

SPS-Safe School Reopening Task Force – Sub Committee Meeting Notes

Date: 6/19/2020

Committee Name: Secondary Ed Model Sub Committee

Attendee Names: Adam Swinyard, Heather Bybee, Scott Kerwien, Rob Reavis, Josh Harrison, Susie Gerard, Joel Evanson, Mark Lund, Ken Schutz, Cindy McMahon, Laura Treece, Erik Powell, Megan McLean, Eric Hauck, Scott Detlefs, Daniel Nord, Ellen Gillespie, Bobbi Konshuk, Shamerica Nakamura, Bryce Wilcox, Ashley Coulson, Dean Tyler-Babkirk, John Parks, Stephanie Splater, Carol Pederson, Jen Piper, Theresa Meyer

Meeting Notes:

Heather Bybee summarized Tuesday's meeting and conversation around maximizing face to face instruction but noting at secondary that is looking most likely an A/B schedule and questions from there about blocks vs. 6 period days.

Adam reiterated the purpose of this group is to develop recommendation(s) based on guiding questions to help form the creation of a safe school reopening plan for the fall of 2020.

Recommendation Development

Present draft recommendations based on input and district variables (budget financing, space availability etc.)

Solicit edits and suggestions

Seek approval from the group (this will be through polling or thumbs up, topic depending)

Most of today will be spent talking about the model. Hope to have conversation of finite details i.e. which digital tools for live meetings – not a linear process as we need to make some decisions based on timelines.

What model will be used to provide educational services?

- Maximize face to face instruction within the safety guidelines
 - Reduce class size by increasing sections and using additional classroom spaces or
 - Rotating schedule to reduce the number of students on campus at any one time (e.g. A/B schedule)

We've been modeling out based on space and number of students enrolled in each course to see could we meet social distancing requirements and if not how many additional classroom spaces and class sections would we need? That will look different at each school based on size, etc. For context, Elementary sub-committee met and took a poll on thoughts and ideas relative to this topic. Elementary group perspective – asked similar questions - about 1/3 of their group wants us to model it out to see how many we can get face to face on a daily basis and 1/3 felt it should be A/B schedule for a safety basis and over 1/3 felt like it should be a combination of the two - maybe primary come every day and intermediate come on a rotating schedule.

Thoughts, ideas, wonderings about the 2 different pathways?

- Leaning towards the rotating schedule based on conversations and thoughts from first meeting related to number of contacts. Not so much about staggering passing time, it is about keeping kids 6 feet apart when you have 20, 23 or 25 kids rotating through, if those 20 kids went to 10 different rooms for next period and now in contact with kids that have been in 10 other rooms then you're talking 200 contacts made between students so limiting the number of students on campus that cuts at least in 1/2 if not 1/4 if we could do a grade level creativity. Reasoning behind her choice for the block rotating A/B schedule - to limit contacts.

Clarifying question – Favor Rotating A/B Schedule and a Block or Rotating Schedule and 6 period day?

- See's thinking behind the block – less passing time and groupings of kids together in a day. You'd only see a given group of kids one day a week. Thought about Mark's relationship building comment and try to do

something where we can pivot one way or the other, if we have to pivot backwards to a distance model. Having something more normal - having 1 day a week doesn't seem close to normal. Thinking a 6 period day and for ease of master schedules, if you have 150 students in 5 classes and cut relatively in $\frac{1}{2}$ it puts us in the best place to pivot one way or the other.

- Doesn't feel good about either model to ensure safety and thinks it will wear down teachers quickly. Maybe we could talk about hybrid options to get kids on campus but be safer for everyone in the long run and help transition easier back to full online learning if we have to.

Elementary is gravitating to hybrid concept. Everybody shouldn't be A/B and know we can't have everyone here every day so need to be intentional in finding a creative solution.

