**Environmental Health and Safety Labor-Management Group 2.4.21 Meeting 5 pm**

Review of Purpose: To fulfill Article 12.1.3 of the MFT Teacher Contract Joint Committee:

a. **Membership**: The Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and the District will establish a joint committee consisting of members of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers Environmental Health and Safety Committee and representatives from the District’s Office of Environmental Health and Safety, Facilities, Office of Equality and Civil Rights, Operational and Security Services Department, Division of Human Resources, and other groups the committee deems appropriate.

b. **Meetings:** The committee will meet a minimum of three times per year and thereafter as needed. The committee will post the minutes and agenda of all meetings online.

**c. Purpose:** The purpose of the committee shall be to cooperatively review statistics of reported complaints and corrective actions taken by the District and solves problems involving but not limited to

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| Accident and injury reduction | Forklift safety | Pests such as cockroaches, ants, wasps, mice and rats |
| Asbestos | Hearing conservation | Playground safety |
| Blood borne pathogens | Indoor air quality | Radon |
| Chemical hygiene | Infectious disease | Recurring Mold |
| Chemical sensitivity/allergies | Infectious waste | Respiratory protection |
| Chemical storage | Lead in construction and water | Technology education (ergonomics) |
| Compressed gas | Lockout/tag out | Underground storage tanks |
| Emergency preparedness | Minnesota Right-to-Know |  |
| Employee safety and security | Noxious fumes |  |

**2.4.21** at 500 pm **Minneapolis Public Schools Management Present**:

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| Maggie Sullivan, Senior Human Resources Officer | Rochelle Cox, Assoc Superintendent, Spec Ed | Karen DeVet, Chief Operations Officer |
| Alicia Miller, Senior Assoc Labor Relations/Employee Relations | Amber Spaniol, Director Health Related Services. | *Lee Setter, Manager Environmental Health and Safety-* ***Absent-*** *day change* |
| See minutes’ Introductions for additional guests list. |  |  |

**MFT (Minneapolis Federation of Teachers) Teachers Present**:

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| Angie McCracken, **CHAIR**, Steward LSNs. Hiawatha/Howe/DPF 3rd Party | Mike Leiter, MFT Business Agent |  |
| Beatrice Benda, LSN, Recorder, Steward LSNs/Nonpub | Susan McNaughton, Dowling, Steward 5th Grade teacher | Katy Tharaldson, Hale Art Teacher |
| Paige Whitney, Seward Speech/Language | Seeking other members\* |  |
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**Welcome** to the attendees at 5 pm: Lee Setter will be absent due to previous conflict. *This date, a Thursday, was adjusted due to added Board Meeting additions that Management needed to attend.* **FUTURE meetings** will resume on 3rd Tuesdays. **Tuesday March 16th, 2021 at 5 pm** is next meeting. Agenda items due to Chair **the Friday noon preceding the meeting**.

**Introductions** with titles accomplished, see Attendance Roster above plus **Additional Management Attendees today**: Candra Bennett (Executive Director, Human Relations), Doug Hill (Director, Physical Plant Operations), Montquice McCoy (Director, Employee Relations), Cherese Williams (Employee Relations Associate), Malcolm Wells (Employee Relations Associate). MFT is seeking additional members, particularly seeking North Side teachers.

**Agenda Item Re: Minutes:**  Plan adjusted at end of meeting to approve BOTH the Nov Joint meeting and these valuable Feb meeting minutes **via an email process** early next week, to facilitate dissemination to other interested members asap, esp related to process updates provided.

