

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

Date: 8/4/2020

Committee Name: Elementary Educational Model

Member Names: Adam Swinyard, Heather Bybee, Debbie Oakley, Dana Myers, Karin Thompson, Tricia Gessele, Cindy Leonard, James Russell, Carol Pederson, Stephanie Splater, Betsy Weigle, Tricia Kannberg, Clint Price, Sara Ball-Vandeboncoeur, Bonnie Williams, Sue Pfiefer, Patty Baer, Suzanne Bantilan, Corina Fletcher, Samuel Rasmussen, Melissa Raymond, Melissa Percy, Meredith McNally, Brian Trimble

Meeting Notes:

Heather began the meeting by clarifying various options that elementary families will have to choose from.

- If they Choose Spokane Virtual Academy – that means as a family, for entire year, they are choosing to do this – thinking of it like an Option Program. It's a one year, not continuing, COVID response program. Decided to call it Spokane Virtual Academy instead of SPS at Home because it needed to feel like it is base placed. SPS at Home was confusing because we are all at home to start out the school year so that was confusing for staff and families. SVL - Spokane Virtual Learning can be online and is self-paced and is different from Spokane Virtual Academy. If they don't do Spokane Virtual Academy, then they start they year with their teacher online and then if/when we transition back to brick and mortar schoolhouse, those students follow the teacher to the classroom. So families have to be ok to move back to school in this option.
- Spokane Virtual Academy won't be the traditional SVL which is self-paced and ALE so different expectations and requirements
- Spokane Virtual Academy will mirror very closely to what we do in the classroom.

Heather shared the update on the website if they haven't seen it. Web page - District Back to School 2020 –nothing 100% finalized so just draft and ideas and will see this groups influence in our modeling. Heather shared the sample student day schedules for elementary and secondary. (See samples at end of these notes.)

Elementary

- Teacher Readiness time is called WAC in our lingo but they changed the terminology for families to understand since they would not know what WAC time is.
- Class meetings and then 3 instructional blocks in the morning. Those would be broken up and would mirror a master schedule like given change in instructional time.
- This would be the whole district bell schedule
- One-hour lunch allows for time to go get lunch at school if need be (still working through lunch models)
- One-hour collab – gives teacher opportunity to stop, breathe, connect and take care things they need to.
- Personalized learning block – opportunity to invite small groups of students for additional support.

Example - 3 -4 kids struggling with a math idea - teacher might invite them back and have the other students working on Dreambox during that time

- 2:30-3 – parent access time
- 3:00-3:30 - WAC time

Secondary

- Still calling them class periods – it's the lingo people are used to
- Advisory – 3 periods a day,

- Lunch
- personalized learning period
- parent access time
- WAC/release time

FAQ is also posted and 3 webinars have been held.

Built in commonly asked questions and how we responded – not all details are there since we are still working through some of those. We chose not to send it out because it is dynamic and changing every day.

Questions?

- About lunch and overlap of the instructional small group block and wondering how kids would make it to those coming back from lunch? It's why we scheduled the independent work time/play after lunch and before the small group instruction blocks. Allows for more time to get where they need to be.
- Specialists – Are they only teaching during the 3 blocks?
 - Held a place in instructional time for specialists so really anytime from 8:30 through the end of the third instructional block but for personalized learning periods, it would be good for specialists to do something additional for enrichment. The amount of instruction and workload for specialists should mirror one another.
- Would they have the expectation for an hour then?
 - We are working through the models – there are variables to the impact of shrinking things down. It will probably be building to building based on the scale, schedule and availability.
- What about interventionists?
 - Would fit just like a master schedule and how it is built. Afternoon blocks would be pulling small groups like they support – if you're in the building and supporting someone for one half hour and another class/student in another half hour.

We tried to mirror classroom experience as close as possible for kids to have same supports, opportunities, and key instructions – tried to be thoughtful on kids and teacher experience.

Question/Discussion - Heather hopes to talk with this group and hear their thoughts, knowing who they represent and the audience, what are the key factors we should be considering in communication?

We know people need the right information to be empowered to tackle what we need to in order to get this right.

