



# KIRBY SCHOOL DISTRICT 140

## ***PARENT MEETING REPORT SUMMARY***

**Date:** November 12, 2020

At 6:00 P.M., Dr. Olson introduced himself and explained the format for the meeting. Those in attendance included: Dr. Shawn Olson, Superintendent; Dr. Kristine Roth, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Mary Dwyer, Director of Special Services; Mr. Brian Nemeth, Director of Technology; Mr. Chuck Augustyniak and Mrs. Deborah Kowalski, Board Members; and Mrs. Karen Jamraz, Recording Secretary. There were also 6 parents in attendance.

Parent #1 talked about her concerns with the hybrid plan. She does not have a problem with the in-person time her child has but she is not happy about the remote time stating that her child has, on average, about 7 minutes per day of remote activity. She asked why the remote learning can't be synchronous like it was for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. She feels frustrated that we are now 8 months into this pandemic and we still don't have a solid plan. Her hope was that at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter we would hit the ground running.

- Dr. Olson responded that we do have a plan in place. It may seem like we've had 8 months to figure out this plan, in fact we've had several plans only to have to start over because of changing guidelines. We are short of substitute teachers. They do not want to come into the buildings. We can possibly have the substitutes Zoom with the students or teachers who are well enough can teach remotely and we can put a para in the classroom to supervise.

Parent #1 also asked why the district plan is for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to be on the same platform? She feels that grades 6-8 can be more in line with District 230's plan and separate from grades K-5.

- Dr. Olson responded that since we switched to the hybrid plan at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, changes have been made to the middle school day to make it different from the elementary day. He would love to have everyone back to full in-person school, but we are also working on a plan if the event we are told to go back to full remote. That new remote plan will look different for the middle schools and for the elementary schools than how it looked at the beginning of the year.

Parent #2 said that her main concern was that as the number of positive cases rise, she anticipates going back to a full remote plan. This plan cannot look like it did at the beginning of the year when her entire day consisted of teaching Kindergarten while trying to care for her younger child. It's not that her child had too much work, it was going back and forth between the eight Zoom meetings per day and the Seesaw activity. She also feels that there has to be a plan in place and ready to implement when needed.

- Dr. Roth responded that they realize that there have been issues with the Zoom links. Her team is working on this by adding tile links to the Smore page for easier access to their homeroom teacher, specials teachers and WIN (What I Need) page.

Parent #3 asked if there was a plan for an adaptive pause in the school year between Thanksgiving and Christmas as other districts are doing. She also asked if a teacher is quarantined, can he/she teach remotely while the students are in the classroom under supervision and is there a plan for specials teachers to teach synchronous lessons? She also feels that communication needs to improve. The more information that people have, the less upset they are going to be.

- Dr. Olson said that right now there is no intention of an adaptive pause. If our students can stay in class safely, he will continue with this plan. However, we want to be responsible and we can decide to shut down a classroom or a school if needed without closing the District.
- If a teacher is quarantined and they are well enough to teach, they can Zoom in to their classroom while the students will be under the supervision of a paraeducator.
- Dr. Olson acknowledged that our communication needs are ever evolving. He would like to have more meetings like this one to help open the line of communication.

Parent #4's main concern was that her child, who is a special education student, is not moving forward. These students cannot stay home and fall further behind. She also stated that there was a lack of communication and the District needs to be more transparent.

- Dr. Olson said that these are legitimate fears. He has a team that are capable of working on their own and do not need to be micro-managed. He would like to continue to develop a respectful relationship with parents and continue to get information out to them.

Parent #5 stated that when the hybrid plan went into effect, her child remained a remote student and it has been going very well. She really appreciates everything that the district is doing in fact her child told her he likes this new remote plan better!

- Dr. Olson thanked this parent for her comments. He pointed out that we do have a complete spectrum of situations. What is working for some families, may not be working for others. This is why these discussions are so important to us.

Parent #6 said that she realizes we are in the midst of a second wave of the virus. She would like the District to be proactive and not reactive. Moving forward, she would also like the District to be more transparent and honest.

Parent #5 also said to Dr. Olson, "let us help you help us". By informing the parents a little better we can help the transition at home.

- Dr. Olson hears what you are asking. We are planning, we are looking ahead but what you are asking for is to see those plans. You want to know where we are coming from and so you can plan accordingly. To say that you want to be part of this is very important. If there is not a last-minute announcement from the Governor, he will keep you informed.

Dr. Olson thanked everyone for attending and if anyone has any other comments or questions to please email or call him. He ended the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

*The next KSD 140 Parent Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 5:30 P.M.*