**Agenda Item** related to [Sec. 182.676 MN Statutes](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/182.676__;!!MxD8lHs9xPYQ!bd-fw2se1WzaoDBXh6Ut2VLAuK60cmkgOdddbt8Bjqqn-4HylEXXVCIxLX_Lgz_5rqIBYww_MaizEQ$), a Department of Labor and Industry standard labor/management committee. Angie M had talked to Lee Setter who confirmed presence of existing Dept of Labor and Industry Committee already in existence. Angie will follow up with him as Labor willing to help with that committee, topics seem to overlap. Dept of Labor and Industry MN required Labor/Management committee to meet

**Future concerns** re: contract list of topics lists-for example, **Principal reports, etc.** **Packet to come to Labor Members 48 hours before the meeting** for review ahead of time, no dissent voiced.

**Chair** expressed desire for a functional, active responsive group. Maggie S. confirmed willingness to shift to pandemic focus due to Covid 19.

**Current Concerns:** (**Added to Agenda now**, mutual agreement) Maggie S: Offered **Management Update** additions, asking Karen D. and Rochelle C. for Updates

**Rochelle C**: a. Amber Spaniol is working on **more family communications** as the superintendent wants multiple ways to communicate -with families. Today working with Covid Supervisors/Leads on scenario decision-making related to Covid. Amber has helped with that process also. b. Yesterday 2.3 mtg with Epidemiology team from Minneapolis Health Department, reviewed the Covid reporting guidelines, and was very happy with the collaborative spirit with the 5 experts, and their availability to MPS leadership. One is assigned to consult with MPS leadership, available each day.

**Karen DeVet**: Operations: Kinder student excitement! Teams out in field working with custodial staff, now that staff are back in the schools and working on classroom spacing. Had follow-up “Walk Throughs” at several sites today 2.4.21 with Dowling, Folwell, Barton slated for tomorrow.

**Wanted to reassure this team**: Stated that MPS has exceeded the filtration recommendations via **MERV** (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) filters improvements to 14 and “back filling” with **HEPA** (High Energy Particulate Air) **portable filter unit placements**. HEPA filter units are placed in **very specific** classrooms (based on venting/structural concerns) and staff should KEEP in those identified, “right” locations as **science** drove these placements. MPS has additional HEPA units in their storage, for access as indicated, on back-up. Karen voiced concerns “EASILY corrected” if alerted to concerns. MPS has exceeded optimization recommendations for airflow and filtration. There are additional filters in backstock.

Acknowledged some supply chain/delivery concerns with, for example: **Tabletop trifold shields** with a “special run done to pick-up 1000 yesterday”. 600 of these trifolds are already distributed. Once taken off the pallets, 930 more tabletop shields are being dispensed to additional elementary school sites Friday 2.5.21 + Monday 2.8.21, first day for students.

District wants all classroom staff to have recommended **face shield** available for small group or 1:1 with students in close contact. It has been difficult for their group to identify **who is** classroom staff, hard to figure, so at present has used # of licensed teachers based on % of students returning at this point. Encourages staff who want the shields to find shield in building, or via office staff request; Operations can get them out to site quickly.

**PPE supply process**: All Principals or the Covid Program Coordinator are aware of how to access resupplies/to re-order when running low, face coverings, masks from the CENTRALIZED stock. More is going out Friday 2.5, before pre k arrives on Monday…. NEWS on predicted cold windchill of -25, these students are new to bus stop systems etc, potentially at an additional level of risk.

[Bioesque Disinfectant](http://bioesquesolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BIO_dis_1gal_100719.pdf), EPA certified against Covid 19 virus, is now in all classrooms. (N*o longer in halls where students have free acces*s-*bb addition*).

There is a **system for ordering more supplies** and most things are stockpiled in a central MPS supply. Building Covid Coordinator has the supply requisition and can order more.

**Transportation**: Trying to provide best plans “otherwise, working hard to get that figured out”.

**MFT Labor Questions**: **Portable HEPA filter**: where in classroom it should be located? **Karen D**: Location in the room doesn’t matter- needs 110 plug and **10 inches from wall** to prevent overheating. **NOISE** Level: Karen stated she turned one on in a vacant room 2.3.21; teacher may want to stand away from unit while giving instruction, to minimize student distraction. HEPA units are only assigned for rooms >400 square feet in buildings and areas unable to upgrade to MERV14. Not assigned for every classroom, depending on the overall analysis. Recommend 400 cu ft per min on high., “well sized for any of the classrooms”.

