

Lunchtime Ward Forum – Updated School Reopening Plans Secondary

Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (Ward 11 – Don Valley West)

August 27, 2020 – noon – 1:30pm.

Meeting venue: Webex Online Meeting, hosted by Trustee Chernos Lin

Attendees:

- **Trustees:** Rachel Chernos Lin (Ward 11)
- **Staff:** Superintendent John Chasty, Superintendent Andrew Howard, Executive Superintendent Uton Robinson (LC1).
- **Parents-Caregivers/Students/Staff/Community members:** 164 people attended (of 210 pre-registered).

Meeting notes by Wilmar Kortleever, Shared Services Liaison, TDSB Trustee Services

1. Welcome & Introductions

Trustee Chernos Lin started the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement, and welcomed all, including the new Executive Superintendent for Learning Centre 1, Uton Robinson.

The meeting is recorded for note taking purposes. We will try to address as many questions as possible, both pre-submitted and through the chat. We will try to get the report out a.s.a.p.

Please note everybody was sent a confirmation e-mail with additional information, including the TDSB's continuously updated Return to School website www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School.

** A selected PDF PowerPoint Presentation accompanies this report.*

2. Overview Trustee Chernos Lin

See PDF PowerPoint presentation

2a. School Opening & Registration (from slide #2, marked page 6)

- The **start of school is delayed** until September 15, based on advice of Toronto Public Health (TPH), and approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE). Elementary schools entry will be staggered, Secondary schools will start for everybody – what you start with on the first morning depends on which of two courses you are doing, and which of two cohorts you are in.
- As plans finalize, **local school administrators will be in touch** with further details about the start of school

- The **Registration process** has started on August 26. This is for everybody, including those who answered the pre-registration phone survey two weeks before, because of the many changes made since. Even if your intention remains the same, **please fill out the Registration** again, because it allows the Board to plan appropriately. Be patient if you have not received it yet, the Registration e-mails are going out staggered to prevent overloading the servers. If you have not received it in the next couple of days, feel free to contact Trustee Chernos Lin and she will connect you with local Principal. Families who do not respond will be contacted by their local school before September 15.
- The choice is between **in-school learning or Remote Learning. Switching is possible.** In Secondary the opportunity will be available between each Quadmester. Exceptions to these switch points can be made, but on a case by case basis, with time built in for the adjustment. The Board is encouraging the changes at the Quadmester points, as it is a very compressed schedule in Secondary schools.

2b. Health & Safety (from slide #5, marked page 10)

- Ensuring health & safety of students and staff is our top priority. We are working with guidance of Toronto Public Health (TPH).
- A number of **key measures** have been implemented like physical distancing, hand washing, respiratory etiquette (coughing into elbow, sneezing into sleeve), as well as screening for symptoms
- **Screening** in two ways: at home (self-evaluation for symptoms, with detailed guidance forthcoming), plus active screening at school entry. For staff as well as students.
- In **confirmed or suspected cases of covid**, everybody with symptoms will be directed to stay home. Everybody with symptoms will be encouraged to get tested. If symptoms develop during the day, students will be isolated into separated rooms – this room will be disinfected after use. Schools will keep track of absenteeism. If there is a suspected case, TDSB will work with Toronto Public Health for contact tracing. TPH will give guidance who to contact in terms of the class or school. TPH is very well versed in this, through the years for example with chicken pox, and in recent times with Covid. The Province released its protocol of what to do in case of a covid case yesterday, and we are working with that to develop our own protocols, making sure it aligns with Toronto Public Health.
- **Masks:** all students will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks indoor, including hallways and classrooms. They can be taken off outside, with physical distancing encouraged both inside and out. Students can wear their own masks, or they will be provided if needed. Medical exemptions will be made where needed. School-based staff working with students will be provided with all required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Direct and indirect contact for students will be limited to app. 100 people.

Facilities

- Hand hygiene breaks during the day, signage throughout the buildings, traffic flows indicated, designated entry and exit points.
- No assemblies or large gatherings.
- Each school will have a **designated room for ill staff or students**, with protocols around the use.
- Increased **ventilation and airflow**. Ventilation will be turned on two hours before anybody comes into the building, and run longer in the evening. Filter changes have been increased. All ventilation has been checked over the summer and is fixed where needed/possible. In rooms where ventilation is insufficient and windows can't be opened, HEPA filters will be installed. Fans will now be allowed, but the airflow must go up, otherwise it potentially spreads virus.
- Schools are looking into staggered entry and exit times, and there will be pick up/drop off protocols for parents (mostly applicable to elementary schools).
- Visitors are limited to essential visitors, to limit the number of people interacting with each other.
- **Cleaning**: Caretakers will perform routine cleaning of facilities, and enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces (like faucets, doorplates, bathrooms, handrails) twice a day.

