

JEFFERSON LOCAL SCHOOLS
Special Meeting
September 14, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

West Jefferson, Ohio, the Jefferson Local Board of Education met in special session at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: Mrs. Duemmel, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Harper, Dr. Hiss, Mrs. Adams, Superintendent, Mr. Mullett, and Treasurer, Mr. Ingles.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Harper led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON COVID-19 GUIDELINES

Mr. Harper asked Mr. Mullett to put together a committee to assess the reopening guidelines from the Madison County Board of Health, including the impact on school operations. The committee is comprised of the three building principals, Mr. Bute, Mrs. Omen, and Mrs. Barte as well as Mr. Dennis, Mr. Buescher, and Dr. Hiss. The goal of the committee is to provide Mr. Cook, the Health Commissioner of the Madison County Board of Health, to consider moderating the reopening guidelines.

The committee is encouraged by the recent moderation on the guideline to run the air conditioning system at all times, due in part to Mr. Hiss informing Mr. Cook of the impact it may have on the system.

While the District has largely accepted and followed the guidelines, the committee is looking for movement on the one symptom rule as well as the isolation rule. The symptoms included on the guideline include common childhood issues such as runny noses and coughs that may not be related to COVID-19.

Additionally, Mr. Harper is concerned about liability, as guidelines puts on the local schools, while a direct order or policy/procedure will put the responsibility on the county.

The committee has drafted a letter to Mr. Cook which lists their concerns. It hasn't been sent yet, but was shared with the Board prior to the meeting.

The committee is meeting again on Wednesday.

Dr. Hiss asked if a medical person should be on the committee. Mr. Mullett noted that it was made up of school professionals to provide their view of the situation.

Mr. Mullett noted that 30 children so far have been isolated or quarantined since school started the week prior. None of the children have tested positive for COVID so far. 11 of the children are now back in school after receiving a negative test or doctor note.

There is concern over how other counties are doing things differently, and not consistent with the CDC. It is believed that the Ohio Department of Health should issue a statewide guideline to provide consistency.

The school nurse, Mrs. Ferguson, is supportive of changing the guidelines for two symptoms instead of one.

It was noted that a county order doesn't give the same flexibility as a guideline.

If a child were to quarantine, they would have access to E-learning to provide for continuity of education.

Liability concerns were raised. The Governor signed a bill on September 14 granting limited liability protection to schools, granted they do not engage in "reckless or wanton disregard of public health guidelines".

Mr. Harper noted that he will accept whatever decision comes from the committee, but wants to see unity from the committee and for the Board to provide their support to Mr. Mullett. The Board is not going to make the final decision.

It was noted that the District's main goal is to provide the best possible protection to the students.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mrs. Adams and seconded by Mr. Quinn that the board adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The vote: Yeas - Mrs. Adams, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Harper, Dr. Hiss, Mrs. Duemmel.
Meeting Adjourned.

President

Treasurer