

# Bates PTA February 2021 Minutes

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35 people in attendance.

Agenda overview

January 2021 minutes reviewed and approved.

## Treasurer's Report

- See Treasurer's report for the month. Very little spending or income

## Secretary's Report from Parent Feedback Committee

- The 30-minute meeting covered plans and questions about hybrid education.
- I mentioned that the last survey (and others) from AACPS was overly complicated and difficult to complete by phone. There was acknowledgement, but no comment.
- Why did AACPS change the schedule right before implementing hybrid learning, when schedules are going to have to change again? After extensive discussion in the system, with some input from various parent groups, they decided that gradual schedule changes would offer more benefit than one large change. Dr. McMahon also noted that the bus situation is forcing some of the schedule change.
- Hybrid instruction technology: teachers will have a variety of technologies in class. Some may have headsets, some will have other technology. Dr. McMahon says they are all great, and any problems that arise will be solved as we go on. Virtual students will appear on the smartboards in class, so they can be seen by the hybrid students. Virtual students may not all be heard. Not every classroom has the right technology yet, but will get it. Teachers have access to clear masks so that their lips can be seen on camera. Unfortunately, these clear masks tend to fog, so many teachers don't like them.
- All students will be subject to state testing. Tests have not been reduced for length. Logistics for the test have not been settled, so they can't tell us what this process will look like for any of the students.
- They do not know if MSDE will mandate any anti-cheating software like a lockdown browser or anything else. I noted that many of these systems rely on facial recognition and have known problems for POC. Dr. McMahon is aware of the potential for trouble, but does not know what MSDE plans to do about testing security.
- Can students easily switch back to virtual if hybrid doesn't work? No - decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis by school principals. The explanation is that they have attempted to make learning cohorts, and having students drop out is unfair to the students who remain, since they can then be stuck in a tiny and lonely group. The general sentiment was that parents and students should stick it out for a while and give hybrid a chance before asking for changes.
- Student logistics will be a little different, of course. Students will not have to change for gym class, but should show up ready to participate (comfortable clothes and shoes). Hybrid students

may have to carry some materials back and forth too. Most materials are electronic, but don't be surprised if some aren't.

- Music classes seem to be under construction. They are focused on limiting aerosols, so vocal and instrument students should expect to adapt. AACPS is working with the health department to develop best practices. Teachers will use outdoor spaces as much as possible.
- For after school extracurricular activities, students can only remain on campus if the activity is being hosted by an in-person sponsor. If the sponsor is virtual, then the activity will be virtual and the student will be expected to leave campus when classes end.
- Cleaning happens continuously throughout the day for high-touch spaces. Cleaning materials are OSHA approved. Deep cleans will occur on Wednesdays and Friday evening.

## Principal's Report

- Principal Hicks gave us Bates specific information relating to the Parent Feedback Committee Meeting and hybrid education in general:
  - Bates teacher's have appropriate technology
  - Face shields are available but clear masks are limited
  - Club session 1 is virtual, club session 2 is in-person. There are 12 kids/club maximum
  - All students will be included in testing, using their Chromebooks
  - There won't be afterschool clubs. Extended day will continue virtual
  - There is a waitlist for hybrid. People can't switch back and forth at will. There are 21 students on the waiting list. Emails were sent to affected families.
  - There will be a classroom monitor for online teachers. Students with more than 2 online teachers were informed.
  - Cohort and bus information will be sent
  - There will be 12 students max per class, except for two music classes with 13.
  - 43% of students signed up for hybrid
- Cleaning and Hygiene and Public Health
  - Desks will be 6' apart, and students will clean them at start and end of class
  - Hand sanitizer is plentiful in the building
  - Water bottles can be refilled at fountains, but no one should drink directly from a fountain
  - Most teachers have the 1<sup>st</sup> vaccination shot
  - Kids should bring 2-3 masks with them
- Logistics
  - Every grade will have its own entrance
  - Uniforms required for in-person students
  - Neoprene sleeves for the Chromebooks will be issued
  - Three meals will be given to every student, although they can bring their own lunches if desired. Meals will be in Building Community

## Guest Speaker: Delegate Dana Jones ([dana.jones@house.state.md.us](mailto:dana.jones@house.state.md.us))

- Bus Safety Bill
- Student data privacy
- Overturning the Hogan veto on School Blueprint (Kirwan Report)
- Diaper Donation Bill proposed
- The delegate's office also helps with unemployment claims. Please contact her if you need assistance.

Adjourned at 8:05 pm