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BOARD OF EDUCATION
BALTIMORE COUNTY

SPECIAL PUBLIC BOARD MEETING
HYBRID VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

AUGUST 3, 2021

Transcribed by:
Paul A. Gasparotti

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1 **BOARD MEMBERS:**

2

3 Makeda Scott, Board Chair

4 Julie C. Henn, Vice Chair (Absent)

5 Kathleen Causey (Absent)

6 Moalie S. Jose

7 Erin R. Hager

8 Russell T. Kuehn (Absent)

9 Lisa A. Mack (Absent)

10 Rodney R. McMillion

11 John H. Offerman, Jr. (Absent)

12 Cheryl E. Pasteur

13 Lily P. Rowe (Absent)

14 Christian Thomas, Student Member

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1 **I N D E X**

2 Call to Order. 4

3 Opening Remarks. 4

4 Rollcall of Board Members. 5

5 New Business, Masking Update 6

6 Announcements. 43

7 Adjournment. 43

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1 **PROCEEDINGS**

2 **CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT:** Good morning, this is

3 Chairwoman Makeda Scott. I call to order the

4 special meeting of the Board of Education of

5 Baltimore County for Tuesday, August 3rd, 2021.

6 In accordance with the Board of

7 Education's amended resolution approved at the

8 October 13th, 2020 board meeting, in the event of

9 a medical or health emergency related to

10 COVID-19, the board chair in consultation with

11 the vice chair and the superintendent may declare

12 that a board meeting or a board committee meeting

13 he held remotely in its entirety without the

14 physical presence of board members, or in a

15 hybrid manner with only some individual board

16 members participating remotely, subject to the

17 establishment of a mechanism that would allow

18 each board member the opportunity to fully

19 participate in the meeting despite not being

20 physically present and that would allow the

21 public to also remotely attend those portions of

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1 the meeting that are open pursuant to the

2 Maryland Open Meetings Act by being to listen

3 and/or view those portions of the meeting. As a

4 result, this morning's Board of Education meeting

5 is being held virtually and broadcast through

6 Microsoft Teams Live.

7 The sole purpose of this special meeting

8 is to update the Board of Education and the

9 community on universal masking in Baltimore

10 County Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school

11 year. No other business will be discussed this

12 morning.

13 May I please have a rollcall to

14 determine the members of the board that are

15 present in this meeting?

16 **MS. GOVER:** Ms. Rowe? Ms. Causey?

17 Ms. Mack? Mr. McMillion?

18 **MR. MCMILLION:** Present.

19 **MS. GOVER:** Ms. Jose?

20 **MS. JOSE:** Present.

21 **MS. GOVER:** Ms. Henn? Mr. Thomas?