Heather would like to hear from Brian Trimble for the parent perspective

- We know childcare is huge – parents are excited about Microsoft Teams platform – Brian has had conversations with parents for several weeks and the bigger questions they are asking is about childcare and their child sitting in front of a computer for 6 hours – worried about that. Brian's childcare center has a product in summer camp – interim camp and they are planning on continuing on for the school year – does have teachers supporting these students.
- Someone commented about a self-paced idea to have students move at the pace they need to.
- Requires a lot of labor in a childcare environment to supervise students during that whole time and if listening to instruction and trying to do an activity – everyone is panicking – (Parents) Very limited capacity – trying to connect with early learning providers and school age providers, they just don't have capacity. Parents are scared and don't know what to do.

Heather thinks they aren't alone – we are all uneasy and anxious about starting a school year in this environment. We are all in the job and roles we are in because we believe in public education as a bridge of hope for highly impacted communities – we hear it and are committed to a positive approach – don't have to like the decision but all have to get behind it and say we are going to make the best of it.

Heather is excited to see first week of school - she knows people will be creative and come up with things we never thought of.

Not 6 hours in terms of model but it will be age appropriate. No one is intending for a 5 year old to be locked to their computer- it will be catch and release, read a story, talk about it, release you and then come back for the next item.

Wouldn't be appropriate to have a 5 year old from 7:30-12:00. Within each block there will be a sequence.

- No great answer and fear is they are having to sit in front of a computer screen all day. Obviously the 6th grader is going to have a lot of self directed time – more than a 1st grader.
- People worried about older siblings at home and having to help younger ones through the educational process. Families feel like if they fail their kid this one time they have failed for life. Trying to ensure parents that kids are resilient and that if we miss something it's going to be ok.
- Having a recording component would be great access for kids to get snip-its.
- Valuable feedback around the option for kids to have other ways to access the experience.

There are and will be more childcare questions– we understand the issues. All of those challenges are being thought through. We won't have a perfect answer – won't be able to make it work for every family in every environment and will try to make it work for the most amount of kids and knowing the right people will be there to support kids in their experience.

Next Question - If you were a classroom teacher (not on this group) – what would you want to hear to feel better? Other things people are dying to know, to be sure we include?

- Getting a lot of texts on childcare and how am I supposed to be working 6 hours and care for my own kids?
- Do I still have to move my furniture?
 - Hot off the press – yes because we are still hopeful we will get to come back – if not moving it now, when is the right time, right now we have staff that can model the classrooms out so now this is the best time to do it. Can they extend the deadline? We are butting up on other things and trying to utilize the workforce we have.
- Mark's email said if starting remotely, might be delayed so now people are asking am I supposed to go to my building and do this now?
 - We are working with elementary principals on communication - getting bombarded with questions so ensure they are all on the same page.
- Removing furniture and stuff – 3rd grade currently at 23 /24 students would the plan then be to create a new class before start of school year?
 - No one really knows who is in their class or how many they have because we haven't done virtual registration for virtual academy so decision to go full remote will influence decision; we will get registration info and then look at staffing numbers. All of that relies on registration.
- Teacher asked about the furniture – 16 tables in her classroom is plan to be swapped out for desks because she can't sit 20 kids 6 feet apart?
 - Can't speak to it specifically. Part of reason they want furniture removed – so they can know the space and they could switch things out, It's not something she should fret over, not her problem to solve as long as it's not her personal furniture.
- Some teachers are on the hoarding side – they have accumulated furniture and want to keep it in their classroom. K teachers concerned about losing what they have worked hard to accumulate (district furniture) will it be labeled for return or is it lost?
 - Clint met with Justin – custodial supervisor – in one room at Moran they set up 21 tables and chairs so depending on the room it is doable in some places. Clint's big concern –it took him a long time to get a kidney shaped table when he was teaching. They are labeling with a room number. Will suggest labeling on items so there isn't a furniture blitz.
- Furniture is something people want. So are we saying furniture will stay on site?

