



Press Release

August 12, 2020

## **Middleton trustees approve plan to start school September 8th, but table decision on which category to open until metrics are determined later this month**

After swearing in two new trustees -- Jake Dempsey in Zone 3 and Pamela Wagoner in Zone 4 -- the Middleton School Board tackled several topics related to the start of the school year and in what category the district should open.

[Watch the Board of Trustees meeting on YouTube](#)

[Review the agenda items from Monday's meeting](#)

School will start September 8th, the Tuesday after Labor Day. Several reasons were cited including:

- Delayed student enrollment, as of Monday, there were nearly 1,300 students who have not registered for school.
- Uncertain enrollment also means last minute staffing challenges, including making adjustments for the online school.
- Enhanced webcams and audio devices are installed in only about 40 percent of the classrooms. Some equipment, including laptops for teachers and students, has not arrived yet.

- The delay provides teachers with two extra days of training on new equipment and preparing for the new school year.

Trustees approved a request to change the reopening plan to allow for a limited number of students back on campus each week during the Red Category. It could mean one day of face-to-face teaching for students, Superintendent Kristin Beck said.

However, trustees decided to take the next two weeks to develop standards and metrics for Middleton School District to determine what is the best stage to reopen without being locked into a category determined by Southwest District Health Department.

Once those metrics are determined, the board can designate which category to reopen on September 8th, and the district can communicate this information to parents in time for them to prepare for the start of school.

Board members also discussed masks and whether they should be required in Category 3 (red) if students returned to the classroom on a limited basis. It was decided that the language in the reopening plan to highly encourage masks will still apply. Board members additionally noted that they want to ask staff and students to please wear masks.

Athletic Director Andy Ankeny presented the Middleton School District IDHSAA Athletic/Activity Reopening Plan. Trustees approved the plan, with students returning to practice on August 17th and preparing to play games in September.