

Environmental Health and Safety Labor-Management Group 4.26.21

Next Meeting Tuesday 5.18.21, Agenda Items due to Chair Wednesday before or if need to present situation.

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

- 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.
- 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. *(Plan from 11.20 mtg: Recorder to Maggie Sullivan, HR post-approval for MPS website posting/Post Feb 2021 Mtg MFT will not wait: will post on MFT59.org when MFT members approve via email –bb recorder).*
- 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: (the following grid of 25 areas).

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*	*= 19-21 contract additions.

Attendance 4.26.21: see **Bold Face P** for Present before name. Meeting Time: 5:00 pm to 6:01 pm

P Maggie Sullivan, Senior Officer Human Resources	P Rochelle Cox, Assoc Superintendent	P Karen DeVet, Senior Operations Officer-
P Alicia Miller Penn, Senior Employee Relations Assoc	P Amber Spaniol, Director Nursing Services	Lee Setter, Manager Environmental Health and Safety- Absent

MFT Teachers Expected: See bold face P by name if Present.

P Angie McCracken, CHAIR , LSN Hiawatha + Howe	P Mike Leiter, MFT Business Agent	P Susan McNaughton, Dowling, Co-Steward
P Beatrice Benda, Recorder , LSN, Nonpublic	Katy Tharaldson, Hale Art Teacher Absent as unable to adjust CHANGE OF MTG date < 1 wk notice, submitted statement for reading.	P Paige Whitney, Seward Speech/Lang

--	--	--

Guests of Management: Malcolm Wells, Employee Relations Associate

Guests of Labor: Caroline Long, Special Ed Resource Teacher at Contract Alternatives; Karen Maverick Dept Program Facilitator for Contract Alternatives, Special Education.

Agenda: Pre-meeting Homework: (See Heading of all minutes: Review of Purpose).

A. MFT's Building Safety Committee Updates-

1. Statement read to Management Group by Labor Chair:

We were seeing a pattern of high level of concerns about **student masking** prior to staff returning to in-person learning. Once school started, we are finding that **most students are wearing masks easily and safely**. We are **happy** to report that.

We are hearing many concerns about **social distancing**. Students are not able to distance *on their own* and we want this **noted for the record**, that **staff across multiple sites are repeatedly concerned about physical distancing protocols and adherence**.

There are massive **holes** in District Leaderships' **current plan and style of communicating with teachers and ESP staff**. Informing principals and expecting them to carry a consistent message is not working well. Some buildings hear the message, others do not, and at others it is a different version of the message. We are STILL hearing repeatedly that staff are unclear on **cleaning protocols**, what engineers should be doing daily, what to expect when there is **a close contact exposure** and what the exposure and quarantine protocols are.

In conversations with teachers and MFT staff it would be great if MPS leadership could look at their current model of communicating with teachers and make it work better for teachers/staff. **None of the staff we talked to knew about the 60+ page document of protocols** that was mentioned to us as a "resource" at our last meeting 2.4.21. We asked across buildings, we asked MFT Staff, we asked our own colleagues. No one has heard of it or thought of it as a "reference". **That is a problem**.

We need **clear, direct communication from district leaders**. This would alleviate stress, and make staff feel supported and cared for.

We asked that **the engineer information be clarified and communicated to staff** at our 2.4.21 EHS Labor Management Committee (LMC) meeting and we **have not seen any movement** to make that happen.

Because the **communication** about what to expect (cleaning, covid exposure information, etc.) has been **ineffective**, when there is a problem, **we do not know who to report to**. We would like to **request that the district communicate clearly and come up with a way** we can report things directly when they are not going as they are supposed to be.

It is not always "go to the principal" because that is a barrier for some staff for a variety of reasons. For some, the principal IS the one who is not following a clear pattern of notification. Since the information has not been shared clearly it is confusing and stressful.

