

ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION
COVID-19 Committee
Conference Call

May 26, 2020
10:00 A.M.

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance on phone conference: Jessica Voltolini, Tony Podojil, and member representatives from 38 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting by phone conference at 10:00 a.m.

ODE Stakeholder Call – Update

Reset & Restart-Education Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts

- Issue – Transportation Guidelines
- Issue – Health Requirements

Tony shared he had received feedback on the Education Recovery Plan Framework document from Paolo on the list that was sent to ODE after last week’s meeting. Paolo stated the document was designed to guide and give recommendations; final decisions are to be made at the local level. The final document will hopefully be published by June 1. Tony pointed out that local control on some items may be the best strategy, there are others that ODE needs to help decide on such as transportation.

Tony stated he would be on the weekly stakeholder call with Paolo later today and would like to have a list of health guidelines that ODE should decide on, other than transportation. Those items would be ones that are impeding districts from moving forward or making it difficult for districts to make plans.

ODE Health Guidelines

Q. Are the health guidelines just guidance or requirements? I am getting mixed messages on that part of the document.

Q. Taking a student’s temperature when they get on the bus, at the bus stop with no parent, that does have a fever, what to do if you find somebody that is running a temperature? We cannot just send that kid home.

A. What we understand is once the document is finalized, the daily precautions to practice section, which has been coordinated between ODE and the Department of Health, is the part of the document that is required. Once we have the most up-to-date working draft, we will send it out to members.

CDC Health Guidelines

Q. The CDC guidelines recently released call for students to remain in classroom as well as teachers. This simply does not work in junior high, middle school, or a high school setting for several reasons, can you confirm this information?

Q. Can you clarify the requirements in the CDC guidelines related to social distancing? Is it just 6 feet apart or how many students allowed per square footage? I need clarification because to maintain social distancing I have more flexibility versus I can only have 50% capacity or 30% capacity.

A. This is an area we will need clarification from ODE and ODH and how the Reset/Restart Guide meshes with the CDC guidelines. Capacity limits related to bussing, classroom and building levels are needed to help with framing planning for next year.

Community Feedback/Reaction

Q. This is more of a comment than a question but in our communities, we have kids playing sports where the social distancing requirements are not the same as what the schools must follow. Parents are asking why is that okay and not ok for schools. I think each local health department will be asked to respond and will need ODH to intercede. Wouldn't it be better to address these issues now and standardize the answer?

Q. If this is left at a local level, I think we will see the same issues that we had with graduation. We need consistency with these types of actions so we do not have districts and communities being upset that one district can do something but mine cannot.

Q. Can they list the things that are under our control? I do not want anyone to think because of how I do something that I am going against recommendations. If it says requirements and recommendations its basically all requirements.

Q. Franklin County public health commissioners stated I don't have the authority to issue orders so I can't tell you shall not, I can't tell you will not, I'm going to tell you should not, may not, but there is nothing behind it from a legal standpoint. If it is a specific order it needs to come from the Ohio Department of Health.

Q. There are concerns in our community about parents picking up kids in a minivan that are not from the same family but then carpooling them home or to a game. At the same time, we struggle all day to keep students apart and now have non-related kids getting in the same car.

Legislative Impact

Q. Will the legislature step in and change some of the recommendations and requirements made by ODE and ODH? I keep hearing statements from legislators saying we must get this information to schools about what next year is going to look like as soon as possible.

A. The Legislature is back Wednesday and Thursday this week and I believe they will focus on topics for school districts and try to get clarity on what is needed for reopening. Jessica and

Tony have been advocating for legislative relief for next school year and are hoping to have clarity on those items by the time the General Assembly leaves for summer break.

College Credit Plus

Q. With our college credit plus being an option for students in 7th through 12th grade, I have heard that when they open colleges campus classrooms this fall they are allowed to have as many as 15 students or more, is that accurate? If so, then how does that apply to what we do as an educational institution, are there different guidelines for universities, for high school students?

A. Once we see the final health regulations related to both colleges and public schools, we will share that with members. This could be a conflict.

Preschool Guidelines

Q. Are preschoolers under child-care or are they under what is going to be the proposed school rules?

A. Tony talked with Stephanie about that last week and she will follow up with him this week to provide clarity around that issue. We will send that out as soon as we have that information, but Tony thinks we will fall under the childcare guidelines for summer and then at the start of the new school year it would fall under school specific guidelines. Once confirmed Jessica will email members.

Legislative Planning

- AHQE - COVID 19 Education Issues and Legislative Relief

Jessica stated the legislature is meeting this week on Wednesday and Thursday, with summer recess starting the week of June 15th. They will be addressing the Capital Re-appropriations Bill. HB670 Capital Re-appropriations was introduced last week in the House, sponsored by Rep. Mirren. Senator Dolan is going to unveil the Senate version of the Capital Re-appropriation bill in the Senate Finance committee today. Tony and Jessica will continue to advocate for the items on our Legislative relief list with both the House, the Senate and the Governor's office. We have connected with the legislative team at ODE, we will have more to report on this next week.

Budget

- Reductions to FY20 Budget – Dolan Proposal

Tony has been communicating with Senator Dolan in respect to the budget cuts for school districts and according to Senator Dolan, he is hoping to introduce an amendment that would help restore some of the funding cuts.

Q. On Dolan's proposal, can that be line item vetoed by the Governor?

A. Yes, but Senator Dolan has been working with the administration as we have, and we are hopeful that if it gets through the legislative process the Governor will approve it.

Q. On the furlough issue, is this something that the General Assembly is willing to consider?

A. There is still no final clarity on what may or may not pass in the next three weeks but the conversations with respect to the furlough concept have been well received in both the House and the Senate.

Note: Tony spoke with Melissa Cooper with OAFT, following her testimony last week. She in turn spoke with OEA about licensure flexibility. He shared that our intent was not to hire other people to replace people but move people we currently have into positions that we have a need to fill.

Jessica will do a comprehensive update for everyone after summer recess to see where some of the other education issues stand.

Q. Has there been any resurgence of discussion around a common start time for schools in the fall?

A. Not currently.

Note: Jessica will be emailing the third amended school building closure order with updated guidance with respect to the conditioning and training and use of facilities to everyone today.

Next Conference Call:

The next call will be **June 2, 2020, at 10 AM by phone conference.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:55a.m.