

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING – March 15, 2020**  
**Via Zoom Meeting**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION PRESENT</b>
Mrs. Archer Dr. Corcoran Mrs. Deforest Mrs. James-Murad Mrs. Petrosillo Mrs. Rhodes Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz Mr. Souser Mrs. Woodcock Dettor William Guisbond		Dr. Peter Smith, Superintendent Mr. Reyes, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Petrosillo called the meeting to order at 6:04.

This meeting has been called to discuss a possible school closure in advance of the County Executive's Order to close on Friday, March 20.

Mrs. Petrosillo sent information via email and has discussed with the FM BOE president. She indicated that Dr. Smith was going to speak with the FM superintendent to better understand their decision.

Dr. Smith reported that he spoke with Dr. Tice. There were no new data points since the County Executive's press conference but the community physicians were providing information to the BOE that in their professional judgement the district should be closed earlier.

Mrs. Woodcock Dettor asked if they (FM) were willing to risk the possibility of losing their state aid.

Mrs. Petrosillo indicated they were able to make some adjustments to their calendar to make up the week.

Dr. Smith reported that he checked with counsel and they are unsure if the use of snow days would qualify for the state aid exemption.

Mr. Souser asked about the rationale used by the county to wait a week to close schools.

Dr. Smith reported that the decision was based on the available data.

- There is no case in the county
- CDC Recommendation- Closing may not actually reduce the risk of spreading the virus
- Child care accommodation time for families
- Once the schools close then up to 50% of the medical work force could be jeopardized

Mrs. Archer expressed concerns about staff attendance. Dr. Smith reported that the principals are being asked to track staff attendance and have a plan in place should there be a number of staff absent.

Mrs. Woodcock Dettor reported that CBA and MPH are closed and that 24 hours from now the landscape may look different. She asked do we need a day for all of our kids to get in to the school and prepare.

Dr. Smith indicated that a day or two would be helpful.

Mrs. Archer reported the administrators in Syracuse City School District spent all of Saturday packing materials for students. She asked if JD had put any of those plans into action and what has been done for students who may need to spend time with social workers.

Dr. Smith reported that expectations were outlined for staff.

Dr. Corcoran reminded the Board that there's no penalty for parents to keep their kids home. We have to use the data that was presented yesterday and that several people made the decision to close at the end of the week together.

Mrs. Petrosillo stated the issue here is the national pandemic and encouraged the Board to look at it globally, asked do we need to "flatten the curve?" She stated she thinks this is a bigger issue.

Dr. Corcoran asked "If FM didn't close, would we still be having this conversation?"

Mrs. Petrosillo stated she doesn't understand why all of the counties are different. Her feeling is that JD should close now for the good of the whole.

Mrs. DeForest stated that Skaneateles and Jordan Elbridge bumped up because they are in a different BOCES.

Dr. Smith stated this is where it becomes very unclear because of the order from the County Executive. The 180 day requirement is waived because of the local executive's order.

Will stated a lot of kids are feeling the anxiety of uncertainty. It might be helpful to have a day but conversely it might be better to close as it could be best for kids. He asked if we can strike a happy medium.

Mrs. Archer agreed with Will's suggestion.

Mrs. Woodcock Dettor stated she believes that students need to be in school and get their materials and reconnect before the extended absence.

Dr. Smith reported that counselors are working on Tier 1 supports and identifying students that need more support. This has been done for the upcoming break and for their return.

Mrs. Rhodes asked "What are you envisioning for when we are closed?"

Dr. Smith reported that the district is providing continuity of education but not distance learning. We are providing daily work in every class for every subject for every student. There will be work for each day. The high school will be adding items to Google Classroom. We are using the systems we already have in place. The high school is focused on ensuring students have access to a computer.

Mrs. Rhodes asked if there has been discussion about using technology to address SEL concerns.

Dr. Smith reported that K-8 we are going low tech. There may not be the face to face contact but there will be a connection via the work and that virtual contact is more likely at the high school.

Mrs. Rhodes asked if teachers will work at school or from home.

Dr. Smith reported that we have offered the option of working at home or school.

Mr. Souser stated he agrees with Will and Mrs. Woodcock Dettor.

Mrs. Rhodes stated she supports closing early. She stated that children are going to show the least amount of symptoms and she feels we are putting our kids at risk. She stated the BOE should make a recommendation to Dr. Smith tonight so that people can plan.

Mrs. James Murad stated she is for closing as soon as we can. There are not tests available so we are working with unreliable data.

Dr. Corcoran said she was concerned for our staff with not closing early. However, we have to prepare our kids for the closure. She stated "It's not if, it's when."

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz stated that we need to know what's going to happen. First responders need a place to send their kids. She asked if there is a modified plan for how the students interact and if they can be managed for a short period of time. She stated we should stay open but there should be a plan for the kids so that staff can plan.

Dr. Smith stated he appreciates the conversation and that we should respect the opinions of the leadership in the county that have advised us. He stated we should consider that our community is broader than JD. He suggested being in school Monday and Tuesday and a staff day on Wednesday. He has a sense that by tomorrow there will be a change in the County Executive's order. He indicated that we want our teachers with our kids tomorrow because they already have those relationships and that is key for as long as we can provide it.

Dr. Smith reported that the County Executive is asking for information about FRPL by tomorrow. Health care staffing plans are also due. He anticipates our announcement being sent at 7pm on Monday. He stated details are changing hourly, so he would like the BOE to be available to meet and discuss further if necessary.

Mrs. Archer asked if Dr. Smith could let the BOE know if they can be of service in the plans that we are creating.

Dr. Smith shared the Jamesville Elementary plan for supporting students.

Mrs. Petrosillo reiterated that all extra-curricular activities are cancelled.

There was discussion about the next BOE meeting. It was stated that the governor's guidance allows for an electronic meeting with transcripts and a recording.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz asked if community outreach groups are reaching out to the community.

Mrs. Rhodes asked if we should implement a social media presence for this time.

Dr. Smith stated he is hesitant to start a new communication tool during a crisis.

Mrs. Petrosillo suggested that this could be in addition to the way we already communicate.

Mrs. Rivera-Ortiz stated there are a lot of parents that are sending their kids to school even though they have been recently sick and asked if there is a way to reiterate the criteria for staying home.

Mrs. Archer shared the Syracuse City School District protocol for students that are sick.

Dr. Smith reported that the district's protocol is similar.

There was discussion about the text alerts and some BOE members not receiving them. Mr. Reyes will handle this.

No votes were taken during the meeting.

At 7:10 p.m., Mrs. Rhodes and Mr. Souser seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion to adjourn.

Motion carried (9-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Peter C. Smith  
Acting Clerk of the Board

**Board Approved: 3/23/20**