

FINNEYTOWN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regular Meeting, February 22, 2022
Finneytown Secondary Campus Media Center
Open Forum 6:00pm
Regular Meeting 6:30pm

The Finneytown Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, February 22, 2022, in the Media Center of the Finneytown Secondary Campus, 8916 Fontainebleau Terrace, Cincinnati, OH 45231. Mr. Gast, Ms. Lee, Ms. McMullen, Mr. Rea and Mr. Reeb were present. The President called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

14-22 Ms. McMullen moved, seconded by Mr. Rea, that the Board approve the agenda as presented and amended. The President declared the motion passed.

15-22 Mr. Rea moved, seconded by Mr. Gast, that the Board approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022. The President declared the motion passed.

Administrative Report

Officer Emily Smith, SRO – discussed the following:

- The School Resource Officer (SRO) provides an important liaison role between the school district and the police department. Specialized SRO training is required to qualify for this position. I am a Finneytown alumni. The SRO is not engaged in law enforcement or the enforcement of school policy, which is administration's role. The focus is on safety, prevention, and relationship building with the students and staff and community. I work to keep situations from escalating, to communicate with administration, and to connect students with Catalyst and mental health options, when appropriate. If a situation becomes dangerous, Springfield Township Police is a phone call away.

Dr. Laurie Banks, Superintendent – discussed the following:

- Long Range Facilities Committee –
 - This committee was formed in February as an advisory committee to strategically review our comprehensive long-term district master plan.
 - Items being reviewed include: a Finneytown Elementary project update, use and/or disposition of Brent and Whitaker facilities and sites, and plans for project renovations not funded by the OFCC construction project and bond issue (i.e. competition gymnasium, performing arts center, administration building, ball fields, etc.).
 - The committee is also discussing recent OFCC communications, including: possibility of an OFCC Phase II funding offer this spring, an anticipated major increase in the OFCC construction project 2022 cost set (inflation brought on by COVID supply chain issues), and a significant decrease in district enrollment (also impacted by COVID), which negatively impacts state funding.
 - The members of the committee were selected based on their expertise, perspective, and the various roles they serve in the district and community.

The committee plans to meet bi-weekly throughout the spring. Elevar Design Group is facilitating the committee's work.

- The committee has already met twice, affirming the continuing appropriateness of a two-campus solution.
- Kindergarten Registration – is coming soon with an in-person registration planned for March 3rd. Foreign language liaisons will be in attendance. Information is posted on the website and Facebook and will be in the next Community Update.
- Mental Health Services – a update will be provided at our next meeting
- Finneytown Branding – the final package is complete. Information will be on the district website and in the Community Update.
- Transportation Audit –
 - The district engaged OSBA to conduct a transportation audit to increase service and efficiency for this year to overcome the driver shortages, and next year under the new elementary building configuration.
 - The most effective and efficient building start times and end times identified in the transportation study in response to the consolidation of Brent Elementary and Whitaker Elementary into the new Finneytown Elementary were identified as follows:
 - 1) Finneytown Elementary 9:00AM – 3:30 PM
 - 2) Finneytown Secondary 7:50AM – 2:50 PM
 - 3) X-Period 7:05 AM – 7:45 PM

Instructional hours are the same as last year. This information will be shared in the Community Update.

- Construction Funding Shortfall Clarification –
 - While rumors that Phase I project budget cost overruns are responsible for Phase II project shortfalls aren't true, the costs and funding of Phase I and II are indelibly connected. OFCC looks at these together as segments of a single co-fundable project. The potential Phase II project financial shortfall being discussed is a function of dramatically higher future building material cost affecting Phase II, and reduced K-12 enrollment affecting the square footage eligible for co-funding by the state on both Phases of the project.
 - In addition to OFCC communications advising the school district to ready itself for the possibility of a Finneytown Secondary Campus building funding offer in 2022, OFCC has initiated contact with Finneytown Local concerning two additional developments:
 - 1) The probability of significant inflationary project cost escalation.
 - Significant construction material cost escalation has occurred the last two years. This can be traced to supply chain shortages induced by the global pandemic.
 - The cost increase to the district is already estimated by multiple sources in the \$2.6 million range for the Phase II portion of our project.
 - Another year of inflationary increases will also have to be figured in the revised cost of construction