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 MR. THOMAS: Here.</p> <p>2 MS. GOVER: Mr. Offerman? Ms. Pasteur?</p> <p>3 MS. PASTEUR: Present.</p> <p>4 MS. GOVER: Mr. Kuehn? Dr. Hager?</p> <p>5 DR. HAGER: Present.</p> <p>6 MS. GOVER: Ms. Scott?</p> <p>7 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Present.</p> <p>8 MS. GOVER: Ms. Scott, there are six</p> <p>9 present.</p> <p>10 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you. So a</p> <p>11 quorum of the Board is not present; therefore, we</p> <p>12 are unable to conduct business or take any</p> <p>13 action. However, I ask that staff proceed with</p> <p>14 the presentation to provide the Board and</p> <p>15 community information related to universal</p> <p>16 masking in BCPS. At this time I call on</p> <p>17 Dr. Wheatley-Phillip.</p> <p>18 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Good morning,</p> <p>19 Chairwoman Scott and members of the board. On</p> <p>20 July 27th, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control</p> <p>21 and Prevention, the CDC revised its guidance</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 recommendations and following consultation with</p> <p>2 medical experts, all BCPS students and staff will</p> <p>3 be required to wear masks while indoors in</p> <p>4 schools for the fall of the 2021-2022 school</p> <p>5 year. In addition, the school system's</p> <p>6 mitigation plan has the support of local leaders,</p> <p>7 including Baltimore County Executive Johnny</p> <p>8 Olszewski and Baltimore County Health Officer</p> <p>9 Dr. Gregory William Branch. Masking, physical</p> <p>10 distancing and maintaining proper hand hygiene</p> <p>11 have been key strategies advocated to reduce</p> <p>12 transmission of the COVID-19 virus.</p> <p>13 Although COVID-19 vaccines authorized in</p> <p>14 the U.S. remain effective against severe outcomes</p> <p>15 such as hospitalizations and deaths, emerging</p> <p>16 evidence suggests that the fully vaccinated</p> <p>17 persons could become infected with the delta</p> <p>18 variant or at risk for transmitting it to others.</p> <p>19 On July 1st the Baltimore County rate was 4.7, in</p> <p>20 the CDC's blue zone for low transmission, but by</p> <p>21 July 30th it had increased to 39.2, in the CDC's</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 regarding the wearing of masks and recommend that</p> <p>2 everyone in K-12 wear a mask while indoors</p> <p>3 regardless of vaccination status. The CDC</p> <p>4 morbidity and mortality report, the MMWR, of July</p> <p>5 27th, 2021 states, although increasing COVID-19</p> <p>6 vaccination coverage remains the most effective</p> <p>7 means to achieve control of the pandemic,</p> <p>8 additional layered prevention strategies will be</p> <p>9 needed in the short term to minimize preventable</p> <p>10 morbidity and mortality. Additionally, the MMWR</p> <p>11 report notes, to maximize protection of the</p> <p>12 community, prevention strategies should be</p> <p>13 strengthened or added if transmission worsens.</p> <p>14 Moreover, this report advises, decisions to add</p> <p>15 or remove effective prevention strategies should</p> <p>16 be based on local data and public health</p> <p>17 recommendations.</p> <p>18 According to the July 26th, 2021 update</p> <p>19 to the COVID data dashboard found on the BCPS</p> <p>20 website, COVID transmission has increased.</p> <p>21 Consequently, and consistent with the recent CDC</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 yellow zone for moderate transmission. Advisors</p> <p>2 have told us that Baltimore County will likely be</p> <p>3 in the substantial range of transmission by</p> <p>4 mid-August. Coupled with this information, the</p> <p>5 knowledge that children under the age of 12 are</p> <p>6 still not eligible for vaccination at this</p> <p>7 juncture, it is with these factors in mind and</p> <p>8 with the guidance of staff from the CDC, the</p> <p>9 health experts from Johns Hopkins and the</p> <p>10 University of Maryland, that universal indoor</p> <p>11 masking for all Baltimore County teachers, staff,</p> <p>12 students and visitors in K-12 schools regardless</p> <p>13 of vaccination status has been instituted for the</p> <p>14 fall of the 2021-2022 school year. The</p> <p>15 consistent use of layered preventive strategies</p> <p>16 decreases transmission of COVID-19 and masks have</p> <p>17 been shown to be the most effective prevention</p> <p>18 strategy after vaccination. The correct and</p> <p>19 consistent use of well fitting masks will reduce</p> <p>20 the number of close contacts requiring quarantine</p> <p>21 and missed instruction. Baltimore County Public</p>

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1 Schools will continue to monitor regularly and
 2 adjust guidance through consultation with our
 3 health experts.
 4 We have received several inquiries
 5 related to the virtual learning program. The
 6 opportunity to register for the program was
 7 originally announced for all BCPS families in
 8 mid-May and was accompanied by a parent
 9 information session held on May 19th, 2021. This
 10 session was recorded and posted on the VLP
 11 website. At that time the deadline to register
 12 was May 31st, 2021. However, on June 4th in
 13 order to be responsive to students' needs, BCPS
 14 announced to all BCPS families that the
 15 enrollment window would be extended to July 2nd,
 16 2021. This second deadline was necessary to
 17 implement and enforce for planning and staffing
 18 purposes. As such, we are no longer accepting
 19 enrollment at this time.
 20 Thank you, Ms. Scott. Our staff is
 21 available to answer questions at this time.

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1 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you for that,
 2 Dr. Wheatley-Phillip, and do I have any questions
 3 from the board members? If you have questions,
 4 please put your names in the chat so that I can
 5 properly call on anyone who would like to hear
 6 additional information or have additional
 7 questions, but that was very thorough, thank you
 8 for that.
 9 Okay. Oh, sorry, there's a question, it
 10 looks like from Mr. Thomas. Please go ahead and
 11 then after that, Dr. Hager.
 12 MR. THOMAS: So thank you for the
 13 presentation, I thought it was amazingly thorough
 14 like Ms. Scott said, but my first question is,
 15 what are the metrics for the mask mandate to be
 16 subsided, you know, in the fall semester of the
 17 school year, and is there a current date in mind
 18 or a month that is being considered as like the
 19 time when that would possibly expire?
 20 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: So thank you so
 21 much for that question. Your question is, what

