

Teaneck Community Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes from Meeting: NOVEMBER 18, 2020

EMERGENCY VIRTUAL MEETING

Meeting called to order: 7:04pm

Open Public Meetings Act notice read by Shelley Eleby

Attendance

Board Members Present

Doug Anderson

Kimberley Capers

Shelley Eleby

Julie Elliott

Yvette Gonzalez

Xiomara Hadnot

Renee Karibi-Whyte

Julie Mitchell

Yvette Skaff (ex-officio)

Administrators Present

Ralph Gallo

Sonia Torres

Kristina Anders

EMERGENCY MEETING AUTHORIZATION

- Read by President Eleby
 - Due to safety and health reasons in reference to Covid-19 we are looking to discuss the revising of the School Reopening Plan
 - Motion to have the following meeting:
 - Moved by Karibi-Whyte; seconded by Mitchell.
Roll call vote; resolution carries.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Revised School Reopening Plan
 - After reviewing the survey, it was determined that a significant number of staff and students are travelling for Thanksgiving and during the holiday between Christmas Eve and the New Year. Due to the travelling, there would be a 14 day quarantine period following Thanksgiving which would leave a very short period of days in school before the later holiday, when we would have to quarantine again.
 - As is written in the resolution - "Due to travel plans and staffing challenges around the holidays, as well as guidance from the local health department, all students will follow the "full virtual / all remote schedule" from November 30 - December 23, break for holiday recess from 12/24 - 1/3, then stay remote for an additional two weeks following

that period. Hybrid in-person instruction will be scheduled to resume on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.”

PRESENTATION OF THE RESOLUTION

Public Comment Resolutions

Public Comment General

- Statement made by Kindergarten teacher/Co-President of the teacher’s union, Yvette Skaff, on behalf of the teacher’s union, expressing the sentiments of the teaching staff. Please refer to recording. Ms. Skaff asked that the resolution be revised to close school immediately.
- Parents thanked teachers and commended them for the efforts made this year.
- Mr. Gallo thanked Ms. Skaff for her statement
- One parent agreed with Ms. Skaff and requested that the school be closed as soon as possible.

Resolutions:

2011-05 -Revised 2020-2021 Reopening Plan

- Moved by Karibi-Whyte; seconded by Hadnot. Roll call vote; resolution carries.
 - Comments - Mitchell asked whether TCCS would set a transmission rate or something similar to NYC to determine when/if to close.
 - TCCS’s plan is based on cases within school. It comes down to the local health dept., which has left it up to the school to determine. There is no actual number set by the State thus far.
 - Where does the disjinder lie within the school community?
 - The difference between parties might lie in the difference in the way TCCS is handling this situation versus how other schools are making their decisions.
 - Eleby stated she believes everyone in the meeting agreed that the district should close after the holidays. It became contentious when determining whether TCCS should open the extra days before November 30.
 - Gonzalez expressed that would like to revise the resolution to close TCCS effective immediately.
 - Karibi-Whyte requested to know what all the considerations are before making the decision. What are the other factors that are being taken into consideration?
 - How many kids in TCCS have quarantined? Do we know the rate of transmission in Teaneck right now?
 - No exact number for Teaneck right now. It seems like 5-10 cases in Teaneck from week to week. Not sure where those statistics come from.
 - 7 students in 5 families were quarantining in TCCS. Due to exposure outside of the school. Their COVID tests came back negative.

- School building will remain open if teachers want to come in to teach or gather teaching materials. Will further use the time to make sure the building is in even better shape. TCCS will not be 'closing', but instead moving to full remote.
 - Any plan for children with IEPs?
 - Everyone, including classified students, will go full remote.
 - Ms. Anders added that extra services and accommodations are being given to classified students, and that will continue if we go remote. Teachers have extra check-ins and other methods to give extra assistance to the students.
 - Eleby explained that that was another factor that went into making the decision.
 - How significant is the advantage of going for the additional working days when placed against the concerns raised?
 - The school will be open, so whatever needs to be done will occur whether students are in school or not.
 - Are there a lot of cases in Teaneck schools?
 - Statement from the Health Department states that cases are up in Teaneck and in schools. Unclear what schools they are referring to.
 - Hadnot stated that teachers are appreciated, but struggle is with school being open even for staff. She stated the Board should consider whether the school should open at all. She thinks we should use the time to close out and plan. She stands with the community.
 - Positive teacher Covid case earlier in the year was a special case. There were mandated teacher meetings and contact between teachers. Now, what Mr. Gallo is proposing to give teachers the option to come into school, it is not mandated.
 - Member from the Public - Expressed her feelings relating to hybrid instruction and the positive effect it has had on her child. She prefers to have the extra days of hybrid instruction.
 - Hadnot expressed that the fact that TCCS hasn't had any Covid positive cases is due to all of the measures that have been implemented, but the teachers' health is primary.
 - Holway asked if this is a preventive measure, because the numbers now are not the same as they were in March, correct?
 - yes
 - Anderson expressed that what's happening around Teaneck in Englewood, Hackensack and NYC, is happening in Teaneck. Therefore, Anderson in favor of closing immediately
- Mitchell made a motion to revise the standing resolution, 2011-05 -Revised 2020-2021 Reopening Plan, to allow students to continue hybrid this week and start full remote learning Monday November 23, 2020, everything else remaining the same in the resolution.
 - Karibi-Whyte seconds the revision of the amendment
 - Roll call vote; resolution carries.

- Amended resolution 2011-05 -Revised 2020-2021 Reopening Plan read to Board and community
 - Moved by Mitchell; seconded by Gonzalez. Roll call vote; resolution carries.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:14pm