

Larry B. Hammond, Superintendent
Board Report
September 15, 2020

District and school staff are continuing the planning process for re-opening Monday, October 12. As you know, this date is not early enough for some folks within our community and possibly too soon for others. COVID continues to present experiences for everyone that are undesired. That could be true with the decision-making process of formulating/finalizing our re-opening plan. I feel confident not every administrator is excited with the opportunity to provide input and consequently take credit for possible issues that could arise with the evolution of the pandemic. However, this is a GOOD experience for leadership development from my perspective. Our current situation reminds me of my experience in the 90s. Principals had previously taken staff that had been selected and sent to the school by the superintendent. They were not complimentary of all staff since some were chosen for political reasons and not necessarily high quality. Consequently, when issues arose with student management, instructional practices and assessment results; they had an excuse. They pointed the finger at the superintendent and district staff and said, look at the staff we received. With the involvement of SBDM Councils and placing the decision-making closer to where the rubber meets the road, principals had the opportunity to select staff and accept the responsibility for their productivity. At that time, it became apparent on selective occasions, they would rather the decision be made by someone else. This is not true of all administrators in Gallatin County but may be true of some. We continue to remind one another of the worn-out comment from Governor Beshear, "we will make it through this, and we will make it through it together".

WE appreciate the Board's reaffirmation of the October 12 date at the last meeting. That action has provided a specific date for the planning process for both staff and parents. The initial change from our 4 day per week plan was based on the data we had from the OLR responses at that time. The additional time you have approved is appreciated by staff and will ensure a greater likelihood of the plan working efficiently. In addition, everyone needs to understand a small group of vocal participants cannot generate change just because they disapprove from a lack of understanding of the many variables being considered. Your confidence and support of staff will continue elevating the proper team perspective throughout the community. Parents are expected to answer the 4 new OLR questions by tomorrow afternoon. We have already contacted folks that typically have issues with technology or following timelines. That effort will continue throughout the week or until everyone had updated their information. The transportation department will arrange routes based on the data received. Non-transported students will be designated to an A or B (blue or white) schedule by administration with the continuation of the effort to balance the numbers on both schedules. Food service will also make arrangements for both meals at school and home delivery based on the data. Making personal contacts with families to complete

the OLR will require additional time which will run the process into the week of September 21. Once complete, parents will be notified of the schedule for their children. Staff children will also be assigned a schedule comparable to other students. They will be allowed to come to work with staff on Fridays due to the same issue as previously addressed. Staff being unable to obtain childcare remains an issue. Staff children will only be attending classes 2 days per week like everyone else.

Additional personnel will be needed to ride the buses for temperature checks prior the students entering the bus. We are attempting to use personnel that do not work 8 hours per day and have asked for volunteers. At the present time, we do not have enough. That effort will continue because this portion of the plan is viewed as a necessity to ensure not exposing larger groups to the virus. Details of transportation to the ATC will be refined as the need changes. This schedule will be dictated by the ATC as a result of the challenges being faced to get students back in the facility safely.

We will continue listening to the concerns of parents, staff and community members in the development of our next version of the re-opening plan. Although every effort has been made to provide transparency in the process, not everyone will agree with the process or the plan when complete. The ongoing effort will be to remind ourselves as well as our partners, the plan is fluid and subject to change. Governor Beshear and Commissioner Stack shared information yesterday on the plans for the self-reporting requirement for every district. Optimistically, the ongoing sharing of information as it develops will serve to build unity within our team.