

Student Desk Barriers

Date: July 30, 2020; 9:00 am - 10:00 am

Workgroup:

Lisa Denham - attendee

Kimberly Pinkerton - attendee

Katie Zimmer - attendee

Courtney Goode

Melissa Hurd - attendee

Jennifer Orr - attendee

Brad Mason - attendee

Ellis Webster - attendee

Caroline Brown - attendee

Purpose - to determine if the district will provide Student Desk Barriers in addition to providing 6' distancing in classrooms (*assuming A/B model with 12-14 students per classrooms*)

Outcome - to make a recommendation regarding Student Desk Barriers:

To Provide

To Not Provide

To Provide in the following areas: Special Education, EL, RDG, Psych/Guidance - equity

Assessments only

Recommendation - The team recommends:

1. not purchasing barriers for all students in the AB model at this time due to the absence of supporting research; social emotional impact on students and staff while being separated by 6' and a mask; the virus reportedly lives on plastic surfaces for up to three days.
2. that specialists, performing specific assessments, can do so by using a barrier and a clear mask.

END

Notes below for backup only - documented conversation of the work group

Discussion -

Pros - in areas where we are unable to provide 6' distancing (board direction to maintain 6'), with younger children a barrier may deter touching each other; extra layer of protection (already requiring masks)

Cons - Research and Social Emotional; plastic is 3 days for virus; far better to be on the carpet than on the barrier; could become petri dish; social implications behind a barrier; research not available stating barriers actually help, clear parameter of 6' and K-6 wearing masks
Other considerations - cleaning and disinfection - build up on units if using fogger; staff time

Feedback:

where there are desks - additional barriers not needed (feedback from head teachers)

stay 6' distance between individual desks, perhaps provide one per class in the primary small group instruction (no more than 15 minutes at a time)

students walking to rr during class time (no more than 15 minutes at a time)

teacher walking around classroom (no more than 15 minutes at a time)

Question:

What does a teacher do if two students decide wrestle?

Teacher must step in - limited time of intervention - behavioral instances can last longer than 15 minutes

For small group instruction

Primary - not around a group table regardless of if there's a barrier

Upper Grade - pull small groups virtually within the room (talking quietly, head phones)

Meeting discussion:

JO: Didn't really see that it could be helpful

In rooms with tables, it may be appropriate at that time

If sharing table space, barriers could be useful

CB: If we had individual student desks, would we need to recommend them?

KZ: Staying true to 6 foot distancing

Staying true to social distancing, and able to provide desks

Small group table to pull kids closer together for instruction (even in a hallway) then barriers for those group tables could be helpful

Do we have enough desks?

CB: all grades return in AB schedule

Set up tables with half traps, forces the distance between kids

14 per classroom, could set up with traps as the individual student desks

Traps don't have cubbies, but have enough desk-top space to have a bin/tote on desk or under the desk next to them

One student per half-trap

KP: Board adopted that we are requiring 6 feet (non-optional)

W/ 6 foot distancing, small group instruction would not be allowed

MH: Yes, we have barriers for pre-school, but kids are still sitting so close together

Kids and teachers cannot be within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes at a time

CB: Task is to investigate the use of barriers for each student

Recommendation and the why in using barriers

MH: Pro - if we're unable to provide 6 foot distancing for pathways and walkways for students, that gives additional protective barrier

How tall are barriers (above face or below) - for those sitting behind the barrier and a taller student or adult walking by

CB: Also depends on height of students (desk at 27 + barrier at 30" = less than 5')

BM: Student still exposed sitting behind the desk even with barriers

Barriers only effective if students adhere to them (not turning away while sneezing, not circumventing them)

If 6 feet and mandating masks, not sure how much extra protection it provides

KZ: The extra protection could be to keep students from interacting (physically/touching) each other

CB: Requirements for entering and exiting the classrooms? Load back to front/? Exit front to back?

KZ: Situation - Student who has to go to the bathroom (from front of classroom, has to run to back)

Or aid has to walk through classrooms - how do you maintain distancing?

BM: 15 minute rule - walking down an aisle and everybody has masks

MH: Pro - for parents, extra layer of protection

But doesn't see how it's truly helping to the maximum extent - [might be dressing, nothing more]

What is the barrier going to do that the mask isn't going to do?