**Labor** asked about **SMALL spaces**: Often used and “pull in” students. **Karen D**: Filtration is one mitigation. Please use all mitigation. Droplet has to go up, over any Plexiglass-like barrier and behind personal ‘shield’. *Specific room can take a CERTAIN occupancy. in “PULL OUT SPACES”: HEPA unit prob not necessary, but if staff concerned… the entire building was studied. Standard said: MERV filter 13 advised by outside HVAC evaluators KFI Engineers-St Paul HVAC consultant company, but went to 14 IF system could handle it, if not then went to highest MERV possible (for that unit).*

**Labor** queried about:  **Anderson** report from walk from staff attendee: Merv 11 planned, but they only did MERV8, told that at walk through, “NOT going to be changed again”. **Karen D**: **Not an accurate statement**: Pre filter is one layer in the system (might be an 8) but all of Anderson has been upgraded to MERV 11 for the final filter: [All Anderson classrooms get HEPA Unit](https://facilities.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/hepa_-_merv_14_summary_by_school.pdf). ([*See p 21 for discussion of pre-filter/final filter*](https://facilities.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/andersen_ventilation_analysis_2020_2.pdf) )

**Labor** asked about: **Hiawatha exhaust and intake** units on roof being so close ([p15 of Hiawatha report](https://facilities.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/hiawatha_ventilation_analysis_2020.pdf)). Per staff on walk-through this week, this will not be changed due to code ‘rules’. If left alone it’s fine, if changed whole system will be required to bring up to current code”.

**Labor** asked about **Wilder**: Only [MERV 8 enabled](https://facilities.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/wellstone_international_ventilation_analysis_2020.pdf), per HVAC limitations. Nonpublic staff meeting with parents/student Monday-Thursday 2.1-2.4.21 this week for long initial evaluation interactions with nonpublic students and family escorts. Had been told by the Nonpublic Director to expect all PPE and Tabletop barriers there on arrival to site. No HEPA units found in the room, also had been told by their director to expect. Nothing was there—no masks, no shields, no gloves, no tabletop barriers, no HEPA units, all expected in rooms 107 and 108. (ECSE Director Chris Geiger has been helpful with ‘loans’ of PPE items. **Karen D:** Will follow up with reporting labor member who will email Ms DeVet 2.5.21 (done bb).

**Labor** asked about **“culinary bags”.**  **Karen D**: All lunchrooms have been given plastic bag/disposable cups for **mask storage** at lunch, also will have baggie to put used masks/SOILED masks that will go home in that disposable bag and limit body fluid exposure. Mentioned **Transportation**: have active plans also.

**Additional Questions from Labor**: Distancing directions while students eating seem discrepant: 6 ft apart in lunchroom, and then in classrooms at TABLES, so closer when assigned to eat in the classroom. How to space students? Being with classroom and in your pod/cohort… Karen: in cafeteria, in classroom group 6 ft away from other groups…. Eating and masks are off (3 ft if possible but FIRM on adults at 6 ft away)…..THAT is where the portable shield comes in. Modified face covering and shield highly recommended. For students: social distance 3 ft at lunch but 6 ft is best. DO NOT COMINGLE classroom groups.

