

EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
APRIL 21, 2020

Transcription of remote meeting

Michael Buono: Call the meeting to order. I have 7:02, Larry?

Lawrence Edson: Yes

Michael Buono: Alright, for tonight's meeting, welcome to East Greenbush, the central admin office for our Board meeting. Tonight for attendance for our Board members, we have everyone in attendance, missing right now, Ms Massey. I don't see her right now but I see other Board members, Mr. Mann will not be here due to a work commitment. So hopefully Ms Massey can join us shortly. Everybody hear me okay?

Peter Goodwin: Thumbs up

Michael Buono: Thumbs up, Good? Alright. With that could you please join us for the Pledge of Allegiance?

Everyone: Pledge of Allegiance

STUDENT COUNCIL

Michael Buono: Thank you. We will now move to our student council from Columbia. I see Katie and Lily have joined us.

Hi guys, how are you doing? Who wants to start?

Lily Mahoney: I'll start. How are you?

Michael Buono: Good, How are you?

Lily Mahoney: Good thank you. So far we have not had a ton of meetings. We have not had a ton of meetings of a ton of updates since last time that we presented at the Board of Education meeting. Last time we did talk about how we would be creating an Instagram so that students could post what their plans are for next year. The Instagram we created in place of the college acceptance day has really taken off and we have tons of posts on there of seniors talking about their plans for the next few years. This has really helped to boost virtual participation throughout the school, and it seems to be going really great. We have, of course the students, some of their families and parents, some underclassmen, teachers following that Instagram. It really just helps to boost morale and show what's going and just really emphasizes how hard everyone's worked. It keeps those accomplishments from going unnoticed. Again, if anyone would like to follow that Instagram account the handle for it is [futures.ofcolumbia.grads](https://www.instagram.com/futures.ofcolumbia.grads) and we want to emphasize that we are encouraging all students to submit their plans for next year. Whether that is college, the military, trade school or straight into the workforce, we really would love to hear from everyone because everyone has so much to be proud of and has worked very hard. We would love to see what everyone's doing next year. Thank you.

Michael Buono: Great, thanks Lily. Katie, anything?

Katie Asenbauer: Yes, we just want to get a quick shout out to all the various videos the CHS staff has been making, such as the Math departments, because they really help to brighten the student's week and we're super grateful for this little morale boost. Tomorrow we will be having our first virtual student council meeting. We just wanted to say that, as always, everyone is welcome. Hopefully we will come up with some new ways to find participation with that. That's it.

Michael Buono: Great, thanks Katie. Good luck with your meeting. You guys take care. Thank you.

PUBLIC FORUM

Michael Buono: We are now going to move to the public forum and as you know that under this virtual meeting setting we are doing emails but I will read our public content communication:

Residents, students, employees, and business representatives of the East Greenbush Central School District may address the Board on matters concerning programs and/or operations of the district, other than matters involving personnel. Members of the Board do not directly respond to citizen concerns during the Public

Forum. If a response is appropriate either the President or Superintendent will contact the individual in the near future. Those persons wishing to address the Board will be recognized by the chair of the meeting and should state for the record their name and address, or affiliation with the District or business. While the Board does not wish to infringe upon free speech protections, it must be stressed that the "Visitors' Forum" is not deemed to be an "open forum". The Board president will conduct the forum for the orderly and efficient operation of Board business. In addition, any remarks which may be considered defamatory or stigmatizing are prohibited and will be declared out of order. All comment shall be limited to five minutes.

We will now turn it over to Mr. Simons. Do you have any emails communications you would like to share?

Jeffrey Simons: Yes, I do. Right before the Board meeting, actually a little while before the Board meeting, this afternoon, we did receive an email from a parent. The parent's name is Melissa Ioty. She has a 4th grader and a 6th grader in the school district. Her email expresses concerns about the distance learning experience that her children are experiencing at this point. She has a concern that she has brought to the principal and she would like to see more use of the technology, including video conferencing with her children. She has some questions that we need to research. I referred email to Mrs. Barker for follow up, and I will follow up with Mrs. Barker tomorrow as well as contact the parent directly. We have provided a lot of tools for our teachers to use and we are experiencing some differences and we are encouraging our parents to contact the teachers directly and then the principal. In this case, those steps have been followed, so I will intervene and I will talk to the principal tomorrow to see what solutions exist. I appreciate Mrs. Ioty expressing her concerns and I will get back to her.

Michael Buono: Anything else?

Jeffrey Simons: At this point those are the only public comments that we have received.

Michael Buono: Anybody in the audience there, administrators, anybody? Comments? Nope, OK.

BOARD FORUM

Michael Buono: Now we will move to the Board forum. Board members, any comments you would like to make at this time?

Kathleen Curtin: I actually would like to make a comment, Mike. I was out walking in my neighborhood over the weekend, and I can say that we ran into some parents who are very excited about the Genet parade that is going to be happening tomorrow. They are really looking forward to it. It was the talk of the neighborhood as we were out strolling with the dog, so I just wanted to say thank you to the Genet teachers and all of our other staff who have done so much to keep our families connected and try to connect with our students through these different times.