- OFCC will pay the inflationary increase on its 60% share. Finneytown will be responsible for the inflationary increase on its 40% share.
 - While local bond issue money was set aside for typical inflationary increases, these amounts have been grossly exceeded by this anomaly.
- 2) The near certainty of a significantly reduced student enrollment forecast.
- OFCC rules require the recalculation of student enrollment projections prior to a CFAP participation offer.
 - Finneytown Local School District enrollment is significantly reduced versus its last OFCC headcount update in 2019.
 - COVID has been a significant factor in the enrollment decline in Finneytown and across the state.
 - OFCC will reduce the square footage of the entire K-12 project (not just the unconstructed Secondary Campus portion) for the student projection downtrend that has occurred over the last two years.
 - The district will need to make a decision as to whether or not to accept a revised smaller total K-12 co-fundable square footage based on a reduced enrollment projection (i.e. build a smaller Secondary Campus building than originally planned, requiring reconfiguration of grade levels between buildings) or fund an incrementally larger square footage as a 100% locally funded initiative.
- Project shortfall funding bridge discussions, in which the LRFCD features a prominent role, include leveraging other resources of the district to help cover funds needed to complete the district's master plan. These include the fundraising capabilities of our alumni and support organizations, taking advantage of eligible ESSER dollars, other district rainy day construction funds, and tapping into the district's current general fund surplus.

Public Address

None

Board Coordination Matters

Mr. Reeb, discussed the following item:

- Facilities Committees – Ms. Lee and I attended two Long Range Facility Committee meetings earlier this month. I was encouraged by the wide swath of community representation from different careers, backgrounds and ages, giving their time and expertise to our facility planning, as well as the participation of staff members, teachers and former students.

Ms. McMullen, discussed the following items:

- Moment of Silence – A moment of silence was requested for Alex Harris to reflect upon the journey and the legacy of this former student. He was a light in our district. The community came together to pay their respects. The PTA is currently gathering books to give to Alex's family.

- Secondary PTA –
 - Kudos to Secondary PTA for preparing meals for our teachers on Parent Teacher Conference night.
 - AfterProm - Needs volunteers and financial contributions.
 - Fred Wittenbaum shared plans for a Finneytown alumni capital project fundraiser.
 - Sarah Anderson shared information about a partnership with Project ADAM, which is dedicated to strengthening sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) response preparedness in schools through AED training.
 - Finneytown Athletic Association is looking for bowling, volleyball, track, cross country and football program startup directors and volunteers.
 - PTA After School Activity Programs – Volunteers are needed for cooking classes, chess classes, Girls on the Run programming. Reach out to Brooke Woods, President, if you can help.
 - Black History Month – Students are listening to ethnic music, reading poems and learning about black history.
 - World Culture Night – Is coming up on March 1. Please connect with the district if you'd like to have a booth or volunteer. It's fun and a great way to connect and get educated on different backgrounds.
 - Mobile Dentist – Will be in the district February 23rd - 24th.
 - Kindergarten registration – We already mentioned.
 - School Supplies – Students and staff are starting to get low on school supplies. Check in with your teachers if you can help.