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1 are the current metrics for the mask mandate to
 2 be lifted, as well as is there a date that's
 3 available for that. I know that we have Ms. Deb
 4 Somerville on the call and I'd like to ask her to
 5 provide any additional information that we have
 6 at this time. Ms. Somerville?
 7 MS. SOMERVILLE: Thanks,
 8 Dr. Wheatley-Phillip, yes. So Mr. Thomas,
 9 there's not a specific number that we're looking
 10 at. The CDC guidance really says masks in
 11 schools right now for all, but I think what we're
 12 going to do is watching our trends and certainly
 13 if we get back where we were July 1 in the blue
 14 zone, which is ten cases, ten cumulative cases
 15 per hundred thousand residents over a seven-day
 16 period and we saw that to be stable and in
 17 consultation with our health experts felt that
 18 our prevalence rates were really low, we
 19 certainly will be revisiting the mandate. So I
 20 think it's more fluid because we need to be
 21 looking at trends and we need to be looking at

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1 the context of where the cases are really with
 2 the population of students and staff in our
 3 schools. So I wish I could give an absolute
 4 number but I can say probably the easiest number
 5 would be to look for that blue zone.
 6 MR. THOMAS: Thank you, and I have a
 7 follow-up question to that. Are we planning any
 8 other mitigation strategies in our schools for
 9 the school year besides mask wearing? I know
 10 that we're near full capacity so that might put
 11 social distancing off the table, but besides
 12 masks, are there any other things we're doing to
 13 prevent COVID?
 14 MS. SOMERVILLE: Sure, absolutely, so
 15 layered prevention strategies remain in place,
 16 and so although we're not doing strict physical
 17 distancing, we will be doing physical distancing
 18 to the maximum extent possible, so that's going
 19 to continue with careful work from staff in terms
 20 of the layout of desks, how we move students
 21 through the hallways, all those things are going

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1 to be in place to prevent inadvertent exposure.
 2 We are also adding screening testing this year,
 3 we're working with the state and the federal
 4 government to obtain tests and use those in
 5 targeted ways to support mitigation. We will be
 6 continuing the efforts we had last year in terms
 7 of ventilation, making sure our systems are
 8 operating with a maximum air exchange and the
 9 best filter for the unit so that we're having
 10 good filtration and good air exchange. We're
 11 going to be reinforcing the concept of staying
 12 home if you're sick, and wash your hands and
 13 cough into your sleeve if you don't have a mask
 14 on. We'll still be doing the strict contact
 15 tracing and we'll still be doing that daily
 16 cleaning. So all of those layers will be in
 17 place for the fall and throughout the year, and
 18 we'll step them up and become more intensive as
 19 the science and the data trends tell us to, and
 20 we'll step back when we can.
 21 MR. THOMAS: Thank you. And Ms. Scott,

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1 could I ask one more question?
 2 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Yep, one more.
 3 MR. THOMAS: All right, thank you. So a
 4 lot of the mandates right now are for school
 5 buildings. Are any conversations happening about
 6 providing masks for events or on other campuses
 7 if students want to wear them?
 8 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Did you get that,
 9 Ms. Somerville? You went out, Christian.
 10 MS. SOMERVILLE: I did get it, thank
 11 you.
 12 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Okay.
 13 MS. SOMERVILLE: So yes. So the four
 14 offices, we will, our plan is to follow the CDC
 15 guidance which is to mask when you get to
 16 substantial or high transmission in the
 17 community, so we're continuing to monitor our
 18 data. As of this morning we're still in moderate
 19 transmission, but once, you know, honestly, the
 20 predictions are that we will in August hit that
 21 substantial transmission category, and when that

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1 happens staff will be alerted and we will be
 2 asking them to mask. The same other mitigation
 3 is in place in offices in terms of cleaning, in
 4 terms of contact tracing, physical distancing,
 5 all those strategies are applied at the office
 6 site as well as at the school site.
 7 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you for
 8 that. It looks like next is Dr. Hager.
 9 DR. HAGER: Yes, thank you for the
 10 information. As a public health professional and
 11 a mother of a child who is not vaccinated because
 12 he's too young, I am actually very pleased to see
 13 this, it's something I've been very concerned
 14 about, and given the increased rate of
 15 transmission and new variants, I think I
 16 personally, my personal opinion is that we made
 17 the right decision. I have a few specific
 18 questions.
 19 One, and I asked this before, but wanted
 20 to get an updated answer on whether we have any
 21 plans to track vaccination status of staff or

