

Bethlehem Township School District

Thomas B. Conley School
940 Iron Bridge Road
Asbury, New Jersey 08802
Phone: (908) 537-4044
Fax: (908) 537-4309

Ethel Hoppock Middle School
280 Asbury/West Portal Road
Asbury, New Jersey 08802
Phone: (908) 479-6336
Fax: (908) 479-1021

Gregory C. Farley, Ed.D.
Chief School Administrator/Principal

Jane Smith, Principal
Thomas B. Conley School

Beverly Vlietstra
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Sally Klemm
Director of Special Services

March 24, 2021

To Bethlehem Township Board of Education Members:

After collecting and reviewing the concerns and issues regarding the 4th quarter schedule, the Health Related School Preparedness Committee recommends to the Bethlehem Township Board of Education that we continue to use the current shortened day in person and shortened day remote schedule. This would maintain the present instructional supports and ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. The academic and emotional benefits of maintaining our current schedule outweigh the challenges and costs anticipated in providing a full day of instruction.

We have outlined the costs and concerns of transitioning to a full-day schedule below:

Technology needs:

- Instructional Technology assistance (staff and support) with live streaming
- Correcting audio issues in each classroom and purchasing microphones for each classroom
- Installation of second computer (Mac minis from Hoppock library) in each classroom
- Use of 60 new iPads. These have been ordered for state-mandated testing; after testing, these can replace outdated iPads at Hoppock and Conley
- Additional charging cords - \$38 per cord and charging block (100 cords) - \$3,800
 - Charging stations in classrooms
 - 5 per classroom = $\$200 \times 20 = \$4,000$

Instructional/Staffing needs:

- ½ time Physical Education teacher for virtual students - \$4,600
- BSI teacher - \$9,200
- 5 additional support staff (aides) - $\$9,200 \times 5 = \$46,000$
- Time to hire with BOE approval
- Additional custodian for cleaning ($\$600$ per week) = \$5,400

New Jersey Student Learning Assessment: Waiver Submitted:

- May 3 - June 11 at Conley/Hoppock - make-ups to follow
- In-person and virtual testing - Structure unclear and not defined by NJDOE

- Potential bandwidth issues (latency)
- Technology training and preparation for testing has not been conducted yet

Social Emotional Considerations:

- 7 hours of online learning and teaching in a “live streaming” format
- In school students “live streaming” will involve all students logging into videoconferences for interaction
- In school pre-K through grade 4 students in a mask and 6 ft. taped off box all day (gr. 5-8 move classrooms)

Space: 4th and 5th grade - additional space needed to provide full time instruction:

- 4th grade: 4th will move to an enlarged classroom (3MD and Special Education room with wall removed)
- 5th and 6th grade
 - LA - STEAM room
 - Math - Library
 - Science - Art room
 - SS - Music room
- Conley cafeteria used for two classes now - will be moving classes to gym
- Physical Education must be outside
- Air conditioning needed - Masks all day in heat/humidity
- Lunches will be spread out into possibly six sessions (with staff coverage for each)

Health and Safety:

- Hunterdon County has moved to “Orange” into the High Risk category

Our committee also discussed and addressed challenges with our current shortened day schedule.

Challenges with the current schedule:

Throughout this school year our administration and staff have looked to adapt and enhance our current schedule to best meet the needs of our students. Below we have identified some of the challenges presented by our current shortened day schedule:

- Less direct instructional time
- Social/Emotional risks for students
 - Time together for our students
 - Less activities after school
 - Lack of interest in online learning for some students
- Spacing, procedures, boundaries
 - Taped boxes in classrooms
 - Hallways monitored
- Less hands-on learning

The current structure has all of our students learning each day since we began the school year on August 27th. We have had limited exposures and quarantines throughout the year and maintaining our current schedule through the rest of the school is our best option.

- The Committee will continue to investigate ways to increase/enhance instructional time (e.g. Specials, block schedules, additional small group opportunities) during the 4th Marking Period
- Continue to assign independent projects and classwork outside of instructional time
- Continue and increase after school activities
- District is offering free summer camps for residents with a variety of activities (all day and ½ day)

The recommendation of our committee is to continue with our shortened day schedule to meet the academic and social & emotional needs of our in-person and remote students.

Sincerely,

Committee Members:

- Gregory C. Farley, Ed.D., Chief School Administrator
- Jane Smith, Principal - Conley School
- Sally Klemm, Director of Special Services
- Beverly Vlietstra, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- Amy Bundt, Board Office Manager/Human Resources
- Peggy Andrews, Secretary to the CSA
- John Logar, Board of Education Member
- Travis Roop, Board of Education Member/Conley Parent
- Greg Glazar, Board of Education Member/Hoppock/Conley Parent
- Eileen Bancalari, Bethlehem Township Education Association President/Conley Teacher
- Dan Hathaway, Hoppock Teacher
- Jenifer Santoro, Conley Parent
- Kelly Weiswasser, Hoppock Parent
- Cindy Arancio, School Nurse, Hoppock
- Shannon Scanlon, School Nurse, Conley
- Kameron Jeter, School Counselor (Grades 5-8)
- Rebecca Billera, School Counselor (Grades K-6)
- Steve Douglas, District Facilities Manager
- Lisa Lee, Technology Specialist
- Anne Marie Linnen, Conley Teacher