Michael Buono: Board members, anything else? Any other comments?

Michelle Skumurski: I have to give a shout out because Green Meadow did theirs on Friday. I took the day off so I could be there and it was so emotional and amazing. The teachers were just thrilled to see the kids and the kids are so excited, so thank you again. They had a great one for Goff for the virtual one, that was really awesome as well. Like we talked about earlier, the Math videos. It's just amazing to see the community come together during this and really show their appreciation for each other. Thank you very much for all that that you guys do over there for that.

Michael Buono: Thank you, Michelle and I think I echo that too. We haven't had a Green Meadow Elementary student in many years, but it still brought a lot of emotion back when we saw all the teachers who are still at Green Meadow. I see Mr. Garab's on the call, so I want to thank the staff. Also, I think it's staying connected through the parades and the videos is just so important. As our staff learn more and more how to become proficient with video, and Google meets and the tools that are out there, we will see more and more connectivity with our students and our parents and our community, just as we are today with our virtual meeting. Again, thank you to everyone for continuing to learn and to continue to reach out and make these opportunities possible for our families and kids, and also for the staff to stay connected amongst themselves. OK, Any last comments Board members? No?

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Michael Buono: We will move to discussion items. The first one, unless Jeff, I'm sorry, did you have anything for the Superintendent's report?

Jeffrey Simons: I did want to just mention that Red Mill's parade was postponed today because of the forecast for rain and sure enough it was right on target. It did rain for quite a period of time today. I believe it's rescheduled for Thursday, but folks should check the website. Red Mill is also planning a parade this week. It just got rained out today.

Michael Buono: yes, actually it probably snowed out.

Jeffrey Simons: yes, rain and snow.

Michael Buono: Yes, very unusual weather.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Michael Buono: We will now move to the discussion items. The first item for discussion is our 2020-2021 ongoing budget discussions. Mr. Simons, would you like to do that?

Jeffrey Simons: Sure, I'll start.

Michael Buono: OK

Jeffrey Simons: Mr. Edson will join in. Can everyone hear me? Very good. Rather unique circumstances, the district is still in the process of developing its budget recommendations to the Board of Education. I say unique because typically this time of year we are out at PTO meetings sharing a budget plan with our groups, we have attended Town board meetings. We are planning once we've determined the budget that the Board would recommend to the community, to conduct those forums virtually this year. One of the missing significant pieces of information we have is the date of the budget vote. Through the State's action, the vote date was postponed from its typical third Tuesday in May to sometime after June 1st, and that particular date has not been determined yet. As of an hour ago, I received an email from the State Superintendents Council, and they still do not have any information about when the specific budget vote date and Board election date will occur. Additionally, because we are practicing social distancing and people are supposed to be six feet apart, and the majority of us are directed to stay home, the State is considering options for voting, which could include that everyone votes through a mail in paper ballot, but that has not yet been determined either. We are moving forward, just looking at the potential for our expenses and our revenues for next year, but we don't know when the vote is, and we don't know what timelines we are obligated to in regard to public notification as of this meeting. However, I have provided the Board, and this is on the Board docs, with an update as of our last meeting, regarding the proposed budget for the 2020-2021 school year. You may recall that we were estimating about a \$1,050,000 gap between projected expenses and revenues. Mr Edson has worked to sharpen his pencil, and looked very closely at revenues we might have available. He is recommending to me, and I am recommending to the Board, that we make use of an existing reserve. The Board has been very prudent in setting aside monies in the past, from unspent budget and we have approximately \$5.9 million in an employee retirement reserve. That is a specific reserve of monies that can be used to pay for our post retirement obligations for certain employees. We have ERS and we have TRS. TRS covers the teachers and the administrators, all the other employees retirement costs are affiliated with ERS. We are recommending a transfer of \$900,000 to come out of that reserve to cover a portion of our ERS expenses for next year. That will close the gap. Additionally, we try to be conservative about estimating our revenues, because we don't always know exactly the amount that will come in. It is somewhat of a fluid situation, but we are able to recommend an adjustment to an aid category to which we are reimbursed for the prescription portion of certain retirees health insurance. I believe it's the spousal coverage. We estimated in our initial budget review, excuse me, in last year's budget, that those costs were approximately \$107,000. We were able to increase that estimate by about \$200,000, which will close the gap. We are also cautious about what may happen to state aid. If you have been following the news, you know that Governor Cuomo was meeting with the President this afternoon to talk about federal help. I left the house and they were still talking about the possibility of a fourth stimulus bill, that would involve providing monies for local and state governments. It's something that is just beginning to be initiated as a discussion. While we are recommending a budget of about \$99.8 million dollars. We have been

