



## Meeting Notes from TCC General Meeting September 15, 2020 Virtual Zoom Meeting (Due to COVID-19)

.....

### I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

TCC Co-Chair Ms. Erin Kirn commenced the meeting at 6:30PM with introductions of the Steering Committee, including herself and Co-Chair, Ms. Sonja Szubski.

Reminder: Voting window for each school's **Principal Advisory Council (PAC)** closes on September 22, 2020. More information regarding the role of a Principal Advisory Council member may be found here: [www.dekalbschoolsga.org/principal-advisory-councils](http://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/principal-advisory-councils)

Requested that everyone including those new to TCC, please **encourage parent body and PTA/PTO Presidents and Executive Boards** to attend TCC meetings.

### II. PRINCIPALS' UPDATES

#### Topic: The Virtual Learning Experience

**IDLEWOOD (Mr. Andrews - Teacher):** Is managing with virtual learning.

**LIVSEY (Mrs. Pickett):** Parents, faculty & staff are rallying to make it work well.

**SMOKE RISE (Parent Ms. Lori Jones on behalf of Ms McCloud):** It's going well but a lot of excitement is surrounding the new school building being built! Encouraged everyone to drive by and take a look at it in process on Hugh Howell Road.

**TUCKER MIDDLE (Dr Cunningham):** Virtual learning is going well, students are engaged and teachers are handling it well, with everyone working together to improve the experience day to day.



**MIDVALE (Dr. Dougherty):** Explained virtual learning going very well, with strategic support groups in place for success including:

- Small group instruction began after Labor Day
- Tech tips sessions created for parents, to know how to work chromebooks, online learning et al. Sessions recorded and later translated in Spanish, posted for viewing and ongoing support
- Began after school virtual clubs to keep the kids engaged, ending around the time parents clock out of work.
- Morning meetings continue virtually for emotional support of students during the pandemic / virtual learning

**TUCKER HS (Dr Parker):** Virtual learning is going well; checked student performance at the 4.5 week mark and made adjustments accordingly, plan to review, adjust again as needed at 9 weeks.

### III. TOWNHALL Q&A WITH DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 4 REPRESENTATIVE, ALLYSON GEVERTZ

#### Q: Back to School in Person?

A: Anticipating Hybrid Format › Teachers Oct 5th/ Students Oct 19th

- Superintendent Watson-Harris is monitoring data and proceeding as per CDC guidelines, GA Dept of Health (<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>) while tracking the spread of COVID across the District.
- Current number of cases over last 2 weeks is 122-124/1000,000 people
- Number must drop to 100 Cases per 100,000 to move to Hybrid Learning
- Very complex and viewing in real data in real time
- Region II Superintendent Trenton Arnold supported, added to details re this process and moving back to some sort of in person learning based on data

#### Q: MAP Testing/ Rising 5th Graders Applying for STEM Program at TMS?

A: Mr. Arnold explained that whole scores, tracks in elementary schools still counts, the process and timing may be tweaked.



He referenced a presentation given internally, to be released Sept 16th publically, that explains the criteria and steps to be taken in a 5 Phase Re-entry Program. That video and detailed information can be found online here:

[www.dekalbschoolsga.org/covid-19/covid-19/update-34-dcsd-announces-re-opening-plan](http://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/covid-19/covid-19/update-34-dcsd-announces-re-opening-plan)

[Click here to download the “DEKALB’S ONWARD AND UPWARD STRATEGY TO RE-OPEN SCHOOLS 2020-2021” presentation](#)

### **Q: Impact of New Apartments Being Built at Northlake? Suggestion of a 2nd Tucker High School?**

A: No second high school will be built.

- (Ms. Gevertz) New Smoke Rise Elementary (set to open in 2021-2022) will force redistricting to alleviate over capacity at several schools including Idlewood, Livsey.
- (Mr. Arnold) The District hired a third party company to execute a \$2M Master Plan; Incl comprehensive assessment of what is happening in real time plus projections, trends for future enrollment numbers.
- Public input meetings coming in near future where stakeholders will have a say
- Principal Advisory Councils (PACs) will have input opportunities and will be recruited to assist with transition plans for when kids return to schools (COVID\_Response Assistance)
- Emphasized that new Superintendent Cheryl Watson Harris is encouraging community engagement and involvement at all levels and is very impressed by how well TCC has engaged, collaborated amongst its stakeholders.
- Pointed out that TCC is unique to have its cluster completely in its own city, and the City of Tucker has helped tremendously in assisting its schools across the cluster- a real bonus!

### **Q: How will Operations verify that the school’s ventilation (HVAC) is working properly for cleanliness standards and safety affirmation given the pandemic?**

A: (Mr. Arnold): Mr. Noel Maloof is the Chief Operations person for DCSD and has assured Mr Arnold that the HVAC systems across the District are being systematically repaired and maintained.

Explained that the opening of windows in schools for ventilation purposes is not recommended.



