

**ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION
COVID-19 Committee
Conference Call**

**August 11, 2020
10:00 A.M.**

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance on phone conference: Tony Podojil, Jessica Voltolini, and member representatives from 45 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting by phone conference at 10:03 a.m.

State Health Requirements – COVID19

Fall Sports and Student Activities

- OHSAA and Governor's Response

The Governor's office will hold a press conference today at 2pm and we hope to learn more about reopening schools but, do not feel he will be discussing anything that would take away from local control or decision-making including athletics.

Q. How are members feeling about OHSAA changing to a six-game schedule plus playoffs?

A. Districts are concerned that several low-income families will not be able to participate in athletics because of decisions made by OHSAA. Some districts are not able to start August 24 unless they go against their local health directors but will continue with practice because the local health director is using October 1 as a start date. Some districts will continue with practices for contact sports and competition and practice for non-contact sports until further notice. Several are waiting to hear what some of the college's conferences are planning, which will have a real impact on what happens for fall season.

Q. If this season does get suspended is there support to move some of those activities to the Spring?

A. Several districts are in support of Spring, but are facing challenges with OHSAA not allowing it, threatening fines, imposing other sanctions, and not allowing them, to participate in tournaments. Some districts have athletes that play on more than one sport, so moving sports will not work for them if they are scheduled in the same time frame. Even if all three seasons were compressed to fit all sports in, it would be a hardship for some districts based on kids playing more than one sport due to their size.

Q. When ODH posts guidance/direction, do you think the local boards of health will give us something they are willing to support, or do you feel they will step back and say they're just recommendations do what you feel is right. How are we supposed to determine what's right or next level when we are not health experts? What authority do we go to? Do you think the ODH will give direct guidance for every county to use to determine re-opening?

A. This has been a concern. We have local health decisions that contradict what the Governor is advising. There has been hesitancy to tie reopening to the county color coded alert system. It is difficult to make decisions locally if the health departments are basing their guidance on the color-coded system.

Legislation

- **HB 606 - COVID Liability Protection – Status**
- **SB 350 – Transportation**
- **Grant information**

Jessica sent to the members an email regarding the ODE grant information for the statewide broadband grant, program window is open now and schools can apply for the grants through August 24, 2020. Grant amounts can go as high as \$150,000.00 and would be awarded to the districts the week of August 31,2020. The matching component has been removed.

HB606 passed the Senate, amendments were made, its pending in the House awaiting the House to reconvene in September. The only action for this bill is to vote to concur with the Senate changes. They are looking into extending the date for HB606 past the end of this calendar year. It is on Speaker Cupp's radar to address, Jessica will keep us posted on any updates.

HB197 flexibility will expire in December of this calendar year, we will be working with the House and the Senate on additional COVID related possibilities for school after Labor Day and get some of those HB197 flexibilities extended.

SB350 Senator Brenner's transportation bill is an attempt to clarify that transportation to chartered/private schools will still be the responsibility of the public schools even if the public school is not transporting their own students. Jessica will keep us posted on this as conversations progress.

Q. We were not planning on transportation since we are fully remote, do I have to transport students to private, charter, or parochial schools?

A. Right now, you are required, even if you decide not to transport your students by being remote, if they are open and they ask for transportation you are still obligated to transport. Jessica will update should any changes occur with transportation.

Q. Parents are asking, if private schools are allowing a wavier to be signed to allow their kids back in school, why can't parents sign a waiver for the kids to go back to public school?

A. The difference between participating and extracurriculars and going to school is that parents are mandated by law to compulsory attendance of school, therefore, a waiver is not applicable for something that a parent is required by law to do.

ODE Guidance Documents

- Preschool - Restoring Current Ratios
- Attendance Guidance

Preschool - Restoring Current Ratios

The State Board met yesterday, passed, and changed the emergency early childcare rules that were passed last month to revert back to the standard student teacher ratios. ODE licensed childcare aligns with ODJFS licensed childcare providers and can revert back as well. It also adopts the cleaning protocols that ODH put together for childcare centers. Jessica will send out the signed resolution once it is posted.

Attendance Guidance

Make sure your district is following the protocols for attendance (keeping a daily attendance log, how many days students are out, sending out letters) that were sent out in July. You have flexibility but the rules regarding absence and unexcused absence are still in effect.

There is also guidance available from ODE on instructing special education students, we need to be sure we are following federal and state requirements for following IEP's. If you have any questions, we can have a call with special education directors to address the issues or you can email them to us.

Next Conference Call:

The next call will be **August 18, 2020, at 10 AM by phone conference, if needed.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.