

Kensington Town Hall Meeting

Tuesday, October 20th, 2020

- We are getting ready for next week when plan A starts. We will still have over 200 students who are virtual. There is a virtual class at each grade level (before there were two). Fourth and fifth grade still have two virtual classes. Other grade levels are inheriting formerly virtual students into their classes. We tried to reduce transitions as much as possible. Some grade levels still need help, but not enough time to get a new hire acclimated to everything new. KES is very grateful to receive a fifth and kinder teacher from Newtown Elementary. This keeps class sizes down. Class average is 26 in fifth grade instead of above 30+ before. This keeps us from having 23 in kindergarten class with the Newtown Elementary school teacher. If you see new teachers, give them a warm welcome. We are very thankful for them.
- A few things that go with the new structure:
 - As much of homework/classwork to be done in class. Some digital submissions at home for upper elementary to prepare them for middle school Canvas usage.
 - In virtual classes, we will still have virtual submissions. It's more difficult to get papers to virtual teachers. Some teachers have drop off/pick up opportunities at school.
 - Shift in the grading piece: there was grace in the time allowed to turn in work. Now that students are in the building, teachers will work more on the accountability measures. Work will be turned in by Thursday so it can be graded. There was a lot of work missing with mostly virtual work being assigned - it was harder to be accountable. Judgement calls were made for grading to allow for grace in the first nine weeks. We made calls based on what was best for students.
 - This is elementary. The grades don't go towards a GPA that will get them into a program. This has been a crazy nine weeks. We are looking forward to normalcy in the second quarter. Don't stress over grades. Ask kids if there is anything you can do to help.
- Transitioning to specials in the second quarter with the exception of media teacher, Ms. Taylor. She is handling tech issues. There will be a ten minute break in between specials. TAs will pick up classes so that specials teachers can spray all surfaces and allow for sanitizing the correct way. In the past, some classes were combined for specials. We are not combining specials this year. Instead, there is a student program for a typing club to reinforce typing skills. K-1 will start by identifying how to log in to chrome books and how to click and drag. There's letter recognition (identifying which finger and key go together). Students won't be super motivated to do it daily though. To reduce contact points, students will stay in each special for two weeks. Two weeks helps because we can't build on skills when there are seven or eight days in between the last time the teacher saw them. This allows for teachers to teach a full unit during the two week stretch.
- Virtual families: specials will be like a choice board. There will be some norms with these activities. It should be fun and engaging for students.
- Virtual families: now that teachers "own" only their class, this gives the teachers more flexibility. EC/AIG times may change. Important subjects will happen in the morning because that's when students learn best.
- Playgrounds will be open for recess soon. Previously, outdoor areas have been sectioned off. One class on the playground at a time. Students will sanitize hands on the way out to recess and then when going back inside and will wash hands once inside the building. These things take time out of the day.
- Lunch is still in the classrooms. There is a que in the cafeteria to get meals. There will still be mask breaks during lunch and recess. Teachers are mindful of alternating mask breaks through the day (during snack or other times). We are trying to reduce the contact points but we know there probably will be one. We are doing our best to maintain as much safety as possible.
- Largest focus is keeping classes separate. If one class has to be quarantined, it's not as bad as having to keep everyone home. Mrs. Williams staggered bathroom breaks for this reason.

- A contact point is deemed as being within six feet for fifteen cumulative minutes or longer.
- We don't really have a definition of minimal social distancing. According to Nurse Nash, we go by WHO requirements: three feet without masks on.
- Cooperative learning is still happening with great expectations from teachers. Shout out to Ms. Ginsberg for her awesome use of this today!
- We will maintain Canvas. We have the system and procedures and it will stay. It helps keep families in the loop and provides a point of reference for students. Instead of pre-recorded videos, you will see the master table with all the week's activities. Once you get there, you will still see the "I Can" statement, supplemental resources, and then .assignment. It will be more of here's what we talked about, here's what we used to talk about, and here is the assignment for today. If students are absent, this will help them stay up to speed.
- Virtual teachers will still record when they teach and it will be posted. You won't be able to see until after the lesson. Virtual has been at your own pace, but it will be more important than ever to be live for the lessons. That is why we are going to be shifting the core instructions to the beginning of the day.

