

New Lexington, Ohio

September 16, 2021

The New Lexington School District Board of Education met in special meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the New Lexington Board of Education Administrative Office, 2549 Panther Dr., New Lexington, Ohio.

Members present: John McGaughey, Steve Burton, Ray Hatem, and Bill Nutt.

Pursuant to Section 121.22 {F}, Revised Code, the local news media along with the members of the Board of Education were informed of the meeting.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

A. It was moved by Nutt and seconded by Hatem to approve the Resolution #21-12: A resolution adopting and implementing universal mask/facial covering requirements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as approving the amendment of the New Lexington Schools Health and Safety Coalition guidelines for the 2021-22 school year.

WHEREAS, on July 26, 2021, the Ohio Department of Health issued *Covid-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools* (“ODH Guidance”), which provides recommendations and guidance relative to the safe reopening of Ohio public schools for the 2021-2022 school year in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, as part of the ODH Guidance, the Ohio Department of Health “strongly recommends” that “those who are unvaccinated wear masks while in school”;

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) issued *Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools* on July 27, 2021, updated on August 5, 2021 (“CDC Guidance”), which also provides recommendations and guidance relative to the safe reopening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, as part of the CDC Guidance, the CDC “recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status”;

WHEREAS, both the ODH Guidance and CDC Guidance establish that students should return to and remain in school full-time for the 2021-2022 school year due to the benefits of in-person learning;

WHEREAS, the New Lexington School District (“District”) recently released its Health and Safety Coalition Guidelines (“Plan”) for the reopening of its schools for the 2021-2022 school year, and the Plan incorporates the health and safety recommendations of the ODH Guidance and the CDC Guidance;

WHEREAS, Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) provides, “[d]uring times of elevated communicable disease community spread (pandemic or epidemic), the Superintendent will issue periodic guidance through Board of Education plans/resolution(s) in alignment with public health officials and/or in accordance with government edicts”;

WHEREAS, Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) further provides, “[s]chool settings can be a source of community spread. Wearing face masks/coverings is especially important during these times and can help mitigate the risk of exposure from person to person”;

WHEREAS, Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) further provides, “[a]s such, during times of elevated communicable disease community spread, the Superintendent may activate this policy by notifying the school community, requiring all school staff, volunteers, and visitors (including vendors) to wear appropriate face masks/coverings on school grounds unless it is unsafe to do so or where doing so would significantly interfere with the District’s educational or operational processes”;

WHEREAS, Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) further provides, “[i]n addition, the Board may require that students shall wear a fask mass unless they are unable to do so for a health or developmental reason”;

WHEREAS, the District – as part of its Plan and pursuant to and in accordance with Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) – has been in consultation with the Perry County Health Department on an ongoing basis with respect to health and safety issues concerning Covid-19, including but not limited to, issues regarding the number of cases as well as the progression and spread of Covid-19 in Perry County, Ohio and the State of Ohio generally;

WHEREAS, based on its ongoing consultation with the Perry County Health Department as well as the health and safety recommendations provided to the District by and through the Governor of the State of Ohio through press conference on September 14, 2021, the Board has concluded that the present circumstances regarding the rising number of cases and the spread and progression of Covid-19 in Perry County, Ohio and the State of Ohio generally necessitate the adoption and implementation of universal mask/facial covering requirements in the District pursuant to and in accordance with Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”);

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to adopt and implement the universal mask/facial covering requirement as set forth in this Resolution as well as revise its Plan for the 2021-2022 school year to incorporate this universal mask/facial covering requirement;

WHEREAS, in adopting and implementing universal mask/facial covering requirements in the District pursuant to and in accordance with Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”), the Board seeks to help protect the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors;

WHEREAS, the Board believes this action is in the best interest of the District’s students, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors due to the emergency situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Lexington Board of Education (“Board”):

Section 1. The Board hereby restates and reaffirms its goal as set forth in the Plan that students will return to and remain in school for in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year, which is consistent with the recommendations and guidance relative to the safe reopening of Ohio public schools issued by the Ohio Department of Health and the CDC.

Section 2. Based on its ongoing consultation with the Perry County Health Department relative to rising number of cases and the spread and progression of Covid-19 in Perry County, Ohio and the State of Ohio generally, the Board has determined to adopt and implement universal mask/facial covering requirements in and throughout the District pursuant to and in accordance with Board Policy 8450.01 (“Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic / Epidemic Events”) in order to help protect the health, safety, and well-being of students, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

Section 3. The Board has further determined that it will continue to consult and collaborate with the Perry County Health Department with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic, and it will monitor the number of cases and the spread and progression of Covid-19 in Perry County, Ohio and the State of Ohio generally to determine if and when these protocols may be reduced or otherwise changed.

Section 3. The Board hereby has determined that the Plan for the 2021-2022 school year will be revised and updated to reflect this universal mask/facial covering requirement.

Section 4. The Board President, the Superintendent, and/or the Treasurer are authorized and directed to take all other such actions as are necessary or appropriate to accomplish the objectives of this Resolution, including but not limited to, taking measures to provide notice to students, parents, guardians, and anyone else in the District community that may be directly affected by any decision made under this Resolution.

Section 5. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and any of its

committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public or in executive session as permitted by Ohio law.

Section 6. This Resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

THE VOTE: Nutt, yes; Hatem, yes; Burton, yes; McGaughey, yes. President McGaughey declared the motion carried.

It was moved by Hatem and seconded by Burton to adjourn the meeting.

THE VOTE: Hatem, yes; Burton, yes; Nutt, yes; McGaughey, yes. President McGaughey declared the motion carried.

President

Treasurer