MHSA athletes do not have to wear masks during participation; request for participants of basketball and wrestling to not wear masks during competition. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that football had to wear masks; Ms. RidesAtTheDoor stated that it was at player discretion. Mr. Evans stated the Pediatric Health doesn't recommend wearing masks during high activity and he does not have a problem adopting MHSA rules. Ms. Bullshoe stated that she has been contacted by students and had concerns from parents regarding breathing issues wearing masks. Ms. Bremner stated that every school in red zone, which means they are not doing well and they are not following the ordinance and the Governor lifting the mask ordinance, and will be worse; Ms. Bremner felt that kids can take breaks when needed and supports following the tribal ordinance regarding wearing masks. Mr. Gallup stated that

BPS cannot make the opposing team wear masks. Dan Connelly stated if a person playing has the virus and the team is wearing masks they wouldn't be considered to be exposed; if the team is not wearing a mask, they are exposed. Mr. Connelly stated that wearing masks will protect each other. Robert Hall stated that the MOAs have asked about the staggered schedules in different gyms creating weight for officials rushing to each building and the mask rule and asked who does the referee pool talk to about these requirements. Superintendent Hall read letter from Mark Beckman, MHSA, which states: "The current COVID regulations in place from the state do not require athletes who are participating to wear face coverings due to concerns of physical exertion. There also is not a MHSA requirement to wear face coverings during play except for coaches and substitutes on the bench. Visiting team(s) do not have to wear face coverings during play. BPS could play games on the road if the visiting team does not want to wear masks during play, and if not, the game would be considered a no-contest". Ms. Yellow Owl stated that the basketball coach has stated that if one player, not wearing a mask has the virus, the whole team would have to be quarantined and stated she does not agree with not wearing masks during competition. Ms. Croff, Ms. RidesAtTheDoor, Ms. Bullshoe, Mr. Evans, Ms. TallWhiteman, Mr. Gallup agreed by consensus to not wear masks, during participation only. Ms. Yellow Owl, Ms. Bremner did not agree. *Further discussion:* Ms. Bremner felt that this needs to be approved by the Blackfeet incident command. Mr. Gallup disagreed. Superintendent Hall stated that the Blackfeet IC approved the winter sports plan which states, "during high aerobic activity, athletes do not have to wear masks".

4) Request from parents for cheerleaders to cheer on the gym floor during games and be seen by the camera system from NFHS on the north side of the gym. All board agreed by consensus to allow cheer leaders on the north side of gym to be seen by camera system.

5) Request two (2) fans per senior athlete for remainder of season to be in the southern upper level middle mezzanine (the teams have 6 senior boys and 8 senior girls). Ms. RidesAtTheDoor suggested two (2) spectators per player because of freshmen on varsity teams. Superintendent Hall stated there would be approximately 110 spectators. Ms. Yellow Owl stated she is not in favor of out of town fans, and wants to allow only 2 guests for each senior for remainder of sport season and if numbers go down then allow two (2) guests per player. All board agreed to allow only senior players two (2) guests each.

6) Accommodate away fans with up to 16 tickets per team for varsity through C squad. Tickets would be given out at the discretion of visiting teams AD. All board agreed by consensus to not give any tickets out.

7) Locker room use for all teams (visiting and home teams). All athletes will bring their own towels if they choose to shower. Superintendent Hall asked MHSA if BPS allows only seniors to have guests are we okay to say no to other teams. Dan Connelly stated that the board misunderstood what he said earlier and stated that if there is a symptomatic player not wearing a mask, the whole team will have to go into quarantine. Ms. Yellow Owl stated yes; it is player discretion to wear masks during competition. Mr. Connelly stated if only one player tests positive, both teams have to quarantine. All board agreed by consensus to allow all teams to use locker rooms and restrooms in the locker rooms only.

8) Allow Chief Earl Old Person to attend all home games. Board members did not agree and stated that they would rather have all elders attend the games and the decision has already been made to allow two (2) spectators per player to attend games. This issue can be discussed again at the January 27 board meeting. Mistee RidesAtTheDoor, Brian Gallup, James Evans, Rae TallWhiteman agreed by consensus to allow Chief Old Person to attend all home games. Wendy Bremner, Donna Yellow Owl, Brenda Croff, Kristy Bullshoe did not agree. Consensus failed due to a tie.

MOA's are not district employees and they requested to be removed from the BPS plan and they will submit their own plan to Blackfeet IC. All board agreed to remove Browning MOAs from the school district winter sports plan.

Weight room: Ms. RidesAtTheDoor felt the plan should include athletes using the weight room. All board agreed not to approve using the weight room.

Trainers: Ms. RidesAtTheDoor felt that BPS should have all trainers on the scene and available for sports. Everett Armstrong stated that he doesn't have trainers, EMS is available, and if someone needs to be taped, there are people who can do that. Ms. Yellow Owl stated that if this is needed for sports then it needs to be done. Students need to be worked with in a public area. Ms. TallWhiteman suggested contacting the school-based clinic or southern piegan for this. All board agreed, if needed, trainers can be made available.

Motion by Ms. RidesAtTheDoor to adjourn at 7:53 p.m. Second by Ms. Croff. All in favor/Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted:

_____ Carlene Adamson, Board Secretary

_____ Donna Yellow Owl, Board Chairperson

_____ Crystal Tailfeathers, District Clerk