.....

**Q: How will student lunches be handled in a hybrid/traditional model moving forward with COVID?**

A: (Ms. Gevertz): That is the one time of day children have to be maskless to eat, but they will line up spaced 6 feet apart and take lunches back to their rooms to eat at their desks, which are also safe-distanced.

- Added that the District received a Federal grant that will make all lunches free!
- This means more food for more families that might otherwise go hungry so “get the word out that schools have food”

**Q: Work order disparity—Why does it take so long for the District to close out open work orders? Average number of days to close out an order is 132.8? There is a higher number of work orders now than last year.**

A: (Ms. Gevertz): Addressed Mr. Kirk Lunde (parent/stakeholder) by name and the two hashed out numbers. Work orders, malfunctioning equipment verbally (her) and by chat (him); Mr Arnold suggested these issues be brought to Mr Maloof’s attention, who is doing his best to keep up with demand across the District.

**Q: How is DCSD Addressing Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement?**

A: (Ms Gevertz) The District aligned with a nationwide initiative dedicating a week in February to support BLM, but also voted in a resolution to have an additional week in November here locally behind this important issue.

- DCSD has been “ahead of the curve” when it comes to Equity / Equality issues in our area and DeKalb’s Board of Education is very much involved
- (Mr.Arnold): Very happy to see students getting involved, taking the movement to the next level on the ground
- Extremely proud that Tucker Cluster principals have proactively communicated and collaborated on their own, as to how to best be prepared and serve the needs of their students before school year even began.

**Q: How are Substitute Teachers being handled with virtual Learning?**

A: (Mr Arnold): Depends on duration of the full time teacher’s leave:



- Short term (1-6 Days): Teacher will develop a plan and support that can be shared with colleagues within the same school department who will cover for them (Ms Seabrook of Brockett ES and Dr Dougherty of Midvale ES stated this strategy has proven successful at their schools)
- Long Term (weeks or months due to illness, maternity leave, etc) Requires a special assessment, and filling of that position as needed.
- County is reluctant to practice traditional temp hiring of subs during this time due to teachers' access to potentially sensitive materials while instructing under guidance of virtual learning—DCSD does not want substitute teachers to have access to student ID numbers, attendance lists, infinite campus login and other critical passwords, even viewing children on camera has to be taken into account.

### Q: Are there tutoring sessions available with remote learning?

A: (Mr Arnold): Wednesdays are dedicated for extra support so that is when extra help is offered, among other support efforts.

- Dr Parker of THS added that Extended Learning Times (ELT) is offered daily where students may request targeted tutorials and additional instruction as needed.
- Dr Cunningham added that TMS has implemented peer tutoring where small grouping of students help each other out and she knows many teachers are “staying late” offering help in the late afternoons after school has been dismissed.

## IV. NEW BUSINESS

- Ms Gevertz announced: **New track & field for THS** thanks to SPLOST funds!
- Call for Talent! **Main Street Theater is putting on a show “Tucker’s Got Talent!”** Audition info may be found on their website at [www.tuckertheatre.com](http://www.tuckertheatre.com).
- Mr. Arnold offered a pleasant surprise announcement that **Dr. Kathy Cunningham of Tucker Middle School is Region II Principal of the Year!** She was applauded across the virtual meeting, especially by her peers, and added that this is an honor among her colleagues, adding she has been a teacher and or administrator for 39 years!

## V. MS. SONJA SZUBSKI ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:57PM



## VI. CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Allsyon Gevertz may be reached via email at [allyson@allysongevertz.com](mailto:allyson@allysongevertz.com), or on facebook at [www.facebook.com/gevertzboe](https://www.facebook.com/gevertzboe)
- Regional Superintendent Trenton Arnold may be reached via email at: [Trenton\\_Arnold@dekalbschoolsga.org](mailto:Trenton_Arnold@dekalbschoolsga.org)
- Erin Kirn and/or Sonja Szubski of Tucker Cluster Council may be reached via email at: [tuckerclustercouncil@gmail.com](mailto:tuckerclustercouncil@gmail.com)

*Virtual Meeting Notes as Recorded by Mr. Rich Benevento, September 15, 2020 Tucker Cluster Council.*

*~ 36 people in attendance of virtual meeting Zoom Meeting hosted by Tucker Cluster Council (TCC).*



***Our next TCC Meeting is planned virtually for Tuesday, November 17th, 2020 at 6:30PM. Please invite parents and PTA/PTO Board Members from your school to this meeting!***

***Email questions or any agenda ideas to [tuckerclustercouncil@gmail.com](mailto:tuckerclustercouncil@gmail.com)***



*The Tucker Cluster Council's purpose is to create a unified voice to efficiently and effectively communicate the needs of every school in our cluster to the DeKalb County School District.*

***More information can be found online at [www.tuckerclustercouncil.org](http://www.tuckerclustercouncil.org)***