

**Yuma Elementary School District No. One
Governing Board
Study Session**

The Governing Board for Yuma Elementary School District No. One held a Study Session October 28, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. in the District Office Board Room, 450 West Sixth Street, Yuma, Arizona

Members present: Mrs. Barbara Foote, President; Mrs. Karen Griffin, Member; Mrs. Irene Montoya, Member; Mrs. Theresa Fox, Member.

Others present: Mr. James Sheldahl, Superintendent; District Administrative Staff and Alice Quintero, Board Secretary,

Call to Order:

Mrs. Foote called the Study Session to order at 3:03 pm. The purpose of the Study Session was to conduct a study session focusing on information related to the District's hybrid model of instruction. Topics will include Yuma County COVID-19 data and Arizona Department of Health Services guidance as well as district-level data related to enrollment, student engagement, employee surveys and the District #1 Mitigation Plan. The Governing Board will take no action at this study session.

Mr. Sheldahl started the discussion by reviewing the condensed version of the Return to Learning Guide. This Guide is used often at school site front office's staff and nurses' offices use when communicating with parents. The guide gives direction and is followed for all safety measures and protocols that have been put in place. Mr. Sheldahl also shared the newly created District One Dashboard that is updated regularly and used for faculty and staff. Lead nurse Kim Sweeney, RN addressed the board to give an update of how schools are handling the flow in the nurse's office. The guide is used often and answers many of the questions they get from parents and communicating with parents when there is a suspected case. Expectations are in the Guide for reference to any situation that may come up.

Mr. Sheldahl introduced Ryan Butcher, Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator, Benito Lopez, Epidemiologist and Karina Zavala, Supervisor from the Yuma County Health District to present Yuma County Health Data, Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) updated guidelines which can be found at this site <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-schools> and data received by zip code showed the percent positivity by zip code. Mr. Butcher reported that the most significant change was the guidelines for returning to remote learning model as opposed to the hybrid model because of the high positivity rate. Even though a benchmark was met, all three benchmarks will need to be met first for at least two weeks in a row. He also shared local developments in trends, testing and tracing regarding COVID-19.

Dr. Suzie Alka shared with the Board, parent choices, updated student numbers by learning track as of (10/26/20). Some of the benefits of current hybrid model; provides multiple choices for families, promotes CDC social distancing recommendations, promotes continuity of program. A five-day Hybrid Model has not been built/scheduled this could result in loss of social distancing. Students and Teachers may need to be changed to balance classrooms and potential ramifications for staffing which could cause a challenging instruction environment and limited opportunities for socialization and collaboration. Drawbacks of having a five day in person model is going to be challenging instruction environment and have limited opportunities for socialization and collaboration.

Mr. Munoz shared the employee survey data. Of the employee survey results of 64% (739) responses were calculated. Certified (teaching) 388 employees, Support staff 247 employees, Certified (non-teaching) 64 employees and 40 administrators. By work setting there were 193 middle school employees that responded, 121 employees by departments and 425 employees in the elementary

schools. Employee survey results for the question "How safe do you feel at work in the COVID-19 environment?" 53% felt safe and very safe. Teacher response for this question was

47.6% feel safe and very safe. Question "Have the District Protocols and staff guides helped you feel more confident returning to work?" of the 739 responses 49.5% responded "yes," 10.1% responded "no" and 40.3% responded "somewhat". Question, "Have the District Protocols and staff guides helped you feel more confident in returning to work?" 49.5% responded "yes," 40.3% responded "somewhat," 10.1% responded "no." Question, "Do you feel you have the support and resources necessary to be successful in your position during this time?" 55.2% responded "Yes," 33.8% responded "somewhat" and 11% responded "no." The top 5 responses that employees want before the District considers a transition to a 5-day student learning environment are;

- Low Yuma County positive cases – 347 responses
- Consider after cold/flu season passes – 287 responses
- Meeting state benchmarks to return to a traditional setting – 278 responses
- Do not consider until January 2021 - 233 responses
- Consider after a vaccine is available – 226 responses

The results of the feedback on protocols that have been put in place showed a significant finding that most employees feel safe. On the small percentages that showed as employees feeling not safe or somewhat safe, building administrators are using this data as a guiding tool to facilitate communication and awareness at their sites.

Mr. Sheppard reported on student engagement, grading and report cards during the pandemic. Highlighted items of discussion are; Not being able to get students engaged well, checks have been done by parent liaisons by home visits and phone calls from office staff and nurses and electronic resources. Next point of topic (grades are being given this year), report cards were distributed and in addition, progress reports are distributed in middle school. Mr. Sheldahl wrote a letter that principals used at the beginning of the year, establishing the expectations around grading. Some philosophy teachers had to adopt, no (F) is final and any student at any time can make up their work, grades can be altered, not every academic standard is equal, retakes and makeups are welcome, grades need to be equitable and meaningful, success does not depend on the conditions of the home, low expectations leads to inequity, grades guide future decisions and evaluation of student work should be based on their best evidence often their latest evidence. Accountability for our district is still in effect this year regardless of the pandemic we are still accountable for AZM2; Galileo testing; Acadience testing (K-2 reading test), AZELLA; third grade students still accountable for MOWR (Move on When Reading). Absences; 10-day attendance drop still mandated by law. In January official letters of intent to retain will be sent out. Takeaway: All accountability measures for Arizona are in place and will be administered this year.

Adjourn:

The Study Session adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Quintero, Secretary to the Board

Barbara Foote, President

Karen Griffin, Member

Irene Montoya, Member

Theresa Fox, Member