



Board of Directors Meeting

DC Bilingual Public Charter School
33 Riggs Road, NE Washington, DC
HELD REMOTELY DUE TO COVID-19
Tuesday, September 7, 2021
9:30AM

Board Approved October 5, 2021

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Present Remotely:

A. Abbas, M. Holt-Brockenbrough, N. DeVeux, N. Ramey, D. Z. Shaw, R. Lambert, I. Juarez, L. Parris, A. Robinson, M. Taddese, C. Williams

Absent:

- B. Wallace
- D. Gershowitz

School Leadership:

- Daniela Anello – Head of School
- John Breyer – Chief Financial Officer
- Rohini Ramnath – Principal 3-5
- Christian Yarberry - Chief Operating Officer
- Regina Wooldridge - COVID Coordinator

Guests:

- Darius Munchak – EdOps

CALL TO ORDER

N. Ramey called the meeting to order at 9:35am.

MINUTES

Board Vote: N. Ramey moved to approve the June 2021 meeting minutes, L. Parris seconded, and the Board approved via roll call vote from present Board members.

Abstained - C.Williams

Board Vote: N. Ramey moved to approve the July 9 and July 13, 2021 meeting minutes, R.Lambert seconded, and the Board approved unanimously via roll call vote from present Board members.



Abstained - D. Gershowitz, C. Williams, L. Parris, M. Holt

WELCOME

N. Ramey welcomed new and returning families to DCB's public meeting and encouraged community members to put questions in the chat throughout the meeting, which the Board will address after the meeting and post in the meeting minutes. The Board will hold listening sessions to create a more direct connection between Board, DCB families, DCB staff, and community members. Details will be distributed once dates and times are finalized. At the opening of the meeting, we had 16 community members in attendance, in addition to Board members, school leadership, and guests listed above.

HEAD OF SCHOOLS REPORT

D. Anello briefed the Board on arrival and dismissal. Systems put into place to support safe arrival and dismissal have been challenging but are being continuously adapted. Volunteers are welcomed. DCB is providing extra compensation to staff who would like to stay earlier or later than their normal work time.

D. Anello briefed the Board on enrollment and Back to School Night. Currently at 488 enrolled students but plan to get to 492 by the end of the week by bringing students off the waitlist. Impact DMV church provided backpacks and school supplies; families sold masks, food and wellness ensured families filled out lunch forms, introduced staff and family services, and more occurred.

D. Anello introduced Development Director, Anna Christ, who was not at the meeting but was present in the building as a new employee.

Construction updates - on schedule. The playground is 90% complete. PreK leadership team designed the playground and wanted to keep it as simple as possible to cultivate creativity and imaginative play. The Project Manager is keeping noisy construction to weekends so as not to impact learning. Much of the noisy construction was completed before school started.

D. Anello introduced Regina Wooldridge, the new COVID Coordinator, who provided a brief on COVID policies and procedures. N. Ramey asked about the logistics of lunch. R. Wooldridge responded that the school had limited the number of students in the lunchroom. Assigned seating in the lunchroom matches snack time in classrooms. C. Williams asked if the school shares school-wide results of asymptomatic testing. The school will share when a positive case occurs. What steps should be taken when parents know of symptoms. Parents should contact R. Wooldridge or staff immediately via phone call or email. Parents can call the front desk and information will be provided to R. Wooldridge. D. Gershowitz asked if there were opportunities to vaccinate the parent community. R. Wooldridge responded that staff has discussed education and awareness but will continue to develop a communication strategy. I. Juarez expressed her



appreciation towards the organization and communication around returning to school under COVID.

BOARD GOALS

N. DeVeaux walked through the draft Board Goals. The Board reviewed the document and provided input.

Board Vote: N. Ramey moved to approve the Board Goals. N. DeVeaux seconded, and the Board approved unanimously via roll call vote from present Board members.

HEAD OF SCHOOLS GOALS

D. Anello presented the draft HOS goals and received comments. The goals were not brought to a vote at this meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:53 am.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

From chat during board meeting:

1. *Thanks for opening the meeting. I'm a new parent to DCB. Not sure if this is the correct group to ask, but if so, I'm curious to hear any update on the playground and if additional work is planned.*

[Response:](#) The playground is about 90% complete, one more piece of equipment will be added. It was designed by the PK/K staff with the intent to keep it simple on purpose so children can use their imaginations when playing.

2. *Will [free and reduced meal] forms be sent home with students?*

[Response:](#) Yes, DCB has copies and will send them home with families who have not yet submitted their forms.

3. *Will parents in the classroom of positive Covid cases be notified?*

[Response:](#) Yes, parents will be notified by phone and/or email by Regina Woolridge if there is a positive case in their child's classroom.

4. *Regarding testing, can we see the metrics on how many tests/percentage of school are conducted? Same regarding vaccinate rates on staff and who is considered staff when reporting the percentages.*



Response: Yes, starting the week of September 13th, DCB will begin sending out weekly communications of our COVID statistics via email and linked in the HOS message. Data will be shared in a way that does not violate the confidentiality of any staff or student.

5. *Does staff complete the daily health checks as well?*

Response: Yes, all staff must complete a daily health screening check similar to the one for students.

6. *Is there a possibility to extend the daily health check beyond physical and also screen for emotional wellbeing?*

Response: Currently, DCB staff informally screens students for emotional well-being and works closely with members of the students support team (SST) to provide the necessary intervention support to students, and families. Often, parents tell teachers if a child is not well emotionally and the teachers provide the necessary supports during the school day. This support can include time with our school counselors.