- Where on site that it works? We don't have a mass storage facility – so for Moran Prairie-they will use some space they wall off on the sides of the MP room – need to keep gym free and some other areas – some have storage under the overhang. Buildings will find where they can to tuck and pack.
- Because of SEA survey – people are asking are we going to be required to be at school to teach remotely? Tons of texts from parents who are wondering if I'm at school and now I need day care. Also wonder about a slower start – time to get to know who the families are, if they have tech, have 2 days and then 4 days so that 3rd week can be scheduled for diving into learning.
 - We are actively negotiating the calendar. Shared interests in concepts and ideas brought forward. Want relationships established with classroom teacher. Want students to know what school looks like and access and supports to help and what training is in place to ensure onboarded, supported and prepared. Stay tuned - optimistic– that is what we are working through is full distance learning – we are close and with the calendar pieces we are right there –it's the next piece to lock down as we know we need to move on. So many questions and back map our thinking and preparations.
- Any word about SEA survey because it caused concerns for some. It asked – are we going to be required in the building to do all of that teaching – access to materials. You know teachers they are the worst at following directions – as soon as you put us back in the building it probably wouldn't be the safest. The survey asked about thoughts about teaching remotely. Some teachers have spotty internet access at home and they are hoping to be in the school teaching. Some hoping to be home because of childcare and some that want to be a blend of both.
 - Heather – thinks she can safely share – current conversation is that teachers should teach where they feel safest and most effective – for some that will be the classroom with all of their supplies and for some it might be their kitchen table and for some it might be a combination of both – not absolute yet but it's the current conversation they are having.

Schools will be open and people will be able to come into the buildings to teach. Safety protocols will need to be utilized to access a building.

- Hope we can go into a building – happy to go into it and be in the barrier of my classroom not having to interact with people – depends on the person and what they are comfortable with.
- People were wondering about how rigid it is – some are younger teachers and can't wait to get back into it. People will be happy if there is an option.
- Is there an Update on Express – I would rather go into my gym to teach remotely but if Express is in there invading my space?
 - We are working through option of express childcare and student support- having that conversation this afternoon – good questions.
- Having information about clearly articulated options for the which model the family is choosing will be important. Something that explains what they are choosing. Communication about expectations will be important. We will need clear parameters for student expectations since we will be moving and jumping different ships. The Logistics – real time teaching and what that means - we expect students to be in front of the computer dressed and have eaten breakfast, not eating in front of the computer – if we want to build structure and have clear expectations but need some of that type of communication to parents.
 - Some of that is expectation for beginning of year, etiquette of the environment – part of the back to school pieces we are looking at. Agree on the clearly articulated options and implications of those decisions. Now with Spokane Virtual Academy that is people's placement – and only in exceptional circumstances we would say ok, you can come back.
- Subs – will a teacher have a sub if they are sick?
 - We are still working through those pieces – we aren't there yet but we will need to talk through those pieces. Subs for backfill of sick family care, whatever.
- Classes will fit the contract limits – if A/B schedule
- Student Tips for video calls was shared by Betsy Weigle in response to the online etiquette comment.

Heather's take aways from our current discussion:

- Need positive same messaging platform, same schedule across the system, at least thinking right now.
- Strong plan and communication around childcare for staff and impacted community
- Registration plan – options clearly articulated and what that means for families.

Anything Else?

- Parents need to know that students will get technology. Parents telling me her are going to buy technology – She is saying don't do that. Super important families know that. Not just a computer per household or family but one per student.
 - Working through details of that plan and timeline, want families to have the resources they need so when school starts, they are confident and ready day 1.
- Some were asking for earphones too if they have multiple family members. Will those be provided as well?
 - Understand the need for headphones – we have not secured enough headphones and it's not even possible as they are a hot commodity and we cannot use bond dollars for purchasing headphones and generally site discretionary dollars would be used for those types of things. device first was the priority – and start with that.

Registration form to families where they make their choice – we haven't fully finished staffing and then we will be building our staffing based on in person instruction. 2 choices – Spokane Virtual Academy or Remote Learning and when we go back to in person – face to face model those remote learners go back to the school.

We don't know guidelines yet for when face to face is feasible. Our understanding is health district is coming out with guidelines. No longer shelter in place and mandatory buildings be closed – emergency access. – Phase 2 no more than 5 people in a room masked and socially distanced.

Could see the guidelines be a deciding point for families. We are hoping for that info so they can make the most informed decision they can.

Message will go to all families with the site identified and then if a family doesn't choose another option, we will assume they are with their home school class teacher.