able to review our PILOT agreements as well as our other categories of revenue, and we are pleased that in this point of the budget, to offer a budget that has a 1.52% increase to the tax levy, which is under the New York State allowable tax cap. It is the lowest tax levy increase we would propose in the last 5 years. There is a summary memo from Larry attached to the discussion item portion of board docs. We also want to have some discussions with the Board regarding the specific items that are still included in our budget recommendation. We refer to those as the Tier A items. We feel that we have a tricky and difficult balancing act given the fact that the Governor has told us that there will be certain measurement periods at which the State's Budget Director can reduce the aid received by school districts. That first measurement period occurs April 30th. We know that the state revenues are going to be significantly short in terms of sales tax and income tax due the coronavirus impact on the economy. However, we also recognize that some of the needs of our students during this period of which schools could potentially be shut down, although there is online learning going on. Let's say in the event that the schools are closed for the rest of the year and even if not, there will be some students coming back needing additional support. We want to be sensitive to the class sizes given the fact that our enrollment is growing in the district and the Board has seen those enrollment projections, as well as the fact that some of our students who receive special education services, as well as mental health counseling may be in some very difficult circumstances right now. They may be coming back to school, whether it be this Spring or whether it be in September, we want to make sure that there's room in the budget to be able to accommodate any federal monies that we might receive, but also to be able to address the staffing and the supports and services that we might need to be able to provide for the students particularly in light of the potential impact of what's going on right now with kids learning at home. The Tier A items include two additional Elementary sections, one would be at Citizen Genet, and that is based on an enrollment projection for K-5 for next year, and an additional section at Red Mill. You may recall that the district developed a transition plan for its attendance zones. We have more students going into Red Mill next year who reside in what would be former Bell top areas. We are projecting five sections of kindergarten at Red Mill and also the need for an additional section at Citizen Genet. Additionally, the mental health needs of our children have been subject of a lot of discussions within the Board and within our community. There was a need prior to this period, before we were impacted by coronavirus and the kids staying home. We anticipate that the need may be even greater when the kids return to school, and so if we can make it work, I would recommend that we include the social worker in the final budget. A Board member has asked me to look at existing staffing and whether existing staffing could be used to provide the technology support. I pledged that I would do that, and I will give a report to the Board after we have finished studying that option. Additionally, we could probably forgo the additional furniture for next year.

The Questar BOCES stac service is a service that provides our district with ensuring that our claims for certain special education services that are reimbursable are managed well and filed accurately. We receive revenue based on those claims back into the district's budget. We also would get aid on that service through Questar BOCES. Additionally, we've included in the Tier A some things that we know we're going to need to do such as the transfunder reviews that we're doing of our busing service in light of the committee, to you look at the high school start time and also sexual harassment training which is required by New York State law. I think we're all feeling the impact of student activities being limited right now. I believe that the expense of an additional modified cross country team, if we can swing it, is well worth the limited cost because it has a huge impact on the kids. So, all-in-all including the Tier A recommendations which I just summarized, the budget would be \$99.78 million dollars. That was about a 4% increase in the budget, but only a 1.52% increase in the proposed tax levy. The worry that I have is that our district may have to wait a while to determine whether or not any federal monies will flow into the State. So, we may on April 30th and probably likely see a significant impact to our state aid. I would want to be cautious about making cuts now only to learn that perhaps later in the Summer or into the Fall, we receive resources and would be able to adjust our class sizes, it may be too late and we would be disrupting kids. I would not be recommending maintaining all of our programs and services, and in fact, adding some where the enrollment or the need suggests, if we were not in a situation where we are

fiscally stable district. We have adequate reserves and fund balance to manage any issues with cash flow that may occur as a result of not knowing what our state aid or federal aid might ultimately be. I want to keep our momentum going forward, I want to make sure we are able to respond to student needs when they come back to school. I want to make sure that we are continuing to be able to meet the Board's goals with obviously, a sensitivity to the revenue side of the budget. There is some needs within our region and other districts, whereby they may be more reliant on state aid because of the wealth factors involved in those districts, so they may not be in a similar position as East Greenbush is right now. As I said earlier, we do have rainy day funds and certainly we are projected to have a rainy day. Thanks to the Board and Mr. Edson's very tight fiscal management we're going into this unknown situation having some resources to be able to deal with it, perhaps in a way that will reserve programs, and continue our momentum forward. Mr. Edson, anything to add?

Lawrence Edson: Do you want to talk about the May, a possible date for budget adoption?

Jeffrey Simons: Do you want to do that, or do you want me to do that?

Lawrence Edson: I want you to do that.

Jeffrey Simons: We have a Board meeting scheduled for May 6th. We will be receiving our first information regarding whether or not the State will reduce our state aid on April 30th. We want to be able to respond to that information and prepare further information for the Board to take a look at on May 6th. We also want to be able to prepare for a budget vote and we would like the Board to adopt the budget during the next couple of weeks. We are asking if the Board would consider a special board meeting on May 13th, so that between now, May 6th and May 13th we can examine further our own budget, we can take a look at what might be happening with State and or the possibility of Federal help. Mr. Edson is taking a look at how we're doing this year in terms of the fund balance projection, but we want to be able to say to the Board, "Here is what we think we should do with the budget" and have the board adopt the budget on May 13th. Working back 45 days from which is our typical period, if the vote is somewhere between June 1st and June 9th, we have to get the word out to the public because it's going to be a challenge to get the public to, to communicate about the budget with the public with all the restrictions in terms of large group attendance and social distancing. We are asking for some comments on the budget as it stands right now from the Board, but also whether or not the Board would commit to a May 13th special Board meeting, primarily for the purpose of adopting the proposed budget.

