

Henrico County Public Schools

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

5/10/2021

1. **Welcome** – committee members who were present 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 the week is as follows; total number of new cases per 100,000 is at 92.33 which is in the substantial category. This is down from last week. The percent positivity of new cases is currently 4.2%. The percent change is -21.6%.

Chtaura stated that the drop in COVID-19 cases is because of many factors that include, vaccines, and warmer weather allowing for socializing outside.

<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. **COVID Vaccine update:** The large vaccination events held at the Richmond Raceway will continue until May 27, 2021. There was a lot of discussion about when and where to vaccinate children aged 12-15 when the FDA authorizes it. The health department, HCPS and members of Henrico's emergency management team will need to meet to discuss the best way to offer the vaccines to this age group. It will be a balance between educating parents and students and finding the right time and place to offer them.

4. **Updates to COVID CDC guidance and Governors orders-** New guidance on the number of individuals allowed indoors is supposed to increase starting May 15, 2021. Key changes in will include:

- **Social gatherings:** The maximum number of individuals permitted in a social gathering will increase to 100 people for indoor settings and 250 people for outdoor settings. Social gatherings are currently limited to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors.
- **Entertainment venues:** Indoor entertainment and public amusement venues will be able to operate at 50 percent capacity or 1,000 people, up from 30 percent capacity or 500 people. Outdoor venues will be able to operate at 50 percent capacity—up from 30 percent—with no specific cap on the number of attendees.

- The committee was unanimous in the recommendation that the social distancing requirements and other prevention methods be upheld until the end of the school year even with changes expected to come on June 15, 2021 that may lift these requirements.

5. Review of Preparedness for Re-opening

- **Staffing**- Clinic aides are continuing to be hired. There are openings for summer clinic staff as well as for nursing staff next school year.

- **Contact Tracing**- There are currently more student COVID-19 cases than adult cases being reported. There also has been a change with how outbreaks are being reported. However, this will not affect the HCPS outbreak report. Robin is working on identifying all employees who may have contracted COVID via a workplace exposure vs. community or household exposure. This is for Henrico Risk Management. The HCPS School Health Services contact tracing nurses will continue working cases until the end of the school year. Contact tracing responsibility will then shift to the individual schools reaching out to the health department for guidance on who would need to isolate and quarantine for each case.

6. Next Steps –

COVID testing of students/staff-more information to come next week from Robin. It does not appear that any COVID testing will occur prior to the end of the school year.

Summer programs- There is a question about whether a health plan is needed for summer programs and for next school year. Dr. Teigen will find out and report to the group. There will be a transition to social distancing of 3 feet in summer programs if necessary. Seating charts will need to be completed each day on the buses and in the classrooms.

Volunteer guidelines- The committee agreed to open volunteer opportunities to Tier 2 since transmission is in the substantial range instead of high. This allows for volunteers to work inside but not around students.

Additional items for discussion-

Re-opening of school- With a return of 5 day/week in-person learning occurring next school year, it will be hard to have social distancing further than 3 feet. Susan Moore reported that if a school is at 90% capacity that 3 feet between desks is possible. Other prevention measures will be reviewed before the start of school depending on the recommendations from the CDC, VDH and VDOE. Contact tracing will continue to occur in the summer and next school year as young students and others that choose not to get vaccinated will be in attendance. There may need to be a change in the school calendar to allow for early release days to be added as some parents and staff have requested this. This is still in discussion.

Field trips- the group stated the importance of field trips for students to continue next school year. It would ultimately be a parental decision if they wanted their student to participate.

There was a recommendation for transition plans to be submitted for field trips that occur in smaller groups and involve travel to other states.

Student and teacher absences- Student absences were up slightly last week. Teacher/staff absences were up at the beginning of the week and decreased at the end of the week. HCPS still has the ability to supply teaching substitutes as needs arise.

Social Emotional Learning- Members of the committee expressed the importance of having time for students and staff to work on social and emotional learning activities. The past year has been hard on everyone and it will take some time to come together and be comfortable. Community building still needs to be a priority. Christina Vitek stated that SEL standards are being released on 7/1/2021 and this will help empower teachers to build activities into their lessons. Additional school counselors are being hired for the elementary schools and this will allow for students to get the extra support that may be needed.

James Upshaw shared the link below as a guide for reopening of schools.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f85f5a156091e113f96e4d3/t/60885fa500e63d4a1980ec2f/1619550124862/FINAL+ROADMAP_4.27.pdf

Next meeting will take place on 5/17/2021.