Ms. Lee, discussed the following items:

- OSBA Delegate – I am the OSBA delegate for our district.
 - OSBA Capital Conference update
 - 2022 Capital Conference - November 13th-15th.
 - Session nominations are being taken now.
 - Performing group nominations will be accepted through May 18th. Elementary performance nominations encouraged.
 - Student Achievement Fair accepted until filled.
 - Digital art nominations accepted through mid-October.
 - OSBA has several upcoming facilities construction webinars.
 - Southwest Regional Spring Conference - March 8, 5pm to 8pm, Laurel Oaks Career Campus (Wilmington). \$40 includes dinner.
- Personnel Committee – Meets March 3rd.
- Finneytown Music Parents Association (FMPA) –
 - Congratulations to solo and ensemble concert participants
 - A required meeting for anyone participating in marching band took place. Reach out to Mr. Delaney if you did not attend.
 - Dinner Before the Show – Purchase advance tickets online or at the door.
 - FMPA has open Membership and Secretary positions
 - Upcoming concert dates:
 - HS Band/Orchestra concert – March 9th.
 - Middle School concert – May 11th.

- Willy Wonka Musical – May 6th - May 7th.
- Next meeting March 7th; will focus on the Dinner Before the Show.

Mr. Rea, discussed the following items:

- Our Support Organizations Help Needed – I attended the Finneytown Athletic Association and the Finneytown Boosters meetings this month. I heard the same theme and plea. I hear it from PTA and FMPA too. It seems to be the same people doing all the work in these organizations and some of them are getting tired. Our support organizations are making a loud plea for more people to help with the work they are committed to accomplishing.
- Finneytown Athletic Boosters – This was my first time attending. It was well-run but mostly about the need for more people to help run concessions at sporting events. It's always the same four people doing concessions. On Senior Recognition Night, they had to close the concession stand at halftime of the basketball game so the person running concessions could go watch their child be recognized.
- Finneytown Athletic Association – Discussed the need for additional coaching volunteers to expand their sports program offerings. The soccer program is going so well that Greenhills isn't running their program anymore. I explained my role as board liaison.
- School Board Research – I've been doing research on other school boards and have seen some things other boards are doing regularly or at this time that I wanted to ask about:
 - A regular agenda item, just prior to adjournment, that lists all the assignments coming out of the meeting. I would like to suggest we add this to our meeting agenda.
 - Superintendent and Treasurer evaluations occurring at this time of year. I would like an update on the timelines and metrics our district uses for this process.

Mr. Gast, discussed the following items:

- Finneytown Educational Foundation – Meeting highlights include: a focus on generating regular income to support their specific scholarships; the possibility of wine sales through a connection at The Who concert; consideration for a meeting night change to the fourth Monday of the month.
- Springfield Township – Meeting report: just had the Daddy Daughter Dance, Mom Prom is coming up March 19. They obtained an extended liquor license for The Grove now that they no longer operate an official soccer field. City Barbecue is going to come in where Bernstein Allergy was located, across from Panera.
- AED Training – Asked about district training, which occurs twice a year through Public School Works according to Dr. Banks, and if the district could supplement that by bringing in an organization for in-person training of a volunteer AED staff.

- Increasing Community Involvement – I have found the power of a direct personal invitation to be the most effective way to expand the pool of people actively helping in our organizations and to bridge the diversity gap between our community and our active support organization membership.

Board Meeting Assignment List –

- Add "List of Assignments" as a regular agenda item to our meetings prior to the Adjournment.
- Compile a list of upcoming school community events for signup by up to two Board Members, at any given time, to be available to support and hear from the community
- Set up Board Member tables at events where Board Members have signed up to provide coverage.
- Board President and a second member to begin the Superintendent and Treasurer evaluation processes
- Support organization liaisons to collect a list of unfilled volunteer positions and opportunities and forward to Mr. Gast
- Informal small group meetings for team building and subcommittee work, on an as needed basis.