Webinars – not sure if this Thursday has a topic other than responding to questions. Geared those webinars for families – if you ask a question in a webinar as a staff person and it doesn't get answered and was teacher specific, that's why because it was geared for community.

This Thursday will likely be all about distance learning – technology, lunch, how the year will start, how much on computer.

Other questions?

Everyone is signed up for summer institute - super excited. 2020-21 PERT is available.

- Heard at some point that specialists might be seeing all grade band together – like all of 3rd grade
 - There might be a possibility that some classes need to double up but that would be in partnership with the principal. That's to ensure instructional time is same as others. Personalized learning period could be a time for specialists to do something extra and fun.
- How do we use classified staff? If hands on piece, they could put a kit together, could still use classified workforce. If we go science and hands on.
 - We'll have to work through science and the experiences and resources behind it to ensure it's equitable and sustainable.
- Grading practices?

- not sure anything explicit to say – already working on revising the amount of standards to be supported. E.g. What they are measuring in health and fitness has to be completely different. Working on a revamped grade level/snap shot that would encompass focused areas for next year.
- The messaging last spring was do no harm – and then older kids were done because they said it was not going to make any difference.
 - We learned a lot from spring and OSPI expectations will be different in the fall. Actively take attendance, give regular feed back and kids are engaging and showing progress.
- Students at high risk whether medical or academic – and how those kids and parents have understanding about what is going to be looked at?
 - We are looking through those details about the hierarchy of needs and resources needed to be supported.
- Teach at Mullan Road and if she wanted to invite students to the independent work time she could invite 3-4 students for face to face instruction?
 - Yes, we are working through those examples of what could happen and talking through priority groups that are farthest away from educational justice - so many layers of that conversation.

Follow Up/Next Steps: If there are other thoughts email Heather – want as much consistency and calibration. We will probably set up another meeting in 2 weeks. Hopefully we will be done and have an MOU signed and this group can all go be messengers in their communities.

Melissa Percy wanted thanked everyone - District and SEA for working so hard on this. Have heard how well the SEA and district partnership is and they love the talking and listening on both sides so that’s a huge pat on the back to everybody.

Next Meeting Date: 8/18/2020

Sample Elementary Student Day Schedule*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-8:50 a.m.	Real Time Class Meeting: Social-Emotional Learning				
8:50-9:50 a.m.	Real Time Instruction Block 1				
9:50-10:50 a.m.	Real Time Instruction Block 2				
10:50-11:50 a.m.	Real Time Instruction Block 3				
11:50 a.m.-12:50 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:50-1:50 p.m.	Independent Work Time/Play				

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1:50-2:30 p.m.	Real Time Personalized Learning Block/Support & Enrichment				
2:30-3 p.m.	Student & Parent Access Time				

- *Teachers will provide breaks and transitions from block to block, as well as brain breaks during class periods. Real Time Instruction Blocks will include teacher-led instruction on literacy, math, social studies, science, PE, music, art, and technology.

Sample Secondary Student Day Schedule*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-8:50 a.m.	Real Time Advisory (Social-Emotional Learning)				
8:50-9:50 a.m.	Real Time 1st Period	Real Time 4th Period	Real Time 1st Period	Real Time 4th Period	8:50-9:20 1st Pd 9:20-9:50 2nd Pd
9:50-10:50 a.m.	Real Time 2nd Period	Real Time 5th Period	Real Time 2nd Period	Real Time 5th Period	9:50-10:20 3rd Pd 10:20-11:00 4th Pd
10:50-11:50 a.m.	Real Time 3rd Period	Real Time 6th Period	Real Time 3rd Period	Real Time 6th Period	11:00-11:30 5th Pd 11:30-12:00 6th Pd
11:50 a.m.-12:50 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:50-1:50 p.m.	Independent Work Time: Periods 4-6	Independent Work Time: Periods 1-3	Independent Work Time: Periods 4-6	Independent Work Time: Periods 1-3	Independent Work Time: Periods 1-3
1:50-2:30 p.m.	Real Time Personalized Learning Period/Support & Enrichment				
2:30-3 p.m.	Student & Parent Access Time				

- *Teachers will provide breaks and transitions from block to block, as well as brain breaks during class periods.