

Press Release
September 10, 2020



Middleton trustees explore options to bring K-5 and special education students back for face-to-face learning in yellow category

At a special meeting Wednesday, Middleton Board of Trustees agreed to consider a change in the Reopening Schools COVID plan for the “yellow” category to bring all students in K-5 and Special Education students back for face-to-face learning.

The School District will still need to consult with the Southwest District Health Department and the Board of Trustees would also need to officially amend the Reopening Schools plan at the September 23 meeting. But trustees agreed to immediately allow four people, instead of two people, per player to attend football games. Attendance at soccer and volleyball games will be discussed at the September 14 meeting.

Meanwhile, the Middleton School District will remain operating in the yellow category.

A change in the plan would possibly mean required face masks in the yellow category. Trustees said several times it is important to have the young students, as well as special education students, back in the classrooms with their teachers as soon as possible to establish relationships and provide the best education possible.

Operation at full capacity in some grade levels would mean hiring additional teachers, Superintendent Kristin Beck said, adding she would need time to calculate the actual number needed as she is uncomfortable returning to previous classroom sizes in this pandemic. Board members supported the plan, but would need to formally amend the current 2020-2021 budget to fund the additional teachers.

“In these unprecedented times we are working to continuously balance safety with the educational needs of our students,” Board Chairman Kirk Adams said after the meeting.

Earlier in a budget workshop, trustees also discussed other budget amendments, based on \$1.5 million additional funding after voters approved the two-year levy August 25. No decision was made. A revised draft budget, at the request of the board, will be presented to the trustees at the September 14 regular board meeting at which time they will vote.

Beck told the board several options were being considered to restore some of the \$2.5 million cuts made in June when the levy failed and the state mandated more than 5 percent in budget cuts. Those options include:

- Restore one School Resource Officer.
- Restore several positions with the plan of eventually moving to the “green” category.
- Reduce the pay-to-participate fees, currently at \$200 per sport/activity at the high school level and \$100 at the middle school.
- Restore funds for the science curriculum update.
- Restore several educational aides, including one-to-one aides for special education students.
- Pay a one-time \$500 stipend for non-certified staff to make up for the cuts in their pay because the district moved to a 4-day school week, and delayed start of school.
- Allocate funds for teachers who have attained the state professional endorsement.

Important links:

[Watch the September 9, 2020, special board meeting](#)

[Review documents the board discussed](#)

[September 2, 2020, letter from Superintendent Beck](#)

[Current Reopening Plan](#)