Questions

- Drop off/pick up time: We are doing a great job of keeping things going with having to do temp checks. If people show up in waves, that does help eliminate the lines. Using the park has been great and we can continue to use Nesbit. If the line is up to the intersection, go down to Nesbit and use the roundabout. There is a back-up plan, but involves community relations. Dismissal - second round isn't leaving until 2:20pm. Single file line allows us to get cars out faster - adults can go around both sides. There is a good rhythm at dismissal. We thought about pulling fifth grades and queuing them up but then social distancing and class mixing will happen and it may not be worth it. We are envisioning a time frame of 3:00pm for being finished. We are thankful for our teachers who are helping and losing their prep time at dismissal. If you need a bus, email Mrs. Williams. It does take a few days to set it up and some buses are very crowded. Bus riders need attestation forms at the beginning of the week. These are done on the morning routes. If you are an afternoon bus rider only, you won't need this because it's turned in during the mornings.
- Remote attendance: what happens if my kid is sick or on vacation? Can they still participate? The answer is no. We will treat them as we did before. Teacher will let you know what's going on if possible (check Canvas). We want to keep and protect virtual classes. Virtual teachers deserve to give their classes all of their time. We want sick kids to stay home to keep everyone safe. Reach out to Nurse Nash if you have any questions related to whether or not your child should attend school. Play it safe, do not worry about attendance count.
- If you have to quarantine as a class or individually (school issued), then those students will be guests in the virtual classes. Nurse Nash will communicate with that family/families and share the link. Links will not be posted for all kids, guests will need links shared from a staff member.
- What can parents help teachers as they transition? Asking the question is best to teachers. Offer help to teachers if you can. We have put money into some of the needs for teachers to make this easier. Allowing teachers to settle in is very helpful. It's nice to show teachers that you appreciate them. When you send an email to Mr. Vaughn or Mrs. Williams, we share with staff. It means a lot to them.
- Supplies: what do we need to bring? Reach out to teachers but they should be sharing in an upcoming email. Students will have cubbies and desks to leave stuff in. Chrome books will continue to need to go home and come back each day. They may need them for independent work time in school. We don't have huge charging carts for when they are in school. They need to be charged overnight. There will be more use of student agendas. Look for the ABC stamps for good behavior and their home communicator folders (taken care of by PTO - shout out to the PTO for all their help). There will be no communal supplies.

- How many students are in third grade virtual? 27-28 students. It is the largest virtual group. We applied for a waiver to allow for lower class size. TAs will also be assigned to virtual teachers (K-3) to help. Mrs. Young will be helping Mrs. Urbina.
- Volunteering? We are holding off on in the building volunteers. We are thinking of how to use volunteers creatively.
- Will the walker door come back? We do not see that happening in the near future. Town of Waxhaw did get a grant for sidewalks for bikes and walkers but that is on hold right now.
- How will it work with bus riders? Will it be overcrowded? We are looking into adding one more bus route that will do a double route. Currently, only siblings sit together. Next week will only be two to a seat. Masks are important. Some bus drivers are struggling with mask wearing. Please reinforce this at home. Please be patient with the bus drivers.
- Will there be homework? Next week, absolutely not. To start, have kids read (without a screen).
- Will the KES dads be back? We love them but not yet!
- Size of fourth grade virtual classes? 29 and 30 in classes. These are the sizes we would see if they were in the building.
- Will EC services begin in the building? Yes, students will be in the EC rooms with their teachers. They will receive in-school service time as well as supportive services. EC teachers have already been pulling students during in-school days.
- Can we have lunch delivered or have lunch delivered for teachers or treats sent in? Yes, for teachers but not for students. Treats are best pre-packaged if you want to send for teachers/staff.
- Will in-person teachers be using Canvas as much? No, we won't have pre-recorded content. It will just be a skeleton of what the work is for the day.
- What will Fridays look like? They will look a little different. Instead of office hours, we will maintain instruction. This will keep students more engaged and will keep teachers in the habit of knowing how to deliver online instruction just in case. We will have morning meetings then keep kids live on the call (with a break). Reading will be a review of the week. Instead of packaging lessons or quizzes/tests, we won't use Fridays that way. We are looking to touch on I-Station on Fridays. It is an adaptive test so it continues to get harder and harder as you are getting questions correct. Data is really important and interventions are monitored through their usage. It is a really great tool for MTSS.
- Can we do after-school activities? No, not yet. We don't know when that will change.
- Are there assignments in I-Station like I-Ready? Yes, there is a power path which tailors to subcategories that should be progressional to target areas that need to be learned before other content. We are still trying to get more data so we can individualize as much as possible. IStation information was sent home. Parent portal information was shared to see data.
- What will the hybrid model look like for AIG? As we allow fourth and fifth grade teachers to shift content, we are being mindful of what it will look like for AIG. We will communicate this out. Ms. Heileg and Ms. Dence will livestream for at-home kids while also teaching in-class. Teachers will do their best to answer questions from at-home students. They will now have more time to breathe, plan and have more time for Q&A for at-home kids.
- Virtual Mandarin? We are looking at office hours during independent work so that kids can ask their questions if they have them.
- If students and teachers have to quarantine, what would happen? Teachers will teach virtually with the schedule we are currently using with virtual classes. A link will be shared only for their class.