

Summary of August 10, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

The Meeting, which had approximately 50 people in attendance, began with community comments. Many community members shared their passionate thoughts regarding the benefits and drawbacks of mandated mask wearing in our schools.

The discussion items for the evening were a Facilities Update and an update to the Covid-19 Re-Opening Plan for September:

- Jim Ristano, Director of Facilities, gave an update on construction that has been taking place over the summer. There are many ongoing projects throughout the district, including some that are taking place at Schreiber, where the meeting was held. (This includes 7 bathrooms to be completed by September 1, 2021 and the expanded cafeteria and main entrance to be completed by September 1, 2022. There will be revised entrances for staff, students and visitors for this coming school year due to the construction. The cafeteria will still be operational for students.) A roof at Sousa and a portion of the roof at Salem were completed over the summer.
- Dr. Hynes shared that the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will not be issuing Covid-19 guidance for schools this fall. The Nassau County Department of Health (NCDOH) has stated that they do not think it is their role to issue guidance but, in light of Suffolk County issuing guidance and many requests from school districts, they are planning to issue some direction once they see what the NY State Education Department issues this coming week. The burden has been left to each school district to develop its own 2021-2022 reopening plan. NCDOH did state to Dr. Hynes and Dr. Allen, however, that they support the guidance from the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC). Dr. Hynes and Dr. Allen presented the Re-opening Committee recommendations, which follow the CDC recommendations including:
 - Universal indoor masks for all students and staff
 - Students will be spaced 3 feet apart masked, 6 feet for lunch and singing/instruments
 - Modified quarantine policy from last year
 - After school clubs and sports will be happening
 - There will be no pods in the middle school and no cohorting in the elementary school beyond what occurs in a normal school year
 - Policies will be revisited in November and on an ongoing basis as necessary
- The Board of Education unanimously supported this recommendation and the document will be made public no later than August 12th. Building principals will be communicating with their respective parent populations with details specific to their schools.

-Prepared by Adam Block, Trustee in consultation with the Board of Education

Sent on behalf of the Port Washington Board of Education