2c. Secondary Model from slide #10, marked p.28)

- Instead of all-year (8 courses) or semesters (4 courses), students will have **Quadmesters** with up to two courses at a time.
- Dates of the quadmesters are on the screen (in the slides).
Q: The **first five days missed** will not be made up, with permission from the Ministry for the lesser number of hours. This is not uncommon: night school has fewer hours than regular day schools (90 instead of 110), and even during a regular year students miss time because of late starts and early dismissals, which is equivalent to what is missed now, so we do not fear for the integrity of the course or program, the focus will be on essential learning.
- The number of students in the building will be roughly half or less at a time compared to usually.

Timetable for In-School Learning (slide #11, page marked 29).

- Students will have timetables in advance of the first day of school.
Explanation: a student may have Math (course 1) and Art (course 2), with classes of 30 divided up in two cohorts A and B of 15 students. If in cohort A, the student goes to class for course 1 from 8:45 to 12:30, and then home. He/She then has until 2pm for the next live online learning. This gap is substantial for people who have substantial travel time home. In the afternoon, the student will then do online learning with the entire class with the teacher for Course 2 from 2pm until 3:15pm.
The Alternating day, in the morning she/he works from home on Course 1 in the morning, with work assigned by the teacher. In the afternoon, it is back to course 2 with the entire class online. On day 3 and 4, the courses flip (Course 2 in the morning in-class or at home by cohort, Course 1 with the entire class in the afternoon). After four days, the cycle restarts.
This means each teacher is teaching half of the class (Cohort A) one day, and the other half

(cohort B) the other in the morning, and the entire class in the afternoon. We will see more project-based learning in subjects that lend themselves to it, which has proven very effective in engaging students.

- **Mid-day:** During the time in the middle between the instruction, from 12:30pm to 2pm, teachers will have their 40 minutes for lunch. From 1:10-2pm, the Principal will look into design of activities to best support students. This may be professional learning, calling parents, 1-on-1 extra help or small group assistance, and/or connecting with other staff or social workers or other supporting staff.
- **Study Hall:** In TDSB, this may be students who cannot work at home 2-3:15pm, and approach the school to stay at school for learning, or even students who need some more support. This setting will be supervised, and socially distanced. We do not know how many students will need this yet. It will not be open to students on their at-home day, because that breaks the principle of limiting the number of students in the building per day and also limiting the attendance to one cohort at a time.

Virtual model (from slide 12, page marked 30)

- In the Virtual School, students will have the following **daily schedule**: course 1, 9-11:30am ; Course 2, 12:30-3pm.
- Minimum 90min/day live learning, through Brightspace per course. The rest of the time is for asynchronous independent work, which may include small-group learning.
- **Q: This will be very, very different from the Spring.** Teachers have had more time to prepare, there has been more Professional Development. The expectations for synchronous and asynchronous learning are much higher, and there will be daily attendance, as well as regular assessment. For some students, marks being frozen in the spring affected their motivation. This is a totally new ballgame.
- **Technology** will primarily consist of Brightspace, and TDSB's Virtual Library is at disposal.
- **Devices:** Students are welcome to bring their own device to school – owned, or loaned to them by the Board (60,000 were loaned out in the Spring, and registered students were allowed to hold onto them for the time being). If a device is needed, contact your local Principal (even if you are enrolling in the virtual school).
- New is Provincial funding for creating a true **Virtual School** for the Remote Learning model. TDSB has applied and is planning to start four Virtual Elementary schools (one per Learning Centre), and one central Virtual High School that students will be part of who choose Remote Learning. It will be staffed with its own teachers, guidance counselors, Principals, Superintendents – all supports that you would have in a regular school building.
- At the same time, the **connection with the local school** is important. You will remain on a list as part of your school like Northern, York Mills, Marc Garneau, or Leaside. You will graduate as part of your home school, which will be on your diploma.
- It is unlikely that **local teachers** will be teaching their students in the virtual school. We could have up to 60,000 students going online. Which will be very large virtual schools, and challenging to assign everybody local teachers.