Michael Buono: As Jeff just summarized, I think I'd like to hear more about your thoughts, Board members, on the use of reserves, number one, the items that Jeff reviewed under the Tier A, the memo, and then lastly, doing a special board meeting on the 13th. That gives us time to kind of evaluate what happens on April 30th, see what happens because the current closure order is till May 15th, and hopefully we have some more information on a State level. I'll just throw it out there to the Board members, just for feedback. Jen?

Jennifer Massey: I'm good.

Michael Buono: Deanna? I'll go through my grid.

Deanna Muth: Yes, I'm fine with everything.

Michael Buono: JoAnn?

JoAnn Taylor: I'm good with everything and I just want to say kudos to you, Mr. Edson for putting us in the financial position that we do have the reserves to be able to fall back on. Great management of our funds.

Michael Buono: Thanks, JoAnn. John?

John Dunn:

Michael Buono: You're still muted, John. We have a thumbs up from John. Karen?

Karen Curran: I'm good, thanks.

Michael Buono: Thank you. Kathleen?

Kathleen Curtin: I'm also good thank you.

Michael Buono: Did I get everybody?

Michelle Skumurski: You didn't get me, but I'm good with it.

Michael Buono: Oh, there you are. I lost you in the corner of my grid here.

Michelle Skumurski: I'm good with it.

Michael Buono: And the same goes for May 13th? We will put something out there to do that, we will focus on the budget for that meeting? Ok, good.

Jeffrey Simons: We are very sensitive to what is happening in the economy, I just want to add that part. We know, we recognize that there's some people that are really struggling out there. We're trying to get to budget, not only from an expenditure side, where it needs to be to support the kids, but we're very sensitive to the impact on the taxpayers and we're trying to get it as low as possible. Right now we're at 1.52%, again just to reiterate, that is the smallest tax levy increase proposed in five years. We are using monies that the public has approved in the past, which we saved, to appropriate towards an expenditure next year. the \$900,000 portion of our ERS. We are trying to be as transparent about this process as possible, with a lot of unknowns.

Michael Buono: I think that the addition of the social worker especially now given the, now coming back off of what we are currently facing at the middle school is critical, and if you looked at the other document that was attached regarding class sizes, we really want to avoid the combined classes in that kind of large group because I think we're going to be faced with getting kids acclimated again in the fall to a different way of learning and continue that process that we're in right now. I think that's important to keep those class sizes as balanced as possible across the different elementary schools as well. Ok, thank you. Any other comments? If you do have some comments later on, email them to myself for Jeff and we can discuss them, okay? We still have some time and you know that it's kind of a fluid situation. I'm very pleased about where we are right now as a Board and as a District, to be able to kind of function for 2021, and as a community. I will now move to a second discussion item, we have the update on kind of how things are going on the continuity of instruction, meals childcare and some of the community programs we have in place.

Jeffrey Simons: I want to start by thanking Mike Leonard, I don't know if Mike is on the meeting or not, Audra DiBacco and all the volunteers that are contributing to our community food pantry program which is being run out of Columbia High School. That program is not only helping to replenish the backpack programs at each of the schools that have them, they have been providing for what has become a growing community need. That is not a requirement of the State that we do that, but it is a great reflection of the generosity of the people in the community. I was over there again this week, and the number of people that are showing up at the high school who need food, and the number of people who are contributing to that including regular families of East Greenbush School District, business owners in East Greenbush, people writing checks, people donating food, people contributing in so many different ways, and it's just really great to see that are we still, that we have a fairly good supply and a great system in place. I want to thank Mike, and I want to thank Audra and everybody else who is volunteering, and I particularly want to thank the community for continuing to donate to that program. We have been, people have reached out through an email or through just an incidental contact and said you know, there's a person down there who is really in need and we've been getting them what they need. I want to appreciate the drivers and Mark Noeth, for all the work that they're doing to deliver the food. It's just a real super effort. The student meals program under Phyllis is still going well. We are still serving about 165-170 meals to the kids, both lunch and breakfast. The staff is doing a great job with that under Phyllis' direction. The continuity of instruction plan, in terms of our online learning plan is going really well. We sent out a guidance document to our teachers and to our parents which is really well-received. I wanted to give Mr. McHugh, Jim are you there?

James McHugh: I am.

Jeffrey Simons: Ok, I wanted to give Jim an opportunity to, actually we had it under committee reports, but Jim why don't you do that now since I already set you up for that. Why don't you talk about some of the guidance and also I know we don't have it all ironed out yet, we are working through with our department chairs, and some other teachers on how we are going to balance the needs of our kids, which are very diverse, with our grading practices for the 4th quarter. We have not come to a final decision yet, but we have a good process going. I'll ask Jim to talk a little bit about that process. Mr. McHugh?