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1 students at the end of the fall.
 2 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: So thank you so
 3 much for that question. I'd like to call on
 4 Ms. Somerville again to share with us, because I
 5 think that is absolutely in her wheelhouse.
 6 Ms. Somerville?
 7 MS. SOMERVILLE: Thank you. So at this
 8 point I have not been involved in discussions
 9 about tracking vaccination status of staff, I
 10 think that would be something that would have to
 11 be extensively discussed. So that part we don't
 12 have the capacity to do.
 13 Our electronic health records system has
 14 historically had a connection with the Maryland
 15 Immunet, which is the Maryland immunization
 16 database, and so any vaccines that students
 17 receive are automatically uploaded into the
 18 Immunet and they are downloaded into our registry
 19 so that we're able to track, you know, honestly,
 20 to make sure that they're compliant with state
 21 requirements. We can use that registry to look

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1 at vaccination rates and, you know, we can
 2 certainly do that. At this point there is not a
 3 discussion to track students individually, but
 4 will we be able to look it up because of our
 5 Immunet registration, absolutely, we can
 6 determine that.

7 DR. HAGER: And do you have an idea of
 8 how many Baltimore County Public School students
 9 who are eligible are vaccinated, or is it, like
 10 because the under 12 aren't eligible, it may be
 11 challenging to make that calculation?

12 MS. SOMERVILLE: Off the top of my head
 13 I couldn't give you overall. I can say that if
 14 you look at, you know, if you look at the COVID
 15 dashboard for the county we can kind of make some
 16 extrapolations because most of those students,
 17 most of the children under, I think the age group
 18 goes up to 19 and they break it into two trunks
 19 so you know, it's less than 50 percent. So I
 20 think it's really important for us to remember
 21 that even of the eligible population in Baltimore

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1 County, less than 50 percent of our 18 and unders
 2 appear to have been vaccinated based on our
 3 county level data.

4 DR. HAGER: Thank you, and that's even
 5 more reason for masking in schools, so thank you
 6 for that answer.

7 I did see another county that
 8 specifically said that if there was a child that
 9 had direct exposure that was tracked through
 10 contact tracing, that if they were vaccinated
 11 that they would not need to quarantine. Has
 12 there been any discussion about that moving
 13 forward into the fall?

14 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Ms. Somerville?

15 MS. SOMERVILLE: Yes. So we follow,
 16 regardless if student or staff, we follow the CDC
 17 guidelines in terms of quarantines of people
 18 after exposure. And there was actually,
 19 Dr. Hager, an update I think in the middle of
 20 last week in terms of quarantine guidance. But
 21 where the guidance stands right now is that a

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1 vaccinated person who's fully vaccinated, two
 2 weeks after their terminal dose of the vaccine,
 3 does not need to quarantine. We ask them to get
 4 tested at days three to five after exposure, and
 5 we ask them to mask until their negative test
 6 result comes back. If they don't get tested, we
 7 ask them to mask for 14 days. So in school right
 8 now because we're universally masking, the
 9 ultimate effect is it would look no different,
 10 they would be permitted to be at school the whole
 11 time and just keep their masks on. So that is,
 12 that's kind of where we are with vaccinated
 13 folks.

14 DR. HAGER: And if they're not
 15 vaccinated?

16 MS. SOMERVILLE: So unvaccinated folks
 17 are put in a quarantine period for ten days after
 18 the last date of exposure and they're encouraged,
 19 right now the guidance is to test a day five to
 20 seven post exposure, and they're allowed back
 21 into the building after ten days, as long as

Page 21

1 they're asymptomatic.

2 DR. HAGER: Thank you. And since we
 3 have separated out our virtual learning program
 4 from our in-school learning for this coming year,
 5 what will that look like for the children who are
 6 home for ten days, or up to ten days following an
 7 exposure, Dr. Wheatley-Phillip?

8 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Ms. Somerville?

9 MS. SOMERVILLE: Well, I do want to give
 10 you an important exception before we answer that,
 11 which is in a classroom, the CDC changed their
 12 guidelines in terms of what defines an exposure
 13 in a classroom. As long as our students are
 14 masked, no quarantine is going to be needed this
 15 year even if a student is unvaccinated. So in an
 16 elementary classroom, as long as we're keeping
 17 that three-foot distance and the universal
 18 masking, we are not going to need to quarantine,
 19 and that's been an important factor that we
 20 considered in terms of minimizing the number of
 21 students who are exposed and at risk of catching

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1 COVID, but also required to miss school because
 2 of a positive classmate. So I just wanted to
 3 jump in and finish that part of the answer,
 4 because I think it's really key to the point
 5 you're bringing up.
 6 DR. HAGER: Thank you, that was great,
 7 thank you.
 8 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you for that.
 9 DR. HAGER: I have one final question,
 10 but I can wait.
 11 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: I didn't mean to cut
 12 you off there, sorry.
 13 DR. HAGER: No, I have one final
 14 question, but I can wait.
 15 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: No, go ahead.
 16 DR. HAGER: Oh, go ahead, okay. My last
 17 question is about high school sports and whether
 18 there is a plan to require masking for any sports
 19 or for those that are played indoors.
 20 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Thank you so much
 21 for that question. I know that Ms. Somerville