- There will be an attempt to **cohort students** from the same school and grade (e.g. grade 9 Math students from Northern) together in the Virtual School.
- **Optional attendance: Q:** Some people have requested to return to their local home school. If there is space, that can be accommodated by the local Principal. Return to Optional Attendance School afterwards can be accommodated. That also goes for Specialized programs, as long as you stay within the date that will be announced.
- **Q:** Will Specialized programming and courses be available in Remote Learning? This cannot be guaranteed, but if for example Advanced Placement courses have 30 or more students registered, they will run. Teachers will be qualified and Ontario certified, and matched as well as possible, but no guarantee that a specialized teacher from the same program will be available. It is the same thing for TOPS: the program will run online if there are sufficient numbers, but not guaranteed with current TOPS teachers. International baccalaureate may be a bit more difficult because there are additional requirements for teachers.

2c. Special Education (from slide 16, marked page 35)

- **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)** will be followed both in-school and in the Virtual School – that is a legal responsibility. Conversations with parents will need to be had regarding accommodations, because some may not be possible, especially in the virtual environment.
- **Q: Resource:** Regular Day school will be staffed with full Special Education staff, and so will the Virtual School – same level of support. If you have indirect support in-school, you will still have that support, including from Resource teachers if this is assigned in the IEP. In the Virtual School, this works the same way: teachers matched up with students who need Resource.
- **Gifted classes** operate the same as Academic classes and will follow the same Quadmester timetable in-school. There will be **Gifted classes in Remote Learning/Virtual School**.
- **IEP concerns** are best addressed by contacting local staff or the local Principal.
- Some students with certain specific Special Education designations (like D.D.) will be attending their ISP, congregated site, every day.

3. Questions & Answers

- **Schedules: when to be received? For the entire year? Balanced?**
A: Secondary schools are being entirely re-timetabled as we speak. Deadline September 1. They always try to balance academic and other subjects, and avoid conflicts. Quadmesters actually make that easier. Principals will receive the parents/students' Registrations around the same time, and hopefully by the end of that week it will be known which teachers will return and who doesn't. This all has to come together for students' timetables. An e-mail will be sent in that first week of September with the student's timetables. It will not be known before Registration closes.
- **How to do Course Changes?** Teachers, including Guidance Counselors, return to school September 1. They start with 3 days of mandatory professional learning, but after that they can be contacted for course changes.

- **Will all courses run in Virtual School?** we will not know which courses will run until we know which students will register for the Virtual School and which courses they have picked, so timetabling can be done. You can be assured that core subject areas will be covered. Some of the electives might be more challenging, but that is unpredictable in a regular school too.
- **Should we expect course cancellations?** Those are possible, if numbers for a course run too low after people choose Remote Learning. Like in other years, some small reorganizations may be done after the first couple of weeks. University-required courses always run.
- **Do we have a sense of numbers of students returning in school v virtual?** From the pre-registration, the number of students returning to in-school learning seems strong, so there should be solid cohorts available.
- **Can students take less than 8 courses during the year? Minimum course numbers?** In the higher grades students sometimes carry fewer than 8 courses, and that is allowed. Quadesters tend to facilitate completing 6 courses well.
- **Quadesters are new, will universities be ok with this new situation?** Not entirely new – TDSB has some schools with quadester schedules, as have other Boards. Universities can handle the mark-reporting timelines. The Board is in touch with post-secondary about this.
- **E-learning: TDSB has e-learning courses, separate from the Remote Learning in the Virtual School. Are those allowed?**

Yes. You can register for one course at a time. It is completely separate from the Virtual School or regular school, but offers full credits and has a variety of grade 11 and 12 courses.

- **Will we have extra-curriculars? Sports?** Sport teams are not going forward this Fall. Some clubs or Student Council can still happen either virtually or in very small student numbers with staff sponsor. But Extra-Curricular as we are used to, will not exist, at this time. There might be other things going on virtually, depending on Staff availability.

If anything, advocacy groups including Student Council are very important to maintain. It would be an expectation for at least some Superintendents that their Principals facilitate those. You can still have virtual elections, and student leadership can still meet with the Principal, just like we will have School Councils and various other groups. **Student voice** needs to continue to be heard.

Trustee Chernos Lin (RCL): Everything we do has to start with **Mental Health and Well-being**, for both students and staff. We have to realize we have gone through a very stressful period, which still continues. We all need to realize people worry about losing connections with teachers and school, but we need to look at it from all sides: some teachers may not be able to come back, or need accommodations. Very strong attempts are being made to still deliver all the specialized programs that we offer, but that is an organizational mountain to climb in terms of which teachers are coming back and to where, and which students are coming back and to where, and then putting all those pieces together – in an environment that has been changing a lot since June. With a government that has changed plans multiple times, and money that has come in in chunks, requiring adjustments, even up to yesterday with new money from the federal government.

