District Presents Details of State Required Health and Safety Plan

District Seeks Public Comment at Special Public Hearing July
Board to Consider Postponing In-Class Instruction for Nine Weeks

PITTSBURGH July 22, 2020 – Details of the District’s All In Health and Safety Plan were shared with the Board at the start of today’s Legislative Meeting. The state required plan for reopening must be Board approved prior to submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. That approval will be postponed to August 4, to allow opportunity for public comment at a Special Public Hearing scheduled for July 29, at 5:00 PM.

“We know the safe and healthy reopening of schools is a priority for everyone,” said Superintendent Anthony Hamlet. “While the public had an opportunity to review the more than 400 recommendations developed by our 14 subcommittees, it was important that we provided the public time to review and provide comment on the final plan.”

While no strategies exist for completely eliminating the spread of COVID-19, the District’s Health and Safety plan outlines actions steps for keeping transmission as low as possible in four areas: Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting and Ventilation; Social Distancing and Other Safety Protocols; Monitoring Student and Staff Health; and Other Considerations for Students and Staff.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting and Ventilation
Specific procedures that will be followed to properly clean, sanitize, disinfect, and ventilate buildings and buses throughout the school year. Key action steps include:

- Sanitize and/or disinfect all areas of our buildings with special attention to high touch surfaces.
- Daily cleaning of classrooms, hallways, and other areas.
- Deep cleaning on Wednesday of each week when no students are in the building (AA/BB cohort schedule).
- Ensure proper operation of all ventilation equipment.
- Use OSHA and CDC approved disinfectant supplies, including electrostatic sprayers, intermittent disinfectant solutions and Tyvek suits.
- Bus drivers will disinfect in- between routes.
- Water fountain bubblers will be turned off, but bottle filling stations will remain on.

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Social Distancing and Other Safety Protocols
Once face-to-face instruction is implemented, District families have a choice between a full-time E-Learning option or a mix of in-school instruction and E-Learning. For those families who desire the latter, an AA/BB cohort schedule will be followed. All students will be divided into A and B groupings. This would mean students in the AA cohort will attend school Monday and Tuesday and participate in E-Learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, while students in the BB cohort will attend school on Thursday and Friday and have E-Learning on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Wednesdays will be used for extensive cleaning between cohorts. Additional action steps include:

- All students will be required to wear a mask/shield on the District transportation (IEP, 504 Plan Exceptions). Assigned seating with students required to sit one to a seat and closest to the window.
- Distance of 6 to 8 feet maintained between desks and between students seated at tables.
- Screens or dividers installed as in labs and shops with fixed equipment. Desk shields provided to all teachers and service providers.
- Screens or dividers installed if cafeteria tables cannot accommodate the prescribed distance.
- Floor markings will be placed to ensure social distancing.
- Art, Music and Library teachers will come to the classroom to limit hall congestion. Enough materials will be provided to enable limited sharing.
- Musical instruments will not be shared. Each student will be provided their own instrument.
- Where feasible, supplies and materials will not be shared among students, and students will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after use.
- Upon return, books will be set aside for 2 to 3 days to ensure they are not contaminated.
- Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Speech/Language, and other specialized personnel provided with cleaning protocol to be used in between related service sessions.

Monitoring Student and Staff Health
In addition to sharing procedures for actions following a report of a positive case of COVID-19, the plan puts in place the following action steps to monitor the health of students and staff daily.

- Each day, all students and staff will have their temperatures checked.
- Parents will be encouraged to screen their children for symptoms before school.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be in place, along with signage regarding use of PPE.
- Where feasible, separate or multiple entrance/exit doors for staff and students.

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In addition to sharing key safety protocol and procedures, the Health and Safety plan shares considerations for professional development on COVID-19 safety awareness, social distancing, and resocialization for sports. The plan also identifies the makeup of the District’s Pandemic Team and shares details on communication strategies that will be used to engage stakeholders.

2020-2021 Reopening Options
To date, 4,161 or 20% students have been enrolled in full-time E-Learning by choice. Families have until August 30, to enroll their child in full time E-learning. Those who do not enroll in full time E-learning will be earmarked for a blended in-school model that includes a mix of in-school instruction and E-Learning on an AA/BB cohort schedule once this option is available. The District continues to monitor the spread of COVID-19 in Allegheny County and may transition to an entirely online start of the school year if conditions related to COVID-19 make it difficult to assure student and staff safety.

The full Health and Safety plan and well as this evening’s presentation can be found on the District’s website at https://www.pghschools.org/ALLIN. The Board will vote to approve the state required Health and Safety Plan at a Special Legislative Meeting that will take place August 4, 2020.

In Other Business – Board to Consider Postponing In-Class Instruction for Nine Weeks
A resolution for public consideration was introduced by Board Member, Kevin Carter, calling on the Board to postpone in-class instruction for the first nine-weeks of school and directs that all student begin the school year enrolled in remote learning.

The resolution goes on to direct the Superintendent to modify the District’s current plans for blended instruction and to prepare plans for all students to begin the school year equipped to succeed in remote learning. The resolution goes further to direct the District to provide contingency plans for Special Education students, parents of students who are essential workers, and those parents not able to support their child’s remote learning journey. The Board will vote on the resolution at its August 4 Special Legislative Meeting, following its July 29, Special Public Hearing.

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