While staff agree with the decision to move to Distance Learning W-F of week (4.21-4.23.21) due to the Chauvin Trial decision, the way it was communicated to staff was again another example of what is not working well. Some principals let staff know that it was "likely" as early as Wednesday, while other did what was asked and waited until the close of business FRIDAY. **Getting emails on a Friday afternoon is a pattern we see as a toxic communication pattern.** It says, "We're sending this late in the day, so we don't have to listen or answer questions" and sends people into the weekend (or spring break) with a lot of work to do and a lot of stress. It is the antithesis of "take care of yourself" or "work life balance". It makes it hard as an employee to feel valued or supported. We also saw NOTHING about **compensating staff for the extra work** it takes to design and implement distance learning without any additional time or compensation. **Treating teachers/staff this way makes them leave for other districts who work more collaboratively and supportively with their teachers and union leaders.**

We are continuing to hear **teachers wish that the district would get to "the table" and negotiate some of these Covid protocols with our union leadership and negotiations team.** This would be a step towards alleviating some of the issues of clear communication that are happening. It would also **show staff you value our work, and our safety and the safety of our students.**

Discussion: Management sees MPS messaging as clear, but responded, "Will take this back to the Communications" team, per Maggie Sullivan.

Some additional Labor suggestions included

- a. To not just highlight the respective documents for Return to Learning in yellow-seen once you have navigated to that spot and then opened the document - but to **summarize what items are updated** (like a table of contents of changes) there at the beginning, like what HRS has accomplished. **Dates should be included on all items.**
- b. And perhaps The Return to Learning documents **can POP into a person's visual field** upon sign into the staff intranet whenever updates are added. Why should staff have to revisit the page daily on busy work days?
- c. Management again, "We'll take this back to Committee".

- B. **MPS COVID Dashboard** – F/up from 2.4.21 mtg of possibility of adding Student vs. Staff/Adult information. Management agenda item request from Rochelle Cox: Amy Moore, General Counsel had follow-up questions about rationale of the "ask" from labor @ 2.4.21 meeting. Maggie S expressed: Concern about identifying the person for HIPPA privacy, benefit vs risk.

Labor responded: First, we want to acknowledge that there is a history expressed by MPS and nationwide of students not spreading covid, but we now know in 2021 that **students do contract and transmit Covid 19.** In fact, current MDH demographics have acknowledged this on the weekly MDH Calls to School Nurses in their stats analysis---partly due perhaps to the # of staff who have opted to receive vaccines (thus more protected), but ALSO because of the newer presence of the B117 (AKA UK) Variant of Covid 19 that is MORE transmissible and is causing more illness/hospitalizations in younger populations. (4.21.21 MDH School Nurse Update, Slide 7: Cases Associated with PreK-12 School Buildings presented by Susan Klammer, Epidemiologist MDH, see Beatrice.benda@mpls.k12.mn.us or Amber.Spaniol@mpls.k12.mn.us for access to slides directly).

MDH also identifies that these students are more independently mobile in the community at these grade levels MS/HS now Face 2 Face, which continues to concern staff at risk for potential spread to their vulnerable, yet unvaccinated family members. Vaccine breakthroughs, although rare, of the viral contagion are identified in Mn and remain concerning to all of us who listen to the MDH updates to School Nurses, etc.

Yes, MPS' LSNs are doing well with quick quarantining of suspected student cases. But, as stated previously, other districts, both in the Metro area and nationwide, have addressed privacy concerns yet do post staff/student and building specific information. **Labor feels MPS is being too protective of the anonymous data.**

Data separation could allow better, "nimbleness" resolution/interventions as we continue to fight this aggressive virus. For example, within the Nonpublics (Face to Face all school year) during the November surge: Separate data showed clearly that staff were contracting/transmitting the virus, in alignment with MDH stats then. The Nonpublic 'Covid Teams' looked at staff risk areas/times and identified the lunch period and private office time masks off/doors open scenarios. **Education was increased in laser-focus ways to address all masking techniques of staff** (2+ layers) and encouraging more to consider the use of face shield supplementary strategy. Student technique also benefitted from this re-education.

But we feel it **starts with more specific data "streams"**. Partner *with* us.

******POST MEETING UPDATE 4.28.21** update: **Labor rec'd email from Rochelle Cox, Management stating that differentiation will now be listed and thanking EHS for collaboration!** As of 4.30.21 the **MPS Dashboard** is including sites **AND** listing total students/staff # (10 + students and 3+ staff, across 9 sites: Edison, Field, Franklin, Plant Operations, Sanford, Seward, South, Washburn and Whittier—Burroughs is soon completing their **28 days on the State list** of 5 or more in school +, one of 33 schools from Hennepin County now on the list 5.2.21.)

C. Rising Community Positivity Numbers on COVID 19 and What That means for MPS'

Transparency. (Labor): Last week's county dashboard numbers were **48.5 /10000**. Please expound on plans now that we have exceeded the MDH/MPS Dial "Plans": Rochelle Cox: The Covid Leadership group talk each am, they meet daily, and every other week with the Regional Support Team, as well as ???the Minneapolis Health Department. She sees a continued ability to do it from nimbleness, dialing forward. Management is all aware and watching the Covid Community Numbers very carefully.