RCL: A great development we have had is the return of Principals in their buildings, which is different from the last Ward Forum, so local pieces are starting to take shape.

- **Is caretaking increased?** No extra caretakers have been hired in several schools in the Ward. The facility team leader in our learning network does have a compliment of additional mobile caretakers, that can be allocated from school to school for a variety of reasons where needed, to help out in addition to the regular caretaking team at a school. Their availability seems to have increased. **Requirements of cleaning** have been increased compared to last year. Students will see several other changes, including maximum capacity of bathrooms. A video is being prepared by the Board to give you a glimpse of what school might look like.

- **Midtown Safety**

The opening of three shelters in the Yonge & Eglinton area has led to safety concerns and many inquiries. We have been working with many people both publicly and behind the scenes.

Two shelters will close before school starts, but another one recently opened and will remain in operation near Mount Pleasant and Eglinton. Covid has created a very difficult situation for vulnerable people on the street or in crowded shelters.

As soon as Trustees Chernos Lin and Laskin (Ward 8) learned of concerns in the neighbourhood, contacts were made with local City Councillors Josh Matlow and Jaye Robinson. A letter was sent to the city regarding the concerns: incidents that have happened (like needles on the ground, people sleeping on school grounds, and some violent incidents), proximity to many schools (Central Eglinton immediately to the south, Northern SS across the street to the East, North Toronto Collegiate nearby, as well as John Fisher and Maurice Cody and Hodgson a bit further away), but first and foremost safety and security of students and staff both during the day and going to and from school.

We all need to be empathetic with vulnerable people, many of whom are simply down on their luck and trying to get back on their feet. Extra supports need to be offered. At the same time, we need to be cognizant of the fact that we have children who need to get safely to and from school and safe and secure once in school.

We have been working with the City on a safety plan for all of the local schools. We are meeting weekly in a Steering group with City staff, Police Services, Principals, Superintendents, and Council Chairs of all the local schools. This has been a productive way to raise concerns and request ways to protect our kids. Many pieces are being put in place like city staff foot patrols 24/7, increased police presence, two patrols especially before and after school and over lunch. We are talking about extra cameras, but really what we want is prevention.

We will be communicating, well before school starts, to each school, as soon as individual School Safety Plans are finalized – with plans continually subject to change if needed.

Trustee RCL is happy to attend School Council meetings if this subject is put on the Agenda, and perhaps have somebody from the City come as well.

4. Closing

Trustee Chernos Lin thanks everybody for attending, especially Superintendents Chasty, Howard, and Robinson. Please feel free to direct further questions to her by e-mail. The meeting report and hopefully some Q&A will be made available.

Lunchtime Ward 11 Forum – Updated School Reopening Plans – Secondary

Q&A CHAT ANSWERED BY SUPERINTENDENTS

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: Registration, TimeTabling

Q: I want to be able to see my Gr 11 daughters schedule for Sept to see what 2 courses she will be taking. If it is 2 courses that are "easier" to do at home I would prefer her to stay home. If its a more difficult course I would send her. I feel without the schedule we are unable to make an informed and safe decision. Will we be getting their schedules?

Q: In order to make an informed decision it is important to know the students' timetable - are we getting those timetables prior to Saturday? As the courses do in fact impact the choice. We need timetables to make informed choices.

Q: When will high school kids get their schedules?

A: in terms of timetables, secondary Vice Principals begin rebuilding the secondary timetable. It will be completed by September 1. this is around the same time as parent registrations will be sent to Principals. this will allow schools to complete the timetable. Timetables will be shared as soon as possible after that the same way that students received their report cards, by email and password.

A: Students will get their timetables emailed to them the work before school starts.

Q: when is guidance available to speak to about schedules/cohorts? or whose should we speak to?

A: guidance staff will be back at school on the same days all other teaching staff, September 1. Keep in mind that the Ministry has mandated PD from September 1-3 for all teachers so while they will be in school., it may not be until the following week that are accessible to students.

Q: How do we let the school know if our child has completed summer school courses and need to change their course request?

A: regarding completed summer courses, if it is TDSB it will already be in our system. If it is outside, the student will see the guidance counsellor to update the transcript.

A: Any summer course completion can be discussed with the guidance department at the school...course changes can occur accordingly.