James McHugh: Sure, our remote learning guidelines were shared out on April 14th. That recognized the efforts from all of our all State ? Also, it recognized the diversity within all school districts not just ours, in

regards to the needs and the abilities of our students and staff to support students during this challenging time. The first remote guideline talked about narrowing the curriculum down and just looking at the content and skills that were to be covered from March through the end of the school year, and then really focusing on the essential topics that are really necessary in order to prepare students for the next level. A shared priority of preparing students for either the next grade or any courses that are prerequisite for another class. We also talked about implementing teacher guided learning and we spoke about the fact that we want the responsibility for educating our students to remain with our teachers. It is a challenge during this time but, we are working towards increasing the amount of teacher guided learning. We are not opposed to the independent study, but our goal is to provide teacher instruction and support throughout the time period. We talked about parents really, what we really need from our parents, is to help their children stay connected with the teachers and keep them organized, making regular personal connections, maintaining personal connections with our students in order to provide direct instruction and help support their needs. We talked specifically that this is going to take a variety of forms depending on the teacher's chosen methodology. The methods may include live classes and meetings, streamed classes, pre-recorded class lessons, screencast lessons, interactive blogging and even conference calls. All students are expected to be connecting with their teachers on a regular basis, and then just a reminder that students should be checking Google classroom and their email at least once a day. Parents are also encouraged to check their students email and Google classroom if it is used. We talked about providing support during this time, that special education teachers are working with the student's general ed teachers on the instructional modalities and accommodations, but other support services will be delivered by teletherapy, wherever possible. We added an extra, we created an extra email, Molly McGrath. Just a reminder for students and family seeking non emergency mental health support, they can email that, our staff is monitoring that on a regular basis. A lot of the discussions were around equity, you know the access and the level of support that our students are receiving during this time and academic integrity. We've encouraged our teachers all along not to formally assess our students during this. It's the third and final marking period in k-5 and the fourth and final marking period in grades 6 through 12. We have over 600 students with an IEP, so the supports definitely during remote instruction is not the same as it is when it is in person. Then we talked about general expectations of school work, you know grades k-2, one to two hours per day in ELA & Math and other academic areas. We talked about the special area teachers providing students with developmentally appropriate activities to explore. In grades 3-5, an increase in time commitment 1 ½ - 2 ½ hours. Then grades 6-8, two to three hours per school day, total of all assigned work including any virtual class time. At the high school, 15 to 20 minutes of work per class per day, the total should not be in excess of 4 hours. Again, we stress Google meet live or recorded, live streaming, screencasting, emails, phone calls. We put a reminder in there that parents could visit our link on our district web page EGCSD.org/coronavirus to access the most current information and available resources. Then we addressed the assessments, report cards and grading. At this time we know that the grades 3 through 8 ELA, Mathematics and Science Testing have been canceled, as well as the Regents exams. That complicates things in our high school because the Regents exams have been used as 15% of the final grade. We are working through that, I'll talk about that a little bit more in a minute but, for grades 3 through 5 we developed a narrative template for the third and final marking period. We are encouraging teachers to use all of the student information that they have gathered throughout the entire school year to finish that third and final report card. It's a narrative that addresses Mathematics, reading and writing and it also provides an additional space for teachers to write any additional comments that they would like to include in that final report. We initially closed the parent portal until we got our heads around how we were going to actually calculate the fourth and final marking period for grades 6 through 12, as well as how we are going to calculate the final averages. We met once this week with our department chairs and our building Administrators to talk about that. It's not an easy decision. Just before the Board meeting tonight I received about four emails from the Cap Region Assistant Superintendents talking about, asking if there was any guidance on how to grade for the end of the year. There's a lot of extenuating circumstances, we know that we have students that are currently working to help support the family during this

time so their ability to engage in the remote instruction may not be the same as some other students. We start talking about parental support at home and we talk about academic integrity and we have encouraged our teachers not to formally grade anything during this remote teaching and learning time. We were waiting, we've been living in 2 weeks increments, we keep getting additional notification from SED and the Governor that schools will remain closed until the 15th. That for a little while played into our decisionmaking on how we're going to calculate the fourth marking period. The longer we were providing remote instruction, the more likely we start to talk about going to a pass/fail for the fourth marking period. Then we have to determine how the pass/fail in the fourth marking period would impact the final average. We are working through that, we know that some school districts have already come out and stated that no students are going to fail, everyone is going to be promoted. We have some concerns that we're still talking about, once we say we go to pass/fail, does the student interest and the student commitment to the remaining days of school stay the same or does it diminish going to a pass-fail. We have half year classes and we have full year classes so we have to decide if we want to handle those classes a little differently. We also have honors courses that have college credits attached to them, AP classes and courses for college credit, the requirements are set by those colleges and universities so students have to follow whatever those colleges put in place in order to attain that credit. We still are working through it. There's, the impact is significant, not just for our seniors, but for underclassmen. It impacts GPA, it impacts class ranking and class averages. We are meeting again this Friday as a group to decide, to see if we can come to some final decisions regarding how we are going to calculate that final average. The parent portal is opening back up on Monday the 27th, so parents can monitor whether or not their child is completing works or if the work is incomplete, missing. There are other concerns too, where the Regents, when the student did not pass the marking periods but passed the Regents, they pass the course. That safety net is now removed with no Regents exams. We also have some other safety nets, where we have had summer school, we've had credit recovery through APEX, and that's unknown at this time, whether or not we are able to run summer school. We are making sure that when we make a final decision that that decision is in the best interest of the students that we serve. Any questions?