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1 might be able to provide some perspective on
 2 that, but I also know that we have
 3 Dr. Boswell-McComas with us and as part of
 4 leading the athletic division, being the chief of
 5 the athletic division she might be able to
 6 provide. So Ms. Somerville, I'd like to start
 7 with you first and then Dr. McComas, if there's
 8 anything you would like to add for further
 9 clarity, I would appreciate it. Thank you.
 10 MS. SOMERVILLE: So Dr. Hager, our
 11 office works, I think I talk to Mr. Sye at least
 12 weekly if not multiple times weekly to make sure
 13 that they have the latest guidance from CDC and
 14 that we integrate it with the MPSSAA guidance.
 15 So students who are on the field of play do not
 16 need to be masked. Students who are on the
 17 sidelines will be masked, and coaches. So that's
 18 essentially, the plan for the fall is masking on
 19 the sidelines where we generally have closer
 20 contact, no masking in the field of play, and
 21 we're looking at other ways to strengthen

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1 screening, honestly, for our indoor sports, so
 2 that we have less risk of those sports being
 3 interrupted and less transmission.
 4 DR. MCCOMAS: And I will just share that
 5 as Ms. Somerville said, I have really nothing
 6 more to contribute, she really laid out exactly
 7 our approach. Thank you.
 8 DR. HAGER: Thank you all so much, I
 9 really appreciate all of your answers to the
 10 questions, and I just hope everyone who can get
 11 vaccinated gets vaccinated, so thank you.
 12 MR. MCMILLION: Ms. Scott, I have a
 13 question.
 14 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Oh, okay,
 15 Mr. McMillion?
 16 MR. MCMILLION: Yes please.
 17 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Go ahead. I have
 18 Ms. Pasteur ahead of you and then you can go
 19 after Ms. Pasteur, okay?
 20 MR. MCMILLION: Okay, thank you. Yes,
 21 yes, yes, thank you.

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1 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Ms. Pasteur?
 2 MS. PASTEUR: Thank you, Ms. Scott.
 3 First, Ms. Somerville and Dr. Wheatley-Phillip,
 4 thank you for the presentation and for your
 5 responses. In light of what you're saying I want
 6 to ask you, I guess Dr. Wheatley-Phillip, about
 7 some other options. One of my constituents had
 8 planned on sending the children, she has three,
 9 the doctor said no, two of them have serious
 10 respiratory problems, the doctor said absolutely
 11 not. Now unfortunately, she missed that July 1
 12 date because she just got this information from
 13 this doctor a week ago. Can you tell me where I
 14 can direct her for some other options if she's
 15 not, since she's not able to send these children
 16 back to school, where might she look please?
 17 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Thank you so much
 18 for that question, and we certainly don't want to
 19 ever be perceived as turning kids away from
 20 school, especially in light of how critical
 21 instruction is. What I would advise,

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1 Ms. Pasteur, is that that particular parent work
 2 specifically at the school level with her
 3 principal, because the principal in conjunction
 4 with the DSSA team will really work to take a
 5 look at what options are available. I know that
 6 having specific deadline helps us in terms of
 7 creating firm planning; however, I think at the
 8 school level support can be provided in terms of
 9 working with that parent, looking at community
 10 support, working with our health office to find a
 11 good resolution.

12 MS. PASTEUR: Okay. Would home teaching
 13 be an option? I know that program worked last
 14 year for, which is different from virtual, worked
 15 well for a number of students, and they're going
 16 to need it again this year.

17 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: And I think that
 18 that's part of the conversation that would take
 19 place at the school level. Certainly if we have
 20 a student that's impacted, bringing together a
 21 team of experts at the school level as well as

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1 central office supports, they can develop the
 2 best plan for the particular students. At this
 3 point I wouldn't want to say that home school is
 4 an option, but I think having a conversation at
 5 the school level, looking at the needs of the
 6 child, looking at the resources that are
 7 available, the school would be able to develop a
 8 good plan for the student.

9 MS. PASTEUR: All right. Thank you very
 10 much.

11 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you for that.
 12 Next is Mr. McMillion and then Ms. Jose.