7. *Also very grateful for all you're doing. In terms of remaining sources of risk, indoor eating looms large given mask removal. Many other schools are eating outdoor, including DCI for its unvaxed kids. We heard from Regina that a big challenge is staffing, which we understand. Can we still keep that on the list of goals to work towards?*

Response: In planning for the return to school we considered outdoor lunch. At this time, the best possible lunch plan for students that will allow us to maintain proper distance (3 foot distance between students, 6-foot distance between classes) and manage the food distribution and clean up process to ensure all classes have the same, safe experience, is to seat no more than two classes in the Bistro at any given time, and for grades where there are three classes we have the third class eat at the same time in the classroom (also 3 foot distance). Our pre k classes will all eat in their classrooms. This plan is in keeping with all school health guidelines and allows us to have the proper amount of staff (also keeping distance) be able to perform the safest food distribution and clean up process. Students will also have assigned seating during lunch which will allow us to contact trace as carefully as we can in the case of a positive covid case in any of the four lunch rotations. Additionally, Health and safety guidelines provided by the CDC and DC Health continue to evolve as we learn more about how COVID-19 is spread. We will evaluate procedures throughout the year to ensure we're doing the best we can to maintain the safety of our students.

From registration and email:

8. *How to check a child's grades?*

Response: Currently testing is underway to determine student's beginning of the year levels. Grades will be shared formally during parent teacher conferences.. PTCs. If any



parents/caregivers want information before then, they can always reach out to their Principal or teacher.

9. *Questions on air quality.*

Response: We're happy to report that we made some improvements to air filtration this week in each classroom. Medify Air Purifier HEPA filters were installed in each classroom—these filters remove 99.9% of particles down to 0.1 microns in size. Also, the HVAC system in the building cycles fresh air 3.6 times per hour.

HVAC/Ventilation/CO2 Monitoring

DC Bilingual follows the CDC's recommendation of a layered approach to reduce COVID-19 exposures including improvements to building ventilation (see below). Fortunately, the school underwent a major modernization project three years ago, including upgrading to Grade A HVAC quality and meeting the LEED Gold building rating. In addition to ventilation improvements, our layered approach includes physical distancing, wearing face masks, hand hygiene, and vaccination.

- DCB has MERV-13 filters that are replaced every three months
- The airflow throughout the building spaces experiences 3.6 fresh air exchanges per hour
- We also encourage open windows, when possible
- CO2 monitors are located in DC Bilingual hallways
- Medify Air Purifier HEPA filters we installed in each classroom—these filters remove 99.9% of particles down to 0.1 microns in size.

10. *COVID safety practices*

Response: [Here is a link to DC Bilingual's COVID Policy Handbook.](#) We are committed to working with our community to provide all students, staff, and families with as safe an environment as possible during the ongoing public health emergency.

11. *Why is there a Staff Vaccination Opt-Out?*

Response: Currently, DCB has adopted a more stringent vaccine mandate than the Mayor's and as things change and new mandates are issued, we hope to continue that trend. As you know, the Mayor's mandate allows for vaccine exemptions for religious reasons, medical reasons, or if the person chooses to be tested weekly. At DCB, we require testing twice a week for anyone who is not fully vaccinated. This policy is for ALL staff employed by DC Bilingual, including part-time and full-time teachers, substitute teachers, custodial team members, lunch servers, and Hive staff. At this time, over 80% of our staff are fully vaccinated, and we hope that by the end of September to be at 90%.

12. *I'd like consistently clear, preferably stand-alone communication about COVID policies, procedures, with weekly updates regarding testing rates and results, and vaccination rates of staff broken into groups of staff, and/or a clear definition of staff when the total vaccination rate is reported. (See other charter schools for examples, e.g. Capital City's weekly report.) This unclear communication appears to be an issue internally, judging by conflicting information coming from my kids' teachers. It's understandable that leadership would know more about high levels than the staff, but when the staff are being the most responsive, it's helpful for everyone to be on the same page.*

Response: Thank you for your questions and concerns. Many families have reached out for additional information and to offer support. The school leaders are working diligently to address our families' questions, and comments and will be posting FAQs on the school website as they are addressed. With regard to updates on testing and vaccinations, starting the week of September 13th, DCB will begin sending out weekly communications of our COVID statistics via email and linked in the HOS message. Data will be shared in a way that does not violate the confidentiality of any staff or student.

13. *Can we move lunch outside?*

Response: In planning for the return to school, we considered outdoor lunch. At this time, the best possible lunch plan for students that will allow us to maintain proper distance (3-foot distance between students, 6-foot distance between classes) and manage the food distribution and clean up process to ensure all classes have the same, safe experience, is to seat no more than two classes in the Bistro at any given time, and for grades where there are three classes we have the third class eat at the same time in the classroom (also 3 foot distance). Our pre k classes will all eat in their classrooms. This plan is in keeping with all school health guidelines and allows us to have the proper amount of staff (also keeping distance) be able to perform the safest food distribution and clean up process. Students will also have assigned seating during lunch which will allow us to contact trace as carefully as we can in the case of a positive covid case in any of the four lunch rotations. Additionally, Health and safety guidelines provided by the CDC and DC Health continue to evolve as we learn more about how COVID-19 is spread. We will evaluate procedures throughout the year to ensure we're doing the best we can to maintain the safety of our students.

14. *There are parents who want to help in anyway they can, whether it's organizing or fundraising to enhance overall student safety. Can there be coordination between school and PTA and/or parents to do this? Examples of items to help could include screens on windows, portable air purifiers, moveable lunch trays to enhance spacing in classrooms where lunch is eaten to create more physical distance (e.g to eat on the floor and create more space at tables), etc.*



Response: The PTA is an excellent venue for parents to engage with staff and one another, share common concerns and ideas, and coordinate volunteering or fundraising.