16-22 Mr. Rea moved, seconded by Ms. McMullen, that the Board adopt the "Consent Calendar" as follows:

Action by the Board of Education in adoption of the "Consent Calendar" at this point of the agenda means that all items appearing with an asterisk (*) after the title constitute the "Consent Calendar" and are adopted by one single motion, unless a member of the Board of Education or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the "Consent Calendar" and voted upon separately.

a) Monthly Financial Report*

b) Depository and Investment Balances as of January 31, 2022*

U.S. Bank	0.0050%	\$ 558,068.05
STAR Ohio	0.1000%	\$ 17,695,342.84
U.S. Bank (construction fund)	0.6100%	\$ 6,466,860.24
STAR Ohio (construction fund)	0.1000%	\$ 6,514,276.72

c) Interest Earned on Depository and Investment Accounts as of January 31, 2022*

General Fund \$ 1,543.76
Construction Fund \$ 21,652.41

d) Monthly Bond Project Spending and Commitment Report*

[See attachment]

RC: Mr. Rea, yes; Mrs. Lee, yes; Ms. McMullen, yes; Mr. Reeb, yes; Mr. Gast, yes. The president declared the motion passed.

17-22 Ms. McMullen moved, seconded by Mr. Rea, that the Board adopt the "Consent Calendar" as follows:

Action by the Board of Education in adoption of the "Consent Calendar" at this point of the agenda means that all items appearing with an asterisk (*) after the title constitute the "Consent Calendar" and are adopted by one single motion, unless a member of the Board of Education or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the "Consent Calendar" and voted upon separately.

a) Acknowledgement of Resignations*

The Board acknowledged the following resignations, which had been previously accepted by the Superintendent:

Casey Burwinkel	Teacher effective June 1, 2022	(personal)
Martha Hubbard	Media Specialist effective May 31, 2022	(personal)
Marlo Thigpen	Assistant Principal effective January 31, 2022	(personal)

b) Approval of Contract – One Year Limited Classified*

The Board approved a one year limited contract for the following new classified staff member, effective February 15, 2022 through June 30, 2022:

Kristen Gerard Special Education Assistant

c) Acknowledgement of Resignation from Supplemental Contract:

The Board acknowledged the following resignation, which had been previously accepted by the Superintendent:

Alec Johnson Auditorium Manager
 effective March 4, 2022 (personal)

d) Approval of Contracts – Supplemental 2021-2022*

The Board approved the following supplemental contracts, effective August 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022:

Zach Blyberg	Head Coach, Reserve Boys Basketball	\$3,167.00
Jimmy Denson	Coach, Varsity Bowling	\$1,190.00
Montorius Webley	Head Coach, MS Girls Basketball	\$1,622.00

e) Approval of Substitute Teachers Provided by Comprehensive Substitute Solutions*

The Board approved the following substitute teachers who are employed by Comprehensive Substitute Solutions and may be assigned to fill absences for the Finneytown Local School District, effective February 16, 2022:

Babatu, Kwesi	Copeland, David	Jones, Darrell
Barnes, Cheryl	Crumpley, Tanagna	King, Candace
Barnes, Roosevelt	Cruz, Eva	Laird, Maggie
Barnes, Sarah	Davis, Gordon	Leaver, Samantha
Barnett, Althea	Davis, Rollins	Lockett, Teylar
Bell, Danny	Davis, Samantha	Marshall, Gwen
Bellamah, Christopher	Delisio, John	Martin, Artis
Binford, Cornelia	Dietz, John	McCartney, Olivia
Blank, Diana	Duskin, Deemiah	Miller, Mari Kay
Blanks, Earl	Evans, Patricia	Mosher, Parker
Blunt, Sharron	Gaines, Queylah	Myers, Johnnie
Brinkman, Rosa	Gaski, Karen	Nelson, Diamond
Caceros, Carina	Gray, Kiara	Neri, McKenzie
Calhoun, Brenda	Harris, Jordan	Nitti, Danielle
Cargile, Joyce	Hill, Gloria	Obert, Jennifer
Causey, Mikal	Hopkins, Samuel	Oliver, Verneda
Chenault, Kennedy	Howard, Latrice	Ottesen, Lauren
Colvin, Gayle	Hudson, Denesha	Padhy, Shivangi
Connor, Kathryn	Hughes Jr., George	Parham, Ebony
Cooper, Edward	Israel, Shamauel	Partee Johnson, Dionne