Conveyed our Superintendent wants students in school, as does our Governor. There is concern about the big outbreaks (like sports). Staffing is always a concern. MPS has been thankful FEW "close contacts" numbers requiring full classroom quarantines. Overall vaccine rates/protection to staff has helped. Thanked the HRS teams, including building staff.

Maggie Sullivan expressed that she thinks staff are following protective protocols. Vaccination status is voluntary, but that all staff who wanted the vaccine have now had access arranged. MPS does not have #'s of vaccinated staff to share but did put out a survey to all staff soliciting this info.

Amber: Has great partnership with MPS health department, confident in their response.

D. Engineer Information ask/discussion- (Labor) Covered above. See Item A.

E. Contract Alternative Building Safety Concerns with guests (Labor)

Caroline Long reached out to the Chair because she has concerns about the Contract Alternative site Plymouth Youth Center (PYC). She was asked to extensively clean her own room, **handed a cleaner she knows nothing about, a sponge and a bucket.** No gloves were even offered. The bldg. is **not following MPS COVID protocol.** With only 4 kids on her caseload as in-person why must she report to this compromised situation, so Labor wanted to talk about with this Committee. Caroline had included her steward, who is not able to be present today.

Caroline reported the building Plan lists what the adults will do – including no sharing of community food, yet every week there have been **food-sharing events** at PYC with **in-person staff meetings**. They share food in a commons area, take off their masks, and **do not social distance**. It's right outside of my assigned room that had been left 'occupied' by the former PYC staff member. The LSN did a presentation on RTL, but had nothing about Quat etc.

Karen added: PYC also had students, on initial day back, doing a scavenger event, **mixing cohorts**, and not social distancing. Breakfast "bar", Wednesday staff meetings in person. Building program staff have not been following recommendations for their After School Program either. Staff with students After School: Neither staff/students are using masking in the indoor spaces.

Some PYC staff, as well as MPS staff bring up concerns about Covid implementation plans and wind up **making the lead David angry**. 3 of us, myself and Opal spent multiple days cleaning Caroline's room, it was that dirty, using **wipes** Caroline herself brought from her car.

Yes, there have been glitches at other contract alternatives also, not just PYC. Menlo is the most 'accommodating' and straight forward. Also MPS staff have noticed the **plexiglass screens** for close work seems too short for our almost adult students, even when sitting. Currently, PYC is the main concern for infringements. Opal's been working with them. They also have an **ionization system** that I don't know much about, nor been educated about.

Carolyn concluded that conversations with both the PYC leads and with MPS CA manager Opal have been frustrating Both groups of staff have tried to follow the "Chain of Command". Bringing concerns to the MPS lead for CA felt **belittling**, with Carolyn being suggested **"to get a job in Budapest"**. Carolyn felt she was trying to be **silenced**. "Keeping/retaining qualified, effective Educators of Color has been a stated MPS goal, but this is not the way to accomplish this".

Maggie: **MPS will need to follow up on that.**

Rochelle: Supportive, will initiate more conversations.

Labor: But overall, **who is tasked with communicating adjustments of the MPS Covid Plan** to these 'independent' locations? This includes the cleaning protocols, to these non-MPS affiliates who say they are 'using the MPS plan'. Who **is providing updates, oversight and directions** at Contract Alternative sites, and how often?

- a. MPS' plan exceeds 60 pages with embedded links; the CA's plans never exceed 10 pages, and one even posed a question to Opal. PYC's plan specifically has 3 ft, never mentions the MPS plan for 6 ft for these older students.
- b. Bea did a survey of the CA staff and it showed **discrepancy** from site to site in training/support/expectations. In addition, these non-MPS staff don't even know their duties under OSHA protections at a basic level, from a nurse's perspective.
- c. Building staff don't seem to be able to aware of the need to **educate** about cleaning products or **problem-solve, to provide the Safety Data Sheets**. Ex: PYC has elected a Quat (Quaternary Ammonium Compounds, what hospitals use for their most concerning disinfecting needs, should be reserved for school Health Office use only, in my opinion- LSN) which means that flushing of skin for 15-20 minutes is essential if a splash occurs. Without gloves and protective eye wear, this is not a satisfactory choice for classroom teacher cleaning. MPS building staff had the benefits of EHS department, with Lee Setter's assistance in selecting **Bioesque**, a less concerning product.