13 MR. MCMILLION: Good morning, everyone.
 14 I would like Ms. Somerville or Dr. McComas or
 15 someone to clarify field of play. You know,
 16 volleyball is played indoors on a hardwood court;
 17 would the players on the court need to be masked?
 18 Thank you.

19 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: So good morning,
 20 and thank you so much for that question. I'm not
 21 sure if Mr. Sye is on this call but

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1 Mr. McMillion, we would certainly want to get
 2 back to you specifically with an answer to that
 3 question just because it's specific and members
 4 of our team that are here might need to consult
 5 with other members of Team BCPS to find that
 6 answer. So we would be willing to provide that
 7 information to you at a later date once we are
 8 able to contact specific staff in the athletics
 9 department.

10 MR. MCMILLION: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Okay. Next is
 12 Ms. Jose.

13 MS. JOSE: Thank you, Ms. Scott. Thank
 14 you for the presentation. A lot of my questions
 15 were already asked by other board members but I
 16 do have a follow-up question on, in terms of
 17 vaccination, it's zero percent for children under
 18 12 because they cannot get vaccinated, so one of
 19 the best ways to prevent it is to have all the
 20 adults around them vaccinated. And what I
 21 understand, there's no way we can track if the

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1 adults around those children are vaccinated; is
 2 that correct?

3 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: I'm sorry, I'm
 4 going to invite Ms. Somerville in, but I do
 5 believe that as part of personally tracking
 6 individual staff or adults, I think there are
 7 some restrictions regarding that just because
 8 there are rights and privacy that are inherent to
 9 each individual, so it would be difficult to do
 10 that. So is there another aspect of the
 11 question, because I don't know that you would be
 12 able to specifically track and share that
 13 information.

14 MS. JOSE: Okay, but in terms of
 15 Baltimore County Public Schools, there is
 16 immunization records that public schools do
 17 require on whether or not you're vaccinated. Is
 18 that amenable for you to incorporate that,
 19 because that is a part of Baltimore County Public
 20 Schools requirements, correct, to see if you are
 21 vaccinated or not against common communicable

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1 diseases?
 2 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Right. In terms
 3 of public health, having a record of vaccination
 4 is part of the enrollment process for students.
 5 We do know that some students have exceptions
 6 because of religious beliefs. Ms. Somerville,
 7 this is your wheelhouse and so I'm going to
 8 invite you to turn on your camera and come in in
 9 the event there's something additional that you
 10 could share regarding this in terms of
 11 vaccination and how that information could help
 12 us to make sure that we're keeping all students
 13 and staff safe.
 14 MS. SOMERVILLE: Right, so thank you,
 15 Dr. Wheatley-Phillip. So, the state establishes
 16 the vaccination requirements that Baltimore
 17 County Schools enforces. So right now COVID is
 18 not a required vaccine. As we've all talked
 19 about, it's not even available to our youngest
 20 learners so it's not required, but we would, if
 21 in some period of time it was required we would

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1 have the ability to track that, absolutely, but
 2 right now it's not required and it's not
 3 something that we would be tracking in that way.
 4 MS. JOSE: Okay, thank you, and thank
 5 you for the presentation.
 6 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you.
 7 And, oh, it looks like there's another question
 8 from Mr. Thomas.
 9 MR. THOMAS: Thank you. So my question
 10 is, are there any consequences in place right now
 11 for and students that refuse to wear masks in
 12 schools, or for parents that would not allow
 13 their children to wear masks in schools, what
 14 types of consequences are there?
 15 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Thank you so much
 16 for that question. You know, within BCPS we
 17 really strive to maintain a culture of parent
 18 support, not only for our students but also for
 19 our staff. And we truly believe that it takes a
 20 village to raise a child and many of us are
 21 familiar with that.

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1 What I would share at this time is that
 2 we, because this mandate was just implemented, we
 3 will work with school leaders, we'll work with
 4 our PTA partners, we'll work with our parents to
 5 insure that the guidelines are met. We don't
 6 want as a school system to turn away students but
 7 health and safety is most important, and so as
 8 this is applied that was newly really
 9 implemented, we will work with school partners,
 10 parents to insure that the guidelines are being
 11 followed.
 12 MR. THOMAS: Thank you, and who will be
 13 primarily responsible for insuring that, who's
 14 responsible in the schools, will it be teachers
 15 in the classroom, is it going to be
 16 administrators, or is that still in the process?
 17 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Absolutely, that
 18 is still in the process because it truly is an
 19 attempt to insure that kids are safe and that
 20 they're learning, and those plans will be
 21 developed in collaboration with not just only