Jeffrey Simons: I think Mr. Buono has a question of Molly.

Michael Buono: Molly, can you hear me?

Molly McGrath: Yes

Michael Buono: How are you? I'm just following up what Jim said about our special education students and families and teletherapy. Can you tell what is going on with the students and families with those services?

Molly McGrath: Yes, so it was kind of a slow start. Guidance rolled in from the State, they started to relax HIPPA regulations so people would feel comfortable with confidentiality and going live. We started first to do an opt-in model, where families who were comfortable and could facilitate a related service, whether it was OT, PT, speech, even physical therapy sessions. Families opted-in and each provider is now trying to develop a more regular schedule to run related service sessions. Our guidance is that they aren't required to be the full 30 minutes, rather just connect with the student or the family, practice an activity, give some sort of therapy and then follow up throughout the week.

Michael Buono: Great, do you think instructionally our students are connecting?

Molly McGrath: Um, it's a wide range, some families are absolutely thrilled, they're loving the sessions, they want to stay on longer, and some are hard to connect with. It's everywhere in between.

Michael Buono: Ok, great, thank you Molly. Board members any other questions regarding the instruction and what's happening in the community?

Michelle Skumurski: So, for grading, are we thinking that we might have a different grading policy for the elementary school versus the middle school or the high school or will they all have the same?

James McHugh: Elementary is set. Elementary, the first two marking periods, where the grading practices that have always been in place remained, the third and final marking period, we have been in remote instruction. We made the decision that that was going to be more narrative in format so it'll provide each teacher the ability to comment on the student's overall progress throughout the whole year. When students were in the class as

well as when they have been receiving remote instruction, they will use all the information for the entire year to produce that third and final report card. Six through 8th is a little different than 9 through 12th. There are some implications for 9-12, we are a little fearful of coming out too soon and making a commitment to a grading practice for that fourth and final quarter. If we said that we were going to go to pass/fail, we were concerned that we were trying to engage her students to keep our students engaged, that maybe that engagement would diminish moving to a pass/fail format too soon. The overall average, that gets a little complicated for final grades. In the past we had the 4 marking periods, you had a midterm that counted for part of the final average, and then the exam was 15% of that final grade. Regents exams are cancelled, so that takes that 15% away and one quarter of the school year, one fourth of the marking period has been remote. We're not really formally assessing students during this fourth marking period. There are a lot of reasons why. Like I said, equity to access, equity to support, as well as academic integrity. I have two children home receiving remote instruction, one in college and one at the high school. I asked a simple question, when you're taking some sort of assessment what stops you from Googling? We want to really stay away from that formal assessment and use the information that's gathered from the other parts of the school year.

Michael Buono: Thanks, Jim. Any other questions for Jim or for Jeff?

Kathleen Curtin: I just want to say thank you to Jim, working in a college, we are going through all of the same issues with the grading, the academic integrity, and it's a mess. We have a much smaller group that we're working with so I can't even begin to imagine everything you've been doing. Thank you very much for such a comprehensive report that you've just given us, because I know that this is, like I said, it's a mess.

James McHugh: I appreciate that.

Michael Buono: We know that our parents are concerned about that, obviously for all the holes at the high school, like what Jim mentioned. What does it mean for college for next year, what does it mean for underclassmen for the future, but again it's a fluid situation and we're doing the best we can to address all those concerns on a regular basis. We will get there, but this document is a huge help, and I know it has been shared in the region because it is a great document. Thanks to you and the team for putting that together and all the other things that are happening for the instruction.

Jeffrey Simons: One other item, under the new Executive order that came out last week, we are required to provide our essential employees masks for when they report to work. I think it was Monday of last week, whenever it was, we heard about the Executive order and we started to put plans in place to identify where we could get the masks. In addition to Marissa Cannon being a Human Resource expert, she is now the mask czar of the East Greenbush School District, because she was able to work with Larry and others to get us over 400 masks. So Marissa, if you want to talk a little about the mask count and the procedures that we've used to distribute those, you were the one who helped pull it together.

Marissa Cannon: First off just a thank you to all of our community members that helped with this task in making masks, sewing masks, donating cloth, it was a huge help. Not only did we get the masks very quickly but they were of wonderful quality, so I just thank the community for all the help with that. As of today, all of our essential CSEA staff, our essential SRP staff, Administrators, Supervisors, central office staff, we all have been issued a reusable and machine washable cloth mask. We do have extras that are currently being stored in my office, so I encourage anyone if they need an extra mask, just email me or call me and I will make certain to get that out to the building. At this time all the masks have been delivered and I think everyone currently has been doing a great job wearing the masks when they're in buildings, connecting the public. I've been hearing a lot of great things, so I thank everyone for coming together on that.

Michael Buono: That was a great community effort, I know we sent the notice out, Jeff, and the community responded and it was overwhelming. We know how giving our community is, and this is just another example of that. I have a question from Larry.

Lawrence Edson: I just wanted to recognize the Rotary who pledged \$500 for the masks. We are very pleased to receive that donation. It should be coming out in a future list.