- Megan's comment last time about competency-based learning and flipped classrooms resonated— now is the time to think about that. Ellen's live streaming ideas were good. Dan had very important/good ideas to consider about specialists. Mark – emphasizing competency-based learning and building relationships too were important ideas. Thinks we can accomplish some cool things with a hybrid model that wouldn't limit us to the either/or we've been talking about so far.
- Need to be looking at relationship building if we have to go into distance learning and not rejuvenging schedules. Would want to have been with those same kids the entire time instead of removing people from schedules and building larger classes. Thinks the A/B model is a better choice to do that.
- Skill Center – Reminder, we'll need to be looking at ways to incorporate their schedule into the other schedules of the High Schools to include outlying schools and transportation – just another twist to throw in there
- Agree there were creative ideas - Erik, when you talk about a hybrid for the secondary system – what is your thinking of structure of that? How many kids, days of week are they attending, what are we doing in our time together?
 - Core competencies key targets for class hit those and if I can meet with kids 1 day a week on video chat and set up the project for the week and say this is the target, assignment, clarify any questions, 20-30 minutes. 2. Produce video on Loom or live stream and extended video to further instruction. 3. One day a week, have scheduled standard access time on campus for groups of 5-10 students to sit in the classroom in a safe manner to discuss a tutorial type of model (Oxford, Cambridge they go to tutoring sessions) maybe once or twice a week on a staggered model. This would provide opportunities to work with kids in addition to emails and other ways to contact students. Thinks he could make it work doing it that way and would have more contact than he did this spring but would feel safer about the work environment for colleagues and students.
- Science equipment – wants kids to get some hands-on time in the fall so maybe it's the content and why she's gravitating to the A/B schedule. If 15 kids in the room and 7 sets of equipment would like to see a way to get hands on during the days they are at school.
- Could the staggered sessions be used for labs or for band for example and make it work for different subject areas?

As we process through, we need to be thinking about how it would work for transportation – could save us money, could be pro/con. How does it work with Feeding – how to ensure kids get meals. Looking at it through all lenses- the teaching and learning, basic needs, operation lenses; there could be pros and cons as we look through creative solutions we could find cost savings or find barriers that are tough to overcome.

- Meal part could be taken care of similarly to how we did it daily this spring – was a smooth operation Could still come through to get meal on campus even if not coming for a small group session. Transportation- not sure but thinks the cost involved with that would feel safer than the cost involved of keeping down the pandemic, thinks health and safety would outweigh the bus routes, thinks we can make it work. Was thinking about safety on campus.
- How often would my student be on campus each week?
 - If teacher met with video chat or flipped video/live stream version could see a 30 minute staggered tutorial maybe once a week to clarify the work, answer questions, help with any concept trouble.
- So my kid would be at school for like a $\frac{1}{2}$ day a week?

- Could be, to meet with different teachers
- You gravitate to a continuous distance learning model and limit the on-campus time?
 - Yes-limited access for safety sake. Not only do students need to be 6 ft apart but also saw in the guidelines they need to face forward. We need to get smaller anyway and limit the on-campus time. Especially for secondary, not talking about elementary. When the other wave comes, and we have to go fully online, it would not be a huge transition. Won't be such a reshuffle to take out the small group tutorial part of the week and would still have 2 contact opportunities with live stream/flip version.
- Curious to hear math perspective on that model
 - More days in class with kids helps build the relationships and can't get anywhere with them without those relationships. Likes rotating the 6 period days, maximizing it and not overstressing them in block schedules. Also if going to flip the classroom and change the way we progress through hit using competency based model can make any of it work and the kids would be met wherever they are and they would progress as they check off boxes.
- Idea shared from another teacher - Rotating every other day and ½ days in class and developing relationships with one group of students. A group with you at the MS model – 8:50-11:30 a group with you in homeroom and assisting them traveling through competency based learning models from all of their teachers so you'd still be planning and prepping for 5 rosters and have one group on A days and one group on B days. Role would not be restricted to your subject areas- could still do your content live lessons with them but facilitating them and accessing them through other course work. Lunch delivered in classroom and then go home and teacher time for lunch, prep, and virtual office hours for remainder of workday for kids to reach out with subject questions but all virtual.
 - Worried about families planning – it would be A/B, A/B, A rotation and not as nice and clean as if you always go to school on M/W. Capitalizing on relationships in a different way but with those you try to work with in person every day. Produces minimal movement of students through the building but not entire 6 hours of them in the same spot.
- Heard something similar -homeroom or advisory room – if every teacher is required to have that, it already lowers class size because no teachers are on prep- might be able to get more students in the building at one time and not necessarily go to A/B rotation because every teacher carries 20-23 kids and because everyone is teaching it might fit everybody. Could have district level content specialists giving out curriculum and we become facilitators - kids are 1:1 they could watch the content teacher live stream the topic and could even be typing in chat questions back but then you don't have that content teacher. Stopping in the middle of the day and maybe 2nd half of the day is for sign up for labs and things that have to be done in person or get specific help during those times. Maybe that's getting too outside the box but a blend of both worlds.
- Likes the home-base idea conceptually and it gets at some of the relationship pieces. I can let go of the fact my kids won't get hands on science in that model and would have to be simulations so another teacher outside my content area would have to do the work. Trying to keep an open mind outside my own content area and my building – that type of model helps with the concern about safety and limiting contacts. Not sure how to pivot back to regular school works out with those 2 systems and still trying to understand how to get kids on campus-enough to get served in small groups.
- Wonder how parent would feel in any of these models. We might be ready to move education forward in a larger step than the community is. Triangulate keeping staff safe, meeting interest of kids and addressing needs of our community in terms of how they view education and what role the content teacher plays in the students' experience. Not sure all of the community is there. Will support whatever model we come up with as a system that gets kids back and engaged but curious how any parent would feel about the models that are new thinking.
- Thinks we'll have reactions all across the board – some will be open to trying new things and some will say ridiculous, go back to 6 period day. We have to do what is best and safe for people. Not ideal, none of it is - still in a life boat but let's make it a good one for the next year. To clarify, interest is to minimize time on campus because doesn't think it's safe to bring people back. If there is a miraculous disappearance of COVID, great let's go back but don't see that being very likely. We aren't taking it very seriously, as a country, state, city, people not wearing masks etc. Just doesn't think it is safe to come back to school in large numbers full time.