- d. Cannot the resolution approved/found in November for the Nonpublic MPS staff be applied here? (Special Ed Labor Management Committee, Bea provided 'testimony' about the Nonpublic Covid planning process- as sites that do not have to follow MDH Guidelines at all, as is their right under the Nonpublic process).

F. **Where will MPS will post their Minutes** for the benefit of all staff and families per the Nov 2021 initial meeting of this group. Maggie Sullivan **stated she will consult with the Employee Relations team**, no decision yet.

1. FYI: MFT's Minutes can now be found at MFT59.org, 3rd tab from left- Member Resources, select bottom option, the [EHS Labor Management Committee](#). Again, due to LMC 'system' delays, MFT opts to approve their own version of the minutes and post in more timely fashion than waiting for whole group approval a month later or via email (the November plan, revamped and announced at 2.4.21 meeting by Labor so MFT membership can benefit, without impact of Labor's inability to approve when sent post meeting).

G. **Including ESPs on This Labor Management Team**. F/up of 2.4.21 discussion. (**Incomplete reply** from Management). Maggie Sullivan: They have not yet engaged with Shaun Laden, Pres of MFT's ESPs. She felt it most courteous to reach out to him first.

Labor expressed frustration to Maggie, that Management persists in ongoing delays related to this labor group membership, since the abrupt, not direct-to-the-committee-notice/total absence at the planned December 2020 meeting.

(FYI: Labor has sent its own message to Shaun on this topic, so he is ready to promptly provide list of who he'd recommend immediately to represent the ESPs. Catina Neal was present at the 2.4.21 meeting as a Guest of MFT as ESP 2nd Vice President, as she holds more than one role. Note: Management has had up to 4 Employee Relations guests at meetings in the past.)

H. **Social Distancing: Different Standard Concerns: Older students and "Capacity" Concerns** (Labor)

Different standard concern between HS and lower grades: Karen DeVet: MS and HS levels: rotating A/B model. Principal to give max attendance updates—at 6 ft limits.

I. **Clarification on How Often Families Can Alter Their Learning Plan, Affecting Capacity** (Management)
Karen DeVet: Sometimes students just show up without pre-warning. Clarified that the "disclaimer" about not being able to follow 'protocols' for social distancing of students is only for Elementary sites.

At the MS and HS level, some MS/HS opened in a rotating AB schedule and each principal was asked to establish max enrollment and maintain the 6 ft between students (as well as staff distancing that is for all grade levels as possible). MPS has put some time limits on when those kids can come back to In Person Learning.

DATES reviewed:

4.26.21 No additional registrations to learn in person for K-8, Middle School. Up to 2 wks to get transportation set up can be a factor though

5.10.21 No more additions to In Person, aligns with mid quarter, allowing those who need that credit recovery to get the in-person help they need.

- I. **Follow up on 'pending arrival' of more tabletop shields:** Making sure people have these when and where they are needed. (Management) Karen DeVet: NOW have an extra 600 in inventory. Delivered week of spring break. Principals varied in how they distributed. Let Lee Setter EHS dept know if needed at a site. **Will look at TALLER ones, per the Contract Alternative's input today.**
- J. **Update on Spring Event Celebration info (Management).** MDH 3.24.21 venue instruction. Management: Updates 'coming'.
- K. **Summer School Concerns-** Labor expressed concerns re: mixing so many sites and having so many students in person. Ex: Pillsbury—GEMS with 14 sites coming in not just "podded" in schools, in youth sports. Reminder from Labor that the infectious period remains 14 days, 2 'cycles' of separation is better epidemiologically. (Summer School starts 6.21.21, very close to last building day).

Rochelle: Hoped that things would be improving with viral issues by then. Rochelle will take back to the planning (14 days infectious cycle). Suggested invitation to **Amy Fearing to NEXT MTG**—some stipulations on ALC \$\$ processes.... to get her direct input.

Maggie S: MPS will watch, youth sports.

Bea closed by reminding the group Covid Plans will not suddenly disappear- Suggests that MPS work with interested staff THROUGH the summer as Plans are adjusted for Fall 2021. This group worked hard last summer, but separate from the MPS efforts who never attended despite repeated invites, which is incredibly sad.

NEXT Meeting: 3rd Tuesday at 5 pm, May 18th, 2021.