Jeffrey Simons: It came. We got it. The check is here, but it is not on the agenda yet.

Lawrence Edson: It's not on the agenda

Jeffrey Simons: They dropped off the check, and I think I gave it to Linda. We would like to thank the Rotary club, that's awesome.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Michael Buono: Now we'll move on to committee reports and Marissa, you're up again.

Marissa Cannon: I just want to provide an update on our search for the Director of Business and Finance or School Business Administrator. We posted this position on March 26th and the posting was up for approximately one month, it's due to close on Thursday, April 23rd. I posted the position on our district website, OLAS, SANYS, the Rensselaer County Chamber of Commerce job board, as well as several ads in the Times Union to gain attraction. As of end of day yesterday, we have nine candidates that have applied for the position so far. Mr. Simons and I will be reviewing all of the candidate application materials on Monday April 27th and we do have a target interview date for the week of May 11th. I am also in the process of putting together a guideline document for remote interviewing practices and processes due to the unprecedented set of circumstances we are in this will be a remote interview. I've started discussions with Mr. Goodwin, our Director of Technology, on how that might look, and the best ways to go about the remote interviews. We are in the process of moving forward with that and at this time we believe the remote interviews will occur on the Zoom platform.

Michael Buono: Thanks, Marissa. Any questions for Marissa? No

Jeffrey Simons: We will need a board member to participate in that remote interview committee, so there's a board member who would like to serve on that. It'll be one committee, with myself, a board member, Marissa and maybe some other staff, whatever is in accordance with the contract.

Michael Buono: Do you want Board members to email you if they are interested?

Jeffrey Simons: Yes

Michael Buono: Ok, so if you are interested in the opportunity, email Mr. Simons and he will get you going.

Jeffrey Simons: Ok, very good.

Michael Buono: Mr. Edson, do you have anything?

Lawrence Edson: No, not tonight

Michael Buono: Not tonight? Jim, do you, you're up again, do you have anything to add to your previous report?

James McHugh: I do not.

Michael Buono: Very good. Mr. Simons?

Jeffrey Simons: One thing I do want to mention that I put out to the Administrators, is that we have many clubs and activities that are normally operating at a high level right now. We have given an opportunity for our club advisors to indicate to us whether they want to continue to do club activities remotely and Marissa set up a process that we worked on with the Teachers Association officers. We sent out a form for them to fill out to let us know if they want to continue to do that remotely. I think there are a lot of things that the clubs could be doing and I sent out some information to our administrators based on some discussions I had with the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, with the town Supervisor, and some other groups. For a lot of people in our neighborhoods, as well as in senior living facilities and nursing homes, who are not able to have visitors right now, so one activity and Karen helped me with this, Karen Curran, with a contact she had. One activity they could be doing is creating cards and notes and sending them out to people who are either shut in in their own homes and perhaps lonely and need a check in, or the people who can't receive visitors in our nursing homes. I'll just put that out there to the public that if there are people that you know and you need an outreach, something our kids could do from home, we will help them with the mailing or whatever is needed to do that kind of outreach. I got my student Advisory Group involved in that. I reached out to them today to encourage them to send some cards to the nursing homes. There are things that we also are thinking about, that I know that are important to the kids, and important to the families. I think when the last extension of the Governor was made through May 15th, a lot of us, including the Superintendent understood that decision, agree with that

decision from a health and safety standpoint, but also are quite disappointed that some of the spring activities that normally our kids participate in, including our seniors with prom and graduation and all of the celebrations that occur, really, at all levels, are likely not going to happen, or at least not happen in the same fashion. We will be working with Mr. Harkin's committee to see what we can do to have the best celebrations that we can, the best activities that we can. I will probably at the May 6th Board meeting have more specifics about what our backup plans are, for everything such as graduation. Certainly if CDC and state guidelines permit some level of physical graduation where kids could potentially gather in small groups with multiple ceremonies, practicing social distancing, that might be an option. We have to take a look at these things. The kids are doing a great job, the staff is doing a great job, our families are doing a great job, but the kids are missing a lot and I just want to acknowledge that'

Michael Buono: Thanks, Jeff

MINUTES

Michael Buono: Moving on to our agenda minutes, we have none at this time.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Michael Buono: Regular business, Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities. Any comments or questions, Board members? If not, I need a motion to approve that. Michelle, a second, Jennifer all those in favor? (all Board members raise their hands) Approved.

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT

Michael Buono: Next we're going on to Reports and Presentations of the Superintendent this has to do with the Questar BOCES Board Election, the Admin budget, and the Cooperative Services Agreement.

Jeffrey Simons: Each year, that is why we're having a meeting on Tuesday, the Boards of Education from all of the districts in the State meet on the same day to vote on the budget vote and Board Election. In this case, it's the Administrative budget that the Board votes on, as well as the election of four Board candidates. It was an annual meeting a couple weeks ago that was held remotely. It was well done. Dr. Cruz, the District Superintendent of the Questar, outlined the administrative budget. We recommend approval. It is tight budget, and a sound budget and we recommend approval. We have an opportunity to vote on four candidates.