Perez, Adesina	Salem, Duha	Utrecht, Kimberly
Phillips, Ciera	Schneider, Cindy	VonderHaar, Susan
Phipps, Marilyn	Schuler, Emily	Walton, Ronald
Pittman, Felicia	Shaw, Phyllis	Ward, Melanie
Pollington, Connie	Sithe, Adam	Weiler, Michael
Price, Tanya	Skidmore, Carson	Wessels, Joe
Rice, Alisha	St.Hilaire, Melissa	Whitaker, Richard
Richey, Sheila	Staley, Jordan	Wiggs, Joanne
Riggins, Maurice	Stegman, Jessica	Williams, Carla
Robinson, Marilyn	Sullivan, Clyde	Williams, Tracey
Rone, Jessica	Thomas, Jenna	Wilson, Brooklyn
Ruffner, Sara	Thrower, Edith	Wise, Donnise
Ryan, Samantha	Tubbs, Quinetta	Wolke, Sophia

f) Approval of Family and Medical Leave*

The Board approved the following Family Medical Leave:

Ann Morey, Accounting Specialist, beginning February 16, 2022, and continuing intermittently for a maximum period of twelve weeks.

g) Approval of Resolution of Participation - HCDDS*

The Board approved the following resolution of participation:

Finneytown Local School District with Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services (HCDDS) to provide school services during the 2022-2023 school year to children ages 6 through 21 who are identified as needing intensive educational services.

HCDDS will charge the District for services rendered at the per pupil rates as follows: \$50,000 for students served at Rost or Fairfax School and transported by the District.

h) Approval of Agreement - Elevar Design Group*

The Board approved the following agreement:

Finneytown Local School District with Elevar Design Group for professional planning services to complete a Strategic Facilities Development Plan. The cost shall not exceed \$45,000 plus direct expenses. The fee will be waived should Elevar Design Group be selected the Architect of Record (AOR) in a selection process managed by the OFCC.

i) Approval of Change Orders*

The Board approved the following change orders for the new K-6 Elementary construction project:

1) Change Order #S52 – Skanska Contract

Deduct \$38,562.31 for the return of \$50,000 in CMR contingency. 75% (\$37,500) of the contingency is returned to the Owner and the other 25% is considered Shared Savings to Skanska. Since we are reducing the contract value by \$37,500, the return also includes the associated bond and fee. The total return to the Owner is \$38,562.31. This return will be sufficient to cover change orders for the following priority alternates: Supergraphic in Gym, Additional Sidewalks, and Digital Clocks.

2) Change Order #S53 – Skanska Contract

Add \$3,049.14 to add a segmental retaining wall adjacent to the new water meter pit and hot box. Per the response to RFI #075 (included in the attachment), the retaining wall helped to create enough flat area to install the hot box and provide space for maintenance access; otherwise, the grading in the area was too steep.

3) Change Order #S54 – Skanska Contract

Add \$6,369.78 to purchase Alternate #30 Supergraphic in Gym. The alternate price to paint the new logo increased slightly due to increases in paint costs over the past year.

4) Change Order #S55 – Skanska Contract

Add \$18,015.86 to purchase Alternate #04 Additional Sidewalks and to delete the radius sidewalk between the academic wings.

5) Change Order #S56 – Skanska Contract

Add \$4,130.10 to re-purpose casework from the teacher collaboration rooms for installation in Conference Room 1204, Admin Storage Room 1012, and Work Room 1028 per Bulletin #10. The work includes setting the base cabinets, cutting down the countertops, and adding backsplashes and side splashes. In Work Room 1028, the Bulletin adds electrical outlets above the countertop. Since the casework will no longer be installed in the teacher collaboration rooms, the void spaces will be infilled with LVT flooring.

6) Change Order #S57 – Skanska Contract

Add \$2,985.05 to provide rough-ins for clocks per Bulletin #11. Clock locations were relocated to public corridors and spaces. Clocks will not be installed in classrooms, except for the Music Room and Stage.

j) Acceptance of Donation*

The Board accepted the following donation:

A \$500 cash donation to the Finneytown Secondary Campus from an anonymous donor on January 26, 2022.