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1 central office staff but also with school-based
 2 staff as well, so thank you for that question.
 3 MR. THOMAS: And I have one final
 4 question, I think the same answer might apply
 5 here, but are there current plans in place to
 6 provide masks to students and to provide new
 7 masks? That's my last question.
 8 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Absolutely, and
 9 that's part of summer planning and part of our
 10 summer conversations. We absolutely take a look
 11 at all that's needed to make sure that we have a
 12 safe reopening of schools. Specifically related
 13 to number of masks and that particular
 14 requirement, we definitely will work with not
 15 only Baltimore County Health Department, we will
 16 also work with our BCPS health department as
 17 well, our Office of Health, to insure that we are
 18 able to provide the schools with the materials
 19 and resources that they need, but those plans are
 20 also underway and in development, so thank you.
 21 MR. THOMAS: Thank you, and do we have a

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1 date in mind for when all of those metrics, when
 2 that information will be public on those plans,
 3 is it going to be before the start of the school
 4 year? There's a lot of confusion of what kinds
 5 of requirements teachers have and what kinds of
 6 requirements students and families have on the
 7 mask mandate, and I just want to know if there's
 8 a date in mind for when all that stuff will be
 9 released.

10 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Absolutely.
 11 Thank you so much for that. You know as much
 12 information as we have we share, but this is,
 13 COVID has been an unprecedented event, and so we
 14 are working as a school team weekly with
 15 Dr. Williams as well as members of our school
 16 support and our offices to insure that we have
 17 solid plans ready for opening. So as soon as we
 18 have information, we will share that information,
 19 we're working with our communications office and
 20 so we are developing plans, we're working, and as
 21 soon as we have information we share it so that

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1 parents can be prepared and ready for the opening
 2 of schools.

3 MR. THOMAS: Okay, thank you so much for
 4 everything in the presentation, and thank you for
 5 taking the time to inform us.

6 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: All right. Thank
 7 you, Mr. Thomas, and it looks like, Dr. Hager,
 8 did you have follow-up questions? You had a
 9 follow-up question?

10 DR. HAGER: Just one. We talked a lot
 11 about tracking for children and it sounds like
 12 the State Department of Education, you know,
 13 provides a list of required vaccinations for
 14 children, and we talked about the electronic
 15 medical record tracking system, but we really
 16 didn't get into the staff and teacher
 17 vaccinations. And so, is there anything in the
 18 works for being able to identify which of our
 19 staff, which of the adults and grownups in the
 20 building have been vaccinated as we go into the
 21 fall?

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1 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: And so I'm going
 2 to ask Ms. Somerville if she could join us as
 3 part of this conversation to help provide and
 4 additional clarity and information regarding
 5 that. Ms. Somerville?

6 MS. SOMERVILLE: Thanks. To be honest,
 7 no, there's not at this point, I've not been
 8 involved in discussions about a process to track
 9 staff vaccinations. That would be a discussion,
 10 probably it would be a voluntary sharing, I mean
 11 the staff would have to share their vaccine
 12 status.

13 I can say that I mentioned in an answer
 14 to an earlier question, Dr. Hager, that we're
 15 looking to partner with the Department of Defense
 16 and the State Health Department for screening
 17 test kits, and one part of our screening plan is
 18 to offer home screening test kits that we procure
 19 through that process to staff who are
 20 unvaccinated, and we would be asking them to test
 21 themselves each Sunday or Monday morning. And so

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1 that program would be voluntarily, we would not
 2 be tracking folks so to speak, who were not
 3 vaccinated, but we would be encouraging those
 4 folks and really asking folks on the honor system
 5 to track themselves weekly and test themselves
 6 weekly if they've not been vaccinated. So that's
 7 another way, a different approach to insuring
 8 safety that kind of honors peoples privacy
 9 without getting into tracking their vaccine
 10 status.

11 DR. HAGER: Thank you.

12 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you. It looks
 13 like Ms. Jose, you had a follow-up question?

14 MS. JOSE: Yes, thank you, Ms. Scott.
 15 Real quick, we did have mask requirements before
 16 we shut down for the last school year, and were
 17 there any issues with elementary school children,
 18 kindergarten or pre-K wearing masks, and are we
 19 providing additional PPE to all of our schools in
 20 case some of the children forget their masks,
 21 things like that?

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1 DR. WHEATLEY-PHILLIP: Absolutely, and
 2 those are the questions that we're asking of the
 3 team as we meet each week. And certainly as I
 4 shared a little bit earlier, it really is a
 5 village approach, it is working with not just
 6 only school leaders and central office, but also
 7 our PTA partners and members of our community,
 8 because what we want is to insure that each child
 9 is safe and each child is learning, and so
 10 therefore in terms of the specific protocol that
 11 will be followed if there are students that come
 12 to school without a mask, those decisions and
 13 that process will be developed working in
 14 collaboration with our partners, because what we
 15 want is to insure first and foremost safety, but
 16 we also want to make sure that the guidelines are
 17 being followed.

