

Henrico County Public Schools

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

3/22/2021

1. **Welcome** – committee members were welcomed.
2. **Review of Data**- Data was reviewed and presented by Chtaura Jackson. Using the new CDC guidance for school metrics the data for this week is as follows; total number of new cases per 100,000 is at 108.4 which is in the high category. The percent positivity of new cases is 4.6%. HCPS will continue to use the mitigating measures currently in place.

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/key-measures/pandemic-metrics/school-metrics/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html#thresholds>

School Dashboards

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/outbreaks-in-education-settings/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

3. **Updated CDC guidance for distancing in schools**- Updated guidance came out last week about 3-foot distancing for students in elementary schools. Currently VDH has not adopted this new guidance. HCPS has three school where student desks are between 3-6 feet apart. All parents of these schools were notified ahead of time about this. All other schools have maintained the 6-foot social distancing. In all schools there is at least 6 feet between the students and staff. Chtaura Jackson recommended that the school divisions look at the impact that this would cause vs the benefit if deciding to move to this recommendation. For contact tracing purposes, the guidance has not changed. Anyone within 6 feet of someone who tests COVID positive for 15 minutes or longer is still considered a close contact. The committee members agreed that HCPS will maintain the 6-foot distancing in all, but these three schools already identified. The committee also agreed to revisit this recommendation later if community transmission is decreased.

4. COVID Vaccine Update- Vaccination efforts continue for the community at the Richmond Raceway. School nurses are still helping the community with these clinics on Wednesdays, evenings, and weekends. The vaccine clinics will be held over Spring Break. Robin has been working with LaWanda Dunn at the Richmond/Henrico Health department so HCPS employees who are still in need of vaccines can be scheduled directly in the VAMS system. Cathy Edwards is helping with this as she has been doing. Mrs. Atkins asked a question about whether students were eligible for the COVID vaccine. Currently there is no plan to vaccinate students but children who are over the age of 16 can receive the Pfizer vaccine if they fall into the 1B category with parental consent. Robin will reach out to get this information on the HCPS school website so information on how to sign up to receive a vaccine from the community partners is available. Dr. Viray suggested that the following link be added to the website.

vaccinate.virginia.gov

5. Sports and Return to Play- Contact tracing continues to work cases related to sports teams. Currently, the cases are trending down. Robin plans to meet with the middle school athletic directors as middle school sports are starting soon.

6. Volunteers in Schools- Cortney Berry reported that the volunteer guidelines are being finalized with input from Debbie Long. These guidelines include a tiered approach and should be ready soon.

7. Review of Preparedness for Re-opening

- **PPE – N95 update**- Chtaura Jackson and Dr. Viray were consulted during the meeting about the use of plexiglass shields and air flow. Chtaura has done some research but cannot find anything definite. She will continue to research and update as needed. The CDC has removed the recommendation of physical barriers but that is different than recommending the removal of the barriers. The plexiglass does pose an issue with the ability to hear while teaching/learning in person per some research that Chtaura has found.

- **Staffing**- There are currently 18 clinic aide positions still open. Two school nurse positions are open now with two more to come due to retirement at the end of the year.

- **Contact Tracing**- There are currently more student cases than employee cases for the second week in a row. Chtaura Jackson states this may be due to adults being vaccinated and children are not at this time. HCPS uses the 14-day isolation recommendation when a student or staff member is a close contact. The CDC recommendation of a shorter quarantine is not used. The reason is that testing is not mandatory and for the shortened period, a test is a part of the equation. CDC still considers a 14-day quarantine best for positive exposures. There is an exception to the 14 day and that is when a household member is COVID positive and the person cannot quarantine away from the positive case. This means a longer time for quarantine up to 24 days.

-Ill staff and students- when a student or staff member report symptoms that are on the COVID symptom list they are asked to stay out for 10 days or get a note from the physician that they have been evaluated and deemed non-contagious. A negative test alone will not clear someone to come back if they have symptoms. Some parents have reached out to the school health office as they are unclear about this process. COVID symptoms can mimic many other conditions and at this time of year, it is hard to determine allergies from COVID. Each school nurse is aware of the procedures for ill students/staff and can help with this and contact tracing when needed. These minutes will be on the HCPS health dashboard for reference. If anyone has a question, they can call the HCPS School Health Office at 343-6504.

8. Mental Health- Christina Vitek reported today that her team has worked with Andy Jenks on a video about appropriate behaviors surrounding Spring Break. She also shared that her team is bringing additional curriculum to the middle schools about mental health.

9. LAMPS teachers- discussion about whether teachers should/could change and offer classes where they are present in the classrooms. More information to come on this.

10. Other activities- the JROTC has been invited on an overnight trip to Nationals and wanted to know if this was allowed. Currently no field trips are allowed but this is considered a part of the curriculum and may be. They should submit a transition plan and DLT will review and make recommendations.

11. Next Steps –

Summer programs- discussion about the need for nurses and clinic aides for the summer programs. The decrease in salary for nurses who work summer programs may pose an issue with recruitment. It was decided that each summer site will need a clinic aide in addition to a nurse, so staffing is adequate with the clinic and health isolation rooms.

Addendum to HCPS COVID 19 Health plan- Updated health plan to be posted this week.

VDH COVID – School K-12

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/schools-workplaces-community-locations/k-12-education/>
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2020/09/Noncritical-Infrastructure-Worker-Algorithm.pdf>