RC: Mr. Rea, yes; Mrs. Lee, yes; Ms. McMullen, yes; Mr. Reeb, yes; Mr. Gast, yes. The president declared the motion passed.

18-22 Ms. McMullen moved, seconded by Mr. Gast, that the Board approve the School Year 2022-2023 Calendar.

August 30, Tuesday	Staff In-Service - No School
August 31, Wednesday	Staff In-Service - No School
September 1, Thursday	Staff In-Service - No School
September 2, Friday	Staff In-Service - No School
September 5, Monday	Labor Day - No School
September 6, Tuesday	First Day for Students
September 23, Friday	Staff In-Service - No School
October 24, Monday	Fall Break - No School
November 10, Thursday	1st Quarter Ends (46 days)
November 11, Friday	Staff In-Service - No School
November 23, Wednesday	Conference Release Day-No School
November 24 & 25, Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving Break - No School
December 22, Thursday-December 30, Friday	Winter Break - No School
January 2, Monday	Staff In-Service - No School
January 3, Tuesday	School Resumes
January 16, Monday	Dr. MLK, Jr. Day - No School
January 27, Friday	2nd Quarter Ends (43 days)
February 17, Friday	Conference Release Day-No School
February 20, Monday	Presidents Day - No School
March 27, Monday - March 31, Friday	Spring Break - No School
April 3, Monday	School Resumes
April 7, Friday	3rd Quarter Ends (43 days)
April 10, Monday	Staff In-Service - No School
May 29, Monday	Memorial Day
June 9, Friday	Last Day for Students
June 12, Monday	4th Quarter Ends (43 days)
	Staff In-Service
	Last Day for Staff

Dr. Laurie Banks, Superintendent – provided the following information:

This calendar is different from a typical calendar because of the late start after Labor Day. The late start is recommended for unknowns associated with the completion of the Finneytown Elementary construction project. It is based upon conversations with our

construction management, design team, vendors and other school districts that have recently opened new buildings, and our teacher's union.

As it currently stands, the project is essentially still on target for completion in late May, with exception of the backup generator, which is backordered until sometime in June. Actual occupancy won't be granted until the generator is installed.

At this point, furniture delivery is the biggest unknown. The furniture manufacturers expect to make delivery before school starts, but with unpredictable supply chain issues, we can't count out the risk of delays, and we feel the extra time is necessary to safeguard the process.

The school calendar decision is a critical first step in much of the work that needs to be done now in preparation for next year. It affects planning, class scheduling at the high school, our EMIS educational information systems and much more. I am asking for this approval tonight, so that the staff that needs this calendar information right away can get started preparing for next school year.

The other piece that I know the Board has been concerned and thinking about is the potential impact a late start will have on our families. I've reached out to community partners, several of our churches, the YMCA, Arts Connect to let them know and find out what late summer programming opportunities and options they might be able to offer. We have a meeting scheduled and I've started developing a survey to find out the challenges a late start will present to our community. Our district social worker also has the ability to work with families on finding additional care or connections if that is needed.

We considered moving our student summer learning opportunities from June to August, but were advised against this because of the time staff will need to get properly trained and acclimated to the new building in the days leading up to the first student day.

If the furniture would happen to not be here by the later start date, we would need to make a decision at that time as to whether the start needs to be delayed further or we move the old furniture into the new building until the new arrives.

Board Discussion

The late start makes sense for the stated reasons and needs to be approved now so that school personal can prepare for next school year, but is sure to create a financial hardship for families without childcare options and/or may not have the funds for an additional 10 days of childcare prior to the start of school.