Q: But tdsb does not allow students who take less than 6 courses to participate in any extra curricular? Will students who take less this year be allowed to participate?

Q: for grade 12 students who do not require a min 6 courses in order to meet the requirements to graduate, can they take only 4 or 5 courses through the year?

Q: Will the 6 course requirement for full time students be removed for this year? So a senior student might only need to take 5 courses, hard to find a 6th option this year. Does it matter.

Q: Are you getting rid of the 6 course requirement since this is a unique year?

Q: But will students be penalized if they only take 5. As some may not need 6 in grade 12?

A: for 5 or 6 courses, we still prefer that all students take a full timetable, but there is likely to be more flexibility this year at schools

Q: does eLearning count as part of the 6 courses?

A: yes eLearning can count

Q: OK - but in the past students have been told they can no longer participate in school clubs etc.. if taking a lower course load.

Q: Currently students are not allowed to participate in extra curricular if have less than 6 courses in grade 12. How will that help them with their mental health?

Q: Still want to know if a student takes 4 or 5 courses in grade 12, as they do not need more, will they be able to still participate in extra curricular and clubs? Tdsb has not allowed this before.

Q: will grade 12s be penalized for only taking 4 or 5 courses? They have been in the past.

A: if there are clubs this year at a school, i don't see any issue

Q: ... addendum: can gr11 and 12s take more than 1 eLearning course as part of the 6?

Q: I don't believe so. but the website will outline more info

Q: I also understand that one can opt for in class 1st quad, but can request change prior to sept 15th if circumstances change.

A: If a situation changes before Sept. 15 for your child and there is a need to change your decision around virtual vs in-school, please communicate with the school administration.

Q: how do we follow up if we did not get any email on registration on Aug 26 despite having emails with TDSB?

A: If you don't get an email for registration by tomorrow, feel free to contact your principal or me.

Q: When will staff get their timetable assignment

A: Staff timetables will be completed once the student registration has been completed. Principals will be in touch with all staff.

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: Health & Safety & Facilities

Q: Hello, I am a secondary school teacher. Will the older high schools be equipped with updated ventilation or portable medical grade calssroom units?

A: The TDSB facilities team has gone into every school and looked at all systems. They have identified where upgrades or changes were required.

Q: what does active screening mean EXACTLY

A: active screening means there is a person at the entrance of the school verifying the screening questions. Passive means you read them on your own, like when you walk into a store

Q: If the class or an individual student has to be quarantined will the lessons continue online?

A: if an entire class is quarantined, and the teacher can still teach the class, it will switch to remote learning like the virtual school. If the teacher is not well, it will be an occasional teacher

Q: How many students will be in the Northern building at one time

A: 1/2 of the students who choose in-school learning will be in the building on one given day.

Q: Question: under what exact circumstances will a classroom be quarantined? Same Q: for an entire school.

A: School models, depending on the situation we are in with the pandemic can pivot from in-school to fully remote or vice versa...we have built the models to accommodate either way.

Q: has there been consultation with the school community re: sheltersat NSS?

Q: I would also expect that NTCI, Eglinton Junior, John Fisher, and Hodgson would be in on those discussions.

Q: yes, all of those schools are part of the conversation

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: Secondary Programming

Q: How will a 3.75 hr class be handled? This will be so difficult for many kids and teachers. Kids with ADHD esp

Q: will washroom breaks be "scheduled" by class to ensure distancing?

A: The larger time in the morning will be broken down into nutrition breaks, health and wellness breaks, instructional time, independent learning...teachers will not expect students to learn for 3 hours and 45 min straight.

Q: in your example, will the same teacher teach both cohort A and cohort B?

A: Same teacher will be teaching cohort A and B of the same class.

A: yes, same teacher teaches cohort A and B (total 30 students)

Q: What is "bright space"?

A: Brightspace is a digital platform that is approved by the Board, along with Google Classroom, to teach.

Q: are assessments- online tests/quizzes- going to be adapted to be made possible in the virtual school?

Q: assessment will be done in virtual, virtually!

Q: Will there be physical education this year? If not, when do they need to pick a new credit?

Q: How does gym work. Will it be outside in the early part of the year?

Q: sorry if I missed this but will there be music and gym?

Q: What about elective gym is that still being offered?

A: Yes, there will be physical education classes with physical distancing activities where possible and outdoor activity as much as possible.

A: there will be music and gym

Q: Lots of questions have been asked about PE that have not yet been addressed. How will this work in person if it is raining? What will students do for 3 hours and 45 mins? How will this be delivered in the Virtual School?