Thought Exchange earlier and subsequent emails show polarization in our community – group who feel like schools need to be open and back to business and group who feel it's not safe and shouldn't go back until vaccine is available. Reality

to grapple with and this group will make a recommendation and decision-making bodies will decide how we go forward along with conversations with SEA will have huge impact on what it looks like. Additional complexity is the confusion coming from the state level with mixed messaging and that makes it hard for families in the community to determine what they are comfortable with – saying open schools and need to get back to school and face to face instruction yet there are restrictive guidelines and serious health concerns that come with that. Recognize we will have varying opinions and some in our community will be very uncomfortable with what we come up with so important that we need to come up with as many creative ideas we can process through - to recognize as many view points as possible.

Quick Poll – Temperature check on where this group is trending

What do you favor?

- A. Every kid every day
- B. Rotating A/B schedule
- C. Distance Learning w/Limited Access
- D. Other creative ideas

Results

5% on every kid every day (more sections/more classroom spaces)

85% - rotating schedule

2% - thinking distance learning w/limited building access

8% - still wondering about other creative ideas

That helps to know we might need to be focusing in on some sort of rotating schedule so hope to have more information for the next meeting.

Digital Tools - LMS

What digital tools will teachers use for assignments and activities (LMS) learning management system?

- Use Blackboard Ultra as the foundation and utilize Microsoft Teams integration to move between blackboard and teams

What digital tools will teachers use for live meetings?

- Use Microsoft Teams for live meetings

Blackboard is releasing an update called Blackboard Ultra – significantly improved in functionality – thinking it would be the foundation where people would start and go first and integrations to Blackboard where people would move in between blackboard and teams – kids would log onto Blackboard and find assignments and announcements and as different assignments and activities are facilitated through Teams there would be movement back and forth between the two. If group is supportive of that direction – intention is to rebuild courses to more closely match classroom pedagogy. It won't be the SVL shell – we are talking about a rebuild and so it's not what they've known it to be. Rationale - Heard from families too many platforms and a lot of frustration around that.

Teams is not an LMS - not designed to do that. A lot of holes if we said only use TEAMS as one stop shop. You have used these tools in recent years.

Thoughts wonderings?

- Does Blackboard Ultra talk to Powerschool - integration wise?
 - We have that question into Blackboard.
- Staff survey overwhelming choosing – TEAMS
 - Problem is it's not a LMS
- Can teams be all we need or do we need Blackboard?
 - Everyone would have to build their own shell in Teams and you can systematize it at Blackboard, push it out and people can adapt and personalize it. Open to feedback and not married to one outcome but looking through the lens of what work we can get done to support the most amount of people.
- We built a summer school class in Teams and Blackboard and you can copy the shell in TEAMS as well. Found instructions to do it – it's possible – might have to be an administrator.