**Labor member** commented on **MPS staff announcement to Media on 2.3.21 regarding** **class sizes, limited to” 20/classroom”**: Reality is that many classrooms are larger than 20 which was reported by news media: . **UNMASKED for eating**. **Specialists moving between cohort**s: Specialists are entering multiple classrooms. Labor/staff have a high level of concern with this. PEOPLE being told different things by various Building Staff. SOME buildings have received full PPE packs and others told to talk to office if need ‘something else’. Ex: Students are coming Monday with the rest of supplies cleaner/plexiglass shields expected by 2.8, the same day. **STAFF feel uncared for, not loved, not involved in the planning**. Not trying to be disrespectful to MPS, but “we create loving environments”. THIS feels **hurried, rushed.** **We do not feel prepared, supported**. Another Labor member added: **Relationship building is important**, **this has been done TO US, not with us.**  **Karen D:** That site’s (Pillsbury) principal was speaking for that site only, felt it was ‘mis-reported’ in view of whole district. **Classroom Capacity**: District did not set a classroom ‘cap’. The rooms vary in capacity. Media misreported info from 2.3.21 at Pillsbury, when asked by Media, the principal answered average 20 kids/classroom.

**Maggie S**: This is a really challenging time. Having this committee will open communication.

**Labor** responded: The reality experienced in the schools **doesn’t feel safe**. WISH our district leadership **can plan with us** to help us feel safe. With collaboration, staff would KNOW the plans are in place (*in contrast to this late information forum*). Difficult with this type of communication. Anxiousness is where 99.9 % of our colleagues are right now.

**Another Labor member** commented: From my perspective: What we have learned was ONLY from our nurse partners, relying on colleagues versus the MPS administration that has been sent confusing messages. with reality. We Teachers, Psychologists and ESPs **can bring our strengths** to this transition. Please utilize us.

**Labor Member** commented that **active grieving is occurring**, with **shortages in the NURSES particularly**  due to **resignations and retirements as were not ‘accommodated’ with any flexibility (ADA, FMLA, Governor’s Order related to district’s “Undue Hardship” and offer of extra PPE that no one** seems to know what that means. **Maggie S:** Hired back if tenured, will **retain tenure** per contract. (*Business agent ML for MFT confirmed*). If rehired, will be an **external hire, unless given early contract**.

**Labor Member** commented on concerns about **contact tracking, exposure notification worries and the “dashboard” type of transparency that staff still do not know about**.

**Rochelle** **C**: Covid Coordinators or LSN will call HR/Amber S (respectively for staff/student + reports). Mentioned the public online **MDH Tracking of any school site with over 5 case** in a 2 wk period, on a list, can cycle off if no further cases after period of time. *(“*[*Listing the names and counties of schools that have five or more confirmed cases within a two-week period on our situation update page*](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/datafaq.html). *Schools will be removed from the list after 28 days with no new lab-confirmed cases.” –source + MDH quote added, bb Recorder).* And, IF MPS **employee/adult is a close contact:** that person will get call/contact from MHD who will talk staff person through public health protocols. If not a close contact, low risk letter from building supervisor/principal will go out to all staff if present on that date -to include what date the exposure occurred and give you more resource links if desire optional extra ‘testing’, for example.

**Labor member**: C**ommunication** is her own specialty**. Childrens’ safety during lunches is a concern when seated so closely and unmasked** wants to know more about eating protocols. Why is the **3 ft eating distance ‘good’ enough**? **PLEA for better communication from the district, working with the Unions/staff together** as Governor Walz had in his July Executive Order**.** MDH/MDE guidelines have ‘wiggle’ room in them that increase the confusion.

**District** responded: MPS is glad we have the Epidemiology team at Minneapolis Health Department who has guided the MPS response and plan. **Rochelle C** : MPS is following MDH and MDE guidance. We’d get “100 page documents at a time” to study and sort through. Planning team always documenting where they found the guidance. Then it would change. MPS’ **Quarantine:**  MPS is taking a “conservative” stance of 14 days, not shortening it despite options presented.

**Labor member** thanked **Lee Setter** for the [**FAQ 12.11.20 at the EHS public website**](https://facilities.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/ventilation_and_filtration_faqs_12-11-2020.pdf) that was helpful, but we need that expanded to each site.

**Labor stated**: Remember that we **work better together than apart**… This week has felt very disjointed as a long-term employee.

**Maggie S**: We are colleagues here, we share that sentiment. Invited MFT to remain in touch between meetings.