Discussion about how to help varied, but it was decided that the district will undertake the following to help families:

1. Acknowledge and make sure the school community knows about the 10-day late start with families
2. Survey families to find out how they anticipate the late start will create a challenging situation for them
3. Follow up in more detail with families providing affirmative responses

4. Alert and engage community partners, churches, childcare providers and others in solution-oriented conversation
5. Alert and involve the district social worker to assist individual families in need with options
6. Create a Board subcommittee to facilitate a forum for problem solving, inviting community partners and those affected by the late start to the table

RC: Mr. Reeb, Yes; Mr. Gast, Yes; Ms. Lee, Yes; Ms. McMullen, Yes; Mr. Rea, No. The president declared the motion passed.

Discussion of Transition to Mask Optional Plan

Dr. Laurie Banks, Superintendent – provided the following information:

I attend weekly superintendent meetings, involving the Health Commissioner and Medical Director for the Hamilton County Board of Health. Accurate COVID impact updates for the county are given in these meetings.

Following the spike, and over the past month, we've continued to see a decrease in cases and the conversation began to change. At what point is the CDC going to update their guidance? What are the indicators districts should be looking at to move away from mask mandates?

We started to receive messaging from certain students, staff and community to consider a shift. We discussed key indicators to focus on for consideration of a transition to mask optional with Kate Welling, our district nurse and point of contact for COVID. We identified the following: low incidence less than 2% of our population; no evidence of clustering, which means multiple cases in the same classroom or grade, and that's monitored through reporting to our district nurse; and a continual decline in cases in the county as reported by Hamilton County Health Department.

Next we talked about the supports we would commit to if we moved in that direction: the district would continue to provide, through the end of fourth quarter, masks to those who would prefer them; continue the increased cleaning protocol; continue to monitor rates and spread, and then if a trend was noted, and by that we mean an increase of 2% or cluster, we would reinstate the mandate.

We currently have zero new cases to report this week. We had two staff members and two student positives last week. The week before we had zero cases. We talked about monitoring for a consistent trend over the next two to three weeks and then moving to the mask optional choice after return from spring break or moving into the fourth quarter. Our board policy states that the superintendent can make the decision for staff, while the Board makes the decision for students. However, I feel strongly that we should have this conversation and be consistent in our decision.

Board Discussion

Mr. Reeb

The U.S. Department of Transportation still requires the mask mandate. So regardless, of our decision, students will still be required to wear masks on buses.

Assuming the trend stays downward, I would be fine making masks optional. The downside is kids still wearing masks would have to wear extremely uncomfortable N95 masks to be protected and could feel ostracized. If the trend stays downward, the community and the country will say we are behind the curve, if we don't transition. I think it would be easy to snap back if required.

Reasons to consider mask optional include it's getting warmer, they are uncomfortable, they may not be effective.

The best explanation for the inconsistency between having to wear a mask on the bus, while not having to wear it in school, is that federal bureaucracy doesn't necessarily make sense. The kids would get a quick lesson in that.

Mr. Rea

It seems difficult to make kids wear mask on the bus if they don't have to wear the mask in class. Will students who wear a mask, either at the request of their parents or of their own choosing, be bullied? Will they be protected from bullying? What is the responsibility of teachers in younger grades, with parents choosing the optional mask, to always remember which ones are supposed to wear it, and require compliance when no one else is wearing a mask? Do we have policy that specifically covers bullying related to mask?

Politics is local, and we can make the decision to align protocols in school with those on the bus.

Ms. Lee

I am a science minded person and watch this closely. The CDC, the AAP, all of my doctor and nurse friends – no one is saying it's safe to not wear masks. To be honest, when you say mask optional, it basically means no masks. While we reserve the right to go back if we see clusters and issues, it's hard to backtrack.

I'm not sure I would ever be willing to risk the immunocompromised, the grandparents, the toddlers, the teachers, and our community or to wait for them to get sick for us to go back to masks. My biggest thing is someone would have to get sick first, to go to masks. I feel it's too soon and we'll have to go back. We see it all over the world. And the youngest aren't eligible for vaccinations yet. I don't want to do this back and forth. I would rather be steady. There is no risk by waiting.

We need to look at more than just data from our schools to make our decisions. Is there really any point in not just finishing out the year in the masks?