- People like Teams. People had never used it and overwhelmingly like it. That was just over a few months of use. People don't like Blackboard – we hear people don't like it. Can make Teams work long term. People want to continue using it in their classrooms when we go back. Would be odd after the survey response to say we are using Blackboard.
- Agree, but we need to make sure we think through that we could be in this for the long haul so if a yearlong or ¾ year in a virtual environment – can Teams do what we need it to do and a one stop shop platform? No vested interest from a central level but we need to be sure we can support it from a central level and roll things out so that everyone doesn't have to build their own shell. Worry that if there is a variable they don't know of, we set people up for failure. Need to set people up to be successful.
- Identical course built in Blackboard and Teams could have the group get access to both shells to play around. That would be helpful.
- FAQ would be good for differences between Blackboard and Blackboard Ultra
- Anything out there we can see in Blackboard Ultra? – Perception of what Blackboard is and maybe it's not what Ultra is and so it's hard to make decisions on old stuff.
- Could get this group access to it on Monday. – Understand the perception and trying to balance the needs of many – can definitely get access
- Used TEAMS all year long to manage grades and assignments and it worked well for traditional classroom or distance learning. Her class was low stress because kids knew what to expect. Heard Powerschool grades from Teams would be loaded straight in. Can't confirm but that's what she heard. Scott will need to confirm.
- Powerschool Pro is coming – only little tweak for Teams would be if we could enter the grades into Teams and they somehow go into the gradebook.
- Middle school – had nothing, so we created our own work –Spent last 2 months creating a shell in Blackboard to be used next year and wants to be sure they didn't waste their time so whatever is created can be moved to Teams or Blackboard Ultra so that all can be using and not each person spending time creating their own wheel.
- Kids prefer Teams to Blackboard by far since it integrates to Microsoft - what kids are used to – their email is in Microsoft –Super concerned if we go to a different system with a long standing reputation of people hate it, even if it is a new ultra-version. Understand the parent frustration with multiple systems but if we try to add a new system to an already worn out group of people- concerned about that. Especially after the survey results.
- LC teachers ½ on blackboard ½ on Teams - no matter what we choose - ½ will need to learn a new system but if go with a brand new Blackboard, 100% will have to learn. Also not sure how we are solving anything they were concerned about if we are using Blackboard for the course and Teams for their meetings. Still in multiple platforms.
 - It was more TEAMS could be nestled in Blackboard
- Concern about giving people more step of having to go into Blackboard and then into Teams. If we can make Teams work and it sounds like people can, why not focus energies on that?

If we can mass create shells in Teams, that will help us. Regardless, we need to be clear about the messaging –If we recommend Teams because of these reasons - need to state pros and cons. One of the cons is the teacher will have to build their own shell and input their own content. Need to be clear on the front end about the decision. Messaging and rationale is important.

- Wondering about building our own content, aren't we building that as a district?
 - We are looking at having sub committees to the sub committees to build courses out based on new scope and sequence –
 - Seems like we have a lot of that. Doesn't seem like we'd be going from ground zero.
 - Arts in general all set up on TEAMS and common files can be shared, e.g. files between Ferris and LC. Have layers and as a classroom teacher I could access a district level file and pull it down and copy it.
- How easy is it to replicate material for next year? Can you copy the shell?
 - Pretty sure you can archive them over and all saved on Office 365

Adam – heard resoundingly Teams should be our secondary platform
Thumbs up? Yes

Follow Up/Next Steps –

Next Meeting – The Teams decision will help us flow through some next decisions. If Teams is the platform then use of Teams live meetings seems to make sense but we'll want to talk about Zoom because so many teachers said strongly preferred Zoom and only want to use it - mostly because of brady bunch view to see kids faces. Teams is increasing the number of faces you can see at one time so hopefully that will resolve some of that concern.

We will continue to discuss the educational model and start talking about how we will move forward and adjust our curriculum and scope and sequences and how to roll out.

Next Meeting Date: June 23, 2020