18 MS. JOSE: Okay, thank you.

19 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Thank you. And I
 20 would just like to say, I think that these
 21 questions have been very, very beneficial and

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1 most informative, and the presentation was
 2 excellent. And I would like, I know we want once
 3 our schools open we want them to remain open,
 4 that's the goal, so the work that we're putting
 5 in and everything to make sure that that happens
 6 I think is really good, we're on the right path.

7 I would also like to thank the board
 8 members who are here, I know we don't have a
 9 quorum but the six board members who are here and
 10 asked very thought provoking and informative
 11 questions, that's Dr. Hager, Ms. Jose,
 12 Ms. Pasteur, Mr. Thomas, Mr. McMillion, and I
 13 just wanted to, and myself, but I just wanted to
 14 make sure that I acknowledge that you're here and
 15 that you asked very informative questions on this
 16 very serious subject. So, are there any
 17 additional questions?

18 DR. WILLIAMS: Ms. Scott, this is Darryl
 19 Williams, good morning. Can you hear me?

20 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Oh, my goodness, good
 21 morning, Dr. Williams.

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1 DR. WILLIAMS: Good morning. First I
 2 want to thank the team for presenting,
 3 unfortunately I was unable to be there but I did
 4 log on.

5 I just want to circle back on the
 6 questions and I think I want to start where
 7 Ms. Jose left off. What we've learned from our
 8 summer school that we were recommending masks,
 9 that was the state in which we were in when we
 10 started our summer school, and having visited
 11 summer school classes and schools, our staff and
 12 our principals and our central office staff were
 13 very helpful in looking at issues, addressing
 14 issues, and so I think what we've learned from
 15 this summer, what we learned from this spring
 16 will tell us what we need to do in the fall to
 17 help our students to be prepared as well as our
 18 staff. It's just a matter of working with the
 19 team and coming up with some guidance around if a
 20 student doesn't have a mask, if someone is not
 21 feeling well, these are things that we

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1 experienced when we brought back students in
 2 March and once again when we had our summer
 3 program.

4 And so I appreciate the questions today.
 5 More information, I think we will be providing
 6 more information every week, especially for our
 7 schools. The big factor is that the experts are
 8 telling us what we need to do.

9 In terms of the staff, I know that's a
 10 question about their vaccination status and I
 11 know in colleges it's a different approach. We
 12 are exploring that question with our partners,
 13 we're exploring that question with the Maryland
 14 State Department of Education, so we can be
 15 aligned with other districts, other systems. So
 16 stay tuned, we may have some additional
 17 information about the tracking of staff. Right
 18 now like Deb Somerville said, there's still a lot
 19 of questions around that.

20 In terms of consequences for masking, we
 21 still want to encourage our students to mask and

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1 if not, we will have a backup plan, because the
 2 last thing we want to do is close schools because
 3 we want to push more in-person learning as we
 4 open up our school year.
 5 So again, I just want to thank the staff
 6 for presenting today and thank the board members
 7 who were able to rearrange their schedule to be
 8 present to ask questions. These questions we
 9 will definitely keep on our list to make sure we
 10 have answers as we move forward for the start of
 11 the school year on August 30th, so thank you.
 12 CHAIRWOMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you for
 13 that, Dr. Williams, and thank you staff for an
 14 excellent presentation and board members for your
 15 very thought provoking questions, and I think
 16 that we have a plan going forward. Were there
 17 any other questions or comments?
 18 Okay, hearing none, the last item on the
 19 agenda is announcements. The next board meeting
 20 will be held on Tuesday, August 10th, 2021 at
 21 6:30 p.m. I thank you all for joining us this

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1 morning and the meeting is now adjourned.
 2 (Meeting adjourned.)
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1 STATE OF MARYLAND.
 2 BALTIMORE COUNTY: SS
 3
 4 I, Paul A. Gasparotti, a Notary Public in and
 5 for the State of Maryland, Baltimore County, do
 6 hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and
 7 accurate transcription of the recording to the
 8 best of my ability.
 9 I further certify that I am not of counsel to
 10 any of the parties nor in any way interested in
 11 the outcome of these proceedings.
 12 As witness, my hand and notarial seal this 9th
 13 day of August, 2021.
 14
 15 _____
 16 Paul A. Gasparotti
 17
 18
 19
 20
 21

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