

University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville
Administrative Cabinet Meeting
Special Called Meeting
February 24, 2022 / 12:30 p.m.
TEAMS
Minutes

Members present were Dr. Anne Austin, Mr. Zach Perrine, and Dr. Brian Shonk. Cabinet recorder, Ms. Jodie Hightower, was not present but recorded minutes were used to transcribe minutes.

Dr. Shonk called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

They group conferred regarding the closure of campus tomorrow, February 25, 2022, due to inclement weather. They agreed campus should remain closed.

Dr. Shonk called the meeting to review an email sent by Dr. Bobbitt regarding mask policies on campus.

The email, dated, February 24, 2022, stated the following:

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, the Board passed its last face mask requirement for our campuses at the outbreak of the COVID-19 Delta variant in Arkansas last summer. Since that time, we have now lived through the Delta and Omicron waves with cases and hospitalizations now rapidly trending downward. Further, many local K-12 school boards have moved from required to recommended for masking in their institutions. The CDC guidance on masks referenced by the Board in their resolution was released at the outbreak of the Delta variant and recent reports indicate that new guidance may be coming soon.

*With this in mind and with the decline in cases in many of your communities, I've spoken with Chairman Gibson and he agrees that it is time for us to empower you as the leaders of your campuses to address the issue of masking as you feel is best on your campuses and in your communities. **Additionally, we believe that all mask policies should be issued as guidance rather than requirements moving forward.***

Please consider this note permission to move forward regarding masks as I have stated here. If you have questions, please let me know.

Don

Donald R. Bobbitt

President

Charles E. Scharlau Presidential Leadership Chair

The group discussed the email and the intent for campuses. Dr. Shonk told the group about a recent meeting he attended with other presidents and chancellors and the policies in place at various campuses around the state. The group discussed removing the requirement for masks indoors but allowing faculty to maintain a mask requirement for classes, if the faculty member wanted. They discussed the equity of that policy if staff were not also allowed the same ability to regulate mask wearing inside personal offices. The group discussed moving from a mask required to recommended policy. They discussed including the faculty and staff in the discussion prior to moving to a mask recommended policy. Dr. Shonk will email Dr. Bobbitt regarding the question of if faculty will be allowed to required masks in their classroom. They discussed various options for providing information to and gathering information from both faculty and staff next week. They decided to hold a TEAMS meeting for

everyone at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 2, 2022. This will be an informational session on changing guidelines from the UA System office. Dr. Shonk will provide information to campus on Monday via his weekly email update.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ms. Jodie Hightower.