I would need changing CDC guidance to support a change in our mask mandate, but it goes beyond that to endorsement of the entire medical community for me. The general

consensus today is to wear masks. I don't see that changing right away. I would love to see the numbers stay down. But I know people who buried their parents in the last week. I know people who had babies in the hospital two weeks ago. These are risks that we would be taking by changing the policy.

Ms. McMullen

I just feel it's too soon to go mask optional. I feel there's going to be other strands and don't feel comfortable after all the spring break activities coming back and exposing our children. I think it'd be wise to just finish out the fourth quarter and then we can see and go from there. When we go back next school year we can see where we are. Would it really make sense to not require masks at school when they must still wear them on the bus. How do we regulate that? I'm a bus monitor, so I know firsthand. The inconsistency wouldn't make any sense.

Mr. Gast

I think there is a risk of holding the mask mandate for too long. I don't want to put students out for not wearing masks. We will continue monitoring. Mask fatigue is real. I do think we can bring it back. I think it will stay for decades. In our county, we have a bunch of mask optional schools, not having an issue. Because of all the travel during Spring Break we might want to wait for two weeks or whatever the incubation period. However, waiting until the end of school would be another eight weeks.

If a shift in CDC guidance is the only indicator that will provide consensus support for moving forward to mask optional, then let's acknowledge that so that our superintendent has the guidance she is looking for on this issue. I don't think our anti-bullying policy includes mask. It would be good to update so that it does include masks going forward.

Dr. Banks

Our policy does provide bullying protection against vaccination status, obviously we don't want any of our kids bullied over masking. I know from having conversations with other districts who are currently mask optional, the wearing of masks by students is very much the expectation of the parent and not something that the staff is expected to monitor unless they are mask optional and there is a COVID exposure, in which case they are required to mask according to required guidelines.

Are there indicators that you as the Board would like information on or to be monitored in addition to attendance rate and positive case information as decision tools or to provide guidance? Let me know and I'll do my best to find it.

The Hamilton County Board Health Director is allowing schools to decide their own mask requirements. However, they are still very much aligned with CDC, which has not updated its guidance and continues to recommend that all students be masked. In terms of next steps and moving forward, I'll continue the daily updates on attendance and positive cases, we'll continue to monitor shifts in the guidance from Hamilton County Public Health and the CDC and I'll share those updates. I think this is something

we should continue to have conversations about at board meetings if everybody's in agreement.

Proposed New/Revised Policies and Bylaws

1616 - STAFF DRESS AND GROOMING
2271 - COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS PROGRAM
2370.01 - BLENDED LEARNING
5511 - DRESS AND GROOMING
5772 - WEAPONS
6110 - GRANT FUNDS
6114 - COST PRINCIPLES - SPENDING FEDERAL FUNDS
6325 - PROCUREMENT - FEDERAL GRANTS/FUNDS
6423 - USE OF CREDIT CARDS
7217 - WEAPONS
8500 - FOOD SERVICES

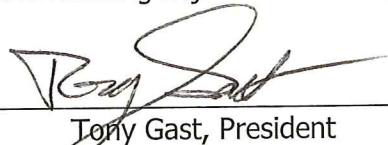
The next regular meeting of the Finneytown Board of Education will take place on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 6:30pm in the Media Center of the Finneytown Secondary Campus, 8916 Fontainebleau Terrace, Cincinnati, OH 45231. Open forum will begin at 6:00pm.

19-22 Mr. Rea moved, seconded by Ms. Lee, that the Board move to Executive Session, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(g)(1), for the purpose of considering the employment of a public employee.

RC: Mr. Gast, yes; Mrs. Lee, yes; Ms. McMullen, yes; Mr. Rea, yes; Mr. Reeb, yes. The president declared the motion passed.

The Board returned to Regular Session at 8:51pm.

20-22 There being no further business, Mr. Rea moved, seconded by Ms. Lee, that the meeting be adjourned. The president declared the meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.



Tony Gast, President

ATTEST:



David L. Oliverio, Treasurer