Q: for PE, our program specialists have developed a guide of safe practices complete with photos to demonstrate about how to run PE, weight room, etc. It is still in draft but shows how to do this safely, K-12

Q: volley clubs, soccer games are they still be available this year? are sport teachers available for coaching?

Q: Could non-contact intramural sports occur (within schools)?

Q: no sports right now.

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: Virtual School

Q: If the student opts for the virtual secondary school, does that mean that they are no longer part of their existing secondary school?

A: Students are still part of their existing school even if connected to the virtual school. They will not lose that connection to their local school.

Q: will student be graduating from new centralized virtual school if chosen remote learning (for 1 or more quadmesters) or from there home school (Northern)?

A: graduating students will be able to graduate from their home school

A: Students who choose the virtual school and in grade 12 will graduate from their home school.

Q: - Will the virtual program be “connected” in any way with the “hybrid” one (i.e. classes offered in person be available for virtual attending students?)

A: students who opt for virtual school will still be part of their home school of record. However, note that the virtual school is actually a Ministry approved separate school. It is not tied to any other school, other than knowing the school the student came from.

Q: will tdsb teachers and admin not be "redeployed" to central/virtual school?

Q: If more students opt for remote learning than in person for a specific program, would the teachers be moved to the virtual school?

A: Only teachers and admin who have a medical note and it is approved will be considered for the virtual school. This will be determined by the disability case managers in conversation with the impacted employee.

A: Not all teachers who opt for the virtual school based on their personal situation will automatically be part of the virtual school. There are decisions to be made depending on the student numbers, the staff numbers. This will be worked through by the elementary and secondary teaching offices.

Q: will the virtual secondary school be offering the same course selections as their home schools?

Q: Until we understand how many students are choosing in-school vs virtual, determining what classes will be taught virtually is yet to be determined. Every course in every high school may not be delivered in the virtual school.

Q: how will band work in the virtual school?

Q: for the band, it will have to happen virtually

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: Spec.Ed

Q: our IEP kid will need support/info on how to switch to Brightspace from google... will this be provided thru TDSB?

A: yes. There will be online tutorials for students and parents

Q&A CHAT ANSWERS: TOPS, Gifted

Q: Will the TOPS / MACS programs be offered online remote?

A: If 30 or more students in the TOPS program register for a course virtually, the program will be delivered virtually as an enriched program. It won't necessarily be taught by TOPS teachers but they will be taught by qualified teachers using the TOPS curriculum.

Q: Will there be a gifted remote classroom. If this isn't happening, then I would be choosing my child to return to the physical classroom but not our first choice

A: Gifted will be offered in the virtual school.

Q: online gifted receiving gifted spec ed teachers?

A: Gifted students will be taught the gifted program if they choose the virtual school. It will be taught by teachers with special education qualifications.

Q: could this be possible? Students opt for in-person, but are allowed accommodations learn online- due to safety and distance from the school? -- could this also work for gifted?

Q: If the specialty program can work together and reach a consensus; I know it is a big accommodation, but could we get a go ahead with this regard? If a "higher-up" provides the program with permission to enable this "opt in person, however learn online- could be the best solution for many students in the TOPS program

A: All specialized programs will be treated the same way. There is not an option to blend in-school and online learning.

Q: related to the TOPS program - if the teacher will be teaching 30 students and 15 or more prefer to learn remotely (so the go-to-school cohort will have no more than 15 students), can that 2nd cohort be an online cohort so that they can learn at home when it is in-school learning instead of going to school and the teacher gives an online class or video tape the lecture instead?

A: A student has to choose in-school or virtual. There will not be movement between the two. If a student needs an accommodation due to distance or safety, they should choose the virtual option.

Q: Please answer: How will the TOPS entrance exam be conducted? When will there be information available?

Q: is there any agreed upon consensus amongst all specialty programs with entrance exams across the board? Can this proceed on a school to school basis, or will the board make a decision on behalf of all programs which have an entrance exam?

Q: TOPS entrance exam information will come out from the school directly.

Q: If more students opt for remote learning than in person for a specific program, would the teachers be moved to the virtual school?

Q: also, read interim director's letter re: spec ed of last night -- states congregate program registration deadline is 31st, not 29th. does this include gifted?

A: no.

Q: Re attendance in virtual school - will there be forgiveness if students are not always available (due to illness/computer issues/broadband issues, etc.)? Will the synchronous lectures be recorded?

A: Regular school has absences for sicknesses and other. 'Forgiveness' should be expected as much now as it was before.