KP: Distancing as practicable - not distancing as 6 foot

If we're going to have kids closer together, then look at feasibility of barriers

6 foot is requirement, so not sure of the necessity of barriers

Unless in a smaller setting, although still mandated to the distancing rules

CB: Other Districts - 6 foot line in front of classroom that gives the teachers a walkable barrier, everybody else is behind that line

KZ: What does a teacher do if students decide to interact/misbehave/etc and a teacher needs to use proximity to manage the situation

JO: Do best to keep distance, but teachers will have to intervene - minimize as much as possible, but that's why it's essential for students and teachers to always have their masks on

MH: Behavioral instances could last hours - as long as under 15 minutes?

Are teachers/instructors timing to tap out at 15 minutes? What are the guidelines for managing instances?

KZ: If we're thinking fiscally, adhering to distancing and masks, why spend the money on the barriers?

CB: Cleaning them, Brad?

BM: If we get the electrostatic sprayers (on time), it shouldn't be an issue.

Every once in a while will have to clean by hand

W/out sprayers, going to take a long time to clean each barrier by hand

Turns into an employment (volume) issue

Harder for staff, taking word that it's getting done (it may not due to volume)

KZ: Is it better for those germs to get hung up on a barrier that another kid can come along to touch, or is it better for germs to travel those three feet and fall to the carpet?

CB: Length of virus' ability to stay alive on plastic vs other surfaces

BM: Plastic is 3 days, other surfaces maybe an hour

Far better to be on the carpet than on the barriers

KZ: If not sitting on the carpets, why wouldn't we let it go to ground to vacuum up vs. putting it on that barrier that could become a little petri dish

KP: Does it linger in the air?

CB: Yes, depends on humidity - maintain 40-60% humidity, will drop faster
KP: Able to do that?
CB: Looking into it, having assessment done in the next two weeks (by August 14)
KP: Original conversation, look at feasibility of barriers?
Discussing all kids for all days of the week
Do we need to plan for that? Or stage by stage planning?
LD: Main thing - physical distancing and masks
Small classes, somewhat additional protection, but not sure it's necessary
Doesn't provide more than what's already mandated
BM: Most effective is physical distancing and masks
What does the barrier do for the emotional state of the child?
CB: May provide a false sense of security for students and staff
LD: May be effective for small group discussion?
CB: Wouldn't be able to do small groups due to 6 foot distancing
KP: Upper grade kids, pulling small kids virtually?
Kids could be at their desks, could be interacting with teacher at desk and teaching small group lesson with kids (with headphones on, etc)
[Virtual small group lessons]
KP: Small group area (only for A B)
Set up 6 feet apart
Or do virtually with kids at desk
LD: Only reason can see barriers is for Melissa's group or EL group
Getting larger barriers, possible need to be closer
KP: Agreements that the Board adopted (6 or 7 points)
6 feet of physical distancing
How to provide EL or speech services support?
LD: When that happens, take extra precautions
Larger screen
Face mask on behind plexiglass
Wearing gloves if need be
Things need to be put in place for children that need closer instruction/interaction
Recommending goggles/eyewear protection as well
KP: Is it a mixed message?
One message around how to interact with students (possible not 6 foot distancing)
What if one of the 6th grade teachers hears this and wants to do something similar with extra protection?
MH: Agree - Not sure how to proceed, mixed messaging
Assessments cannot be done over Zoom - need to be in person
For little children, 10 minute assessment is possible (during sensory break, etc)
Older children, may need more than 10 minutes, what are the guidelines for doing so?
Specialists may have different opinion on this
Once see stipulations, it won't look the same
KZ: Going to have to be very clear on it, for everybody
Teachers don't like 'no'
Might have to say 'no' the purpose of the (barrier) is for special ed assessment...
Will need to have support, same message, and districtwide support
CB: Do we provide them with a:
No, you can't do it this way, but yes, you can do it this way...
Provide guidance
KP: To teachers - please talk to us first before implementing changes or new procedures/protocols
LD: Don't see this in Fall, maybe January and February
MH: Didn't want to hold students back from coming back to school without the necessary equipment
Necessary equipment now, plan for the AB model
LD: Agree with Brad - kids already coming back in different state, already dealing with masks, distancing, etc. Barriers may be unnecessary
Cleaning, protection
KZ: Will barriers provide auditory issues
LD: Lead time to order
BM: 2-4 weeks