Michael Buono: We will take each of those items, one at a time. The first one, item A is the election. Are there any questions regarding those candidates? There are four positions and four candidates. We will do separate votes on each of the items. If there's no questions, I need a motion to vote for those board members that are put forth. Kathleen, and a second, Jennifer. All those in favor? (all Board members raise their hands.) All those opposed? Item A is approved. The second item is the Administrative budget. I think as Jeff mentioned this is close to a contingency budget, I believe.

Jeffrey Simons: Yes

Michael Buono: Any questions regarding the Administrative budget? No, if not, I need a motion to approve that. JoAnn, second John. All those in favor? I see everybody. Anybody opposed? No? That's approved. Then, finally is the Cooperative Services Agreement. Any questions on those services that we purchase from Questar III BOCES? No? I need a motion to approve that. Michelle, second, Deanna. All those in favor? (all Board members raise their hands) Any opposed? That's approved. Thanks everybody. We will move on to our agenda. Any comments, Jeff, regarding that?

Jeffrey Simons: No

Michael Buono: Ok, Larry, anything?

Lawrence Edson: No

TABLED MOTION

Michael Buono: Next on our agenda are tabled motions. We have none at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Michael Buono: Board members, anything to bring up from past? Ok.

CONSENT AGENDA

Michael Buono: Now we are going to the consent agenda items A through J. Any comments and questions on any of those items at this point? I know we have a couple of retirements on there. There are three, I think. Board members, anything? Ok. I just want to acknowledge the Sports Club, and the Rotary and the donations, again very generous to support our school and our community for our students. If there is no other comments or questions, I need a motion to approve consent agenda items A-J. Kathleen, second, John. All those in favor? (all members raise their hands) Any opposed? That's approved. Thank you very much.

NEW BUSINESS

Michael Buono: New business? Board members, anything new to bring up at this time? No? A lot of heads shaking no.

PUBLIC FORUM II

Michael Buono: Public forum number two. anything, Jeff, come up on the email? Anything further?

Jeffrey Simons: There is a message, a public comment from Drew Romanowski who is our president of our East Greenbush Teachers Association. Is that nice and loud? I have to turn this way then.

Michael Buono: So we have a public comment from Drew Romanowski, EGTA president

Jeffrey Simons: (reading) My name is Drew Romanowski, President of the East Greenbush Teachers Association. My message tonight is perhaps the simplest one I have shared in my three years in the position. Perhaps, one of the most important ones, simply put Thank you! Thank you to each of you who volunteer your time to serve on the Board of Education. Thank you to Mr. Simon's. Thank you to Mr. Edson. Thank you to Mr. McHugh. Thank you to Ms. Cannon, our Administrators and our support staff. I like to personally thank each and everyone of you for your support for our students and our teachers through these challenging times. While further uncertainty lies ahead, it is my genuine hope that we continue to work collaboratively to overcome the unforeseen challenges that await each of us in our roles. Respectfully submitted, Drew Romanowski

Michael Buono: Thank you, Mr. Romanowski, we appreciate those comments.

BOARD FORUM

Michael Buono: If there are no other public comments, I'll move to Board forum. Any comments, Board members, on the agenda items that came up?

Karen Curran: I just want to thank Jeff and the student advisory committee and everybody who is looking out for some of our geriatric population. Thanks for that, I appreciate it.

Michael Buono: Excellent, thanks, Karen. Anyone else? I just want to say, you know, to the student council, I know you've just seen Lily and Katie up there and all the things they are trying to do to keep their peers connected. It's wonderful to see. Social media is a big part of their lives and I think they've adapted the best they can to the situation in trying to stay connected as a class and with their peers through all those different means. It's so important, and I would love to be able to do something in terms of graduation, doing something they've probably looking forward to for such a long time, but we'll the best we can to work with our parents and our students to give them the celebration that they deserve so much to end the school year. That's all I have. Any final comments?

Jeffrey Simons: There's a gentleman sitting right here, Peter Goodwin, who's like The Wizard of Oz behind the curtain. All of this online remote learning, as well as remote meetings is going on Peter, with the help of a very small crew has been making it happen. Hours and hours 24/7 Peter Goodwin has been working on this and so I don't want to forget that our ability to connect with one another, our kids ability to connect with their teachers, the curriculum that's been reformatted in a hurry and provided online, there's a lot that goes on behind that is really Peter's work. I want to ask everybody from wherever you are, give Peter Goodwin a round of applause. (clapping)

Peter Goodwin: Thank you very much.

Michael Buono: And we also have Jeanne coming in, our Board clerk, we appreciate her coming in to take the minutes for our meetings. With that, we do have the need for an executive session for the purpose of collective bargaining and personnel matters. What we are going to do is the same thing we did the last time, Board members, there will be a pause, Mr. Goodwin is going to send another email communication to you to connect

again and then we will go from there. I need a motion to go into the executive session. Jennifer, second JoAnn. All those in favor? It looks like everybody. Thanks everybody for coming virtually, I want to thank our community for tuning in. Those of you who will listen, they can see that recording on our website as well and we appreciate your involvement, and hope to see you all out there soon. Take care, and have a great night. Thanks.