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Mr. Buono:

All right. So welcome to our Board meeting. We will call the meeting to order. I got 7:01, Mr. Edson?

Mr. Edson:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Tonight's meeting, Jennifer Massey will not be present. All the other Board members appear to be present. And with that, if you could please rise and join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Group:

I Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you very much. Next on the agenda is our student council, but I don't see anyone here from the council. They're probably preparing for a graduation this weekend, which is great.

Mr. Buono:

So we'll move right to the public forum. And again, a reminder that for anyone listening to the meeting, we have an email box set up to directly email your comments, should you wish to do that during the public forum. 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 through the public forum. If a response is appropriate, either the president or superintendent will contact the individual in the near future.

Mr. Buono:

Those persons wishing to address the Board, will be recognized by the chair of the meeting, and she'll 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 protection, it must be stressed the visitor's forum is not deemed to be open forum. The board president will conduct the forum for the orderly and efficient operation of the Board business. In addition, any remarks that would be considered defamatory or stigmatizing or prohibited will be declared out of order.

Mr. Buono:

So we will now accept any emails, if they come through. Let me know Mr. Simons.

Mr. Simons:

No emails at this point.

Mr. Buono:

Is there anyone out there who would like to address the Board at this time, other than Board members? We got a small audience tonight, that I can see anyway. And if we do get any emails, we'll read those.

But I think at this point, what I'll do is, we'll move to the Board Forum and Superintendent report. And I'll start with ... I'll go around the proverbial table, like I used to, and we'll start with Michele. Is she there? There she is. Anything, Michele?

Ms. Skumurski:

No. I'm good. Thank you, Mike.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks Michele. Mr. Dunn?

Mr. Dunn:

All set, Mike.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, John. Mark?

Mark Mann:

All good. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Good. Deanna?

Deanna Muth:

I'm good. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Kathleen?

Ms. Curtin:

I just wanted to say thank you to everybody for all of their end of the year celebrations. It was a lot of fun watching them from the comfort of my living room. We were especially impressed with the Colombian Awards. They did a fantastic job. And I do have to say, I'm sorry that I missed the senior parade, but I had to be out of town that day. But thank you to all the staff, and the faculty, and the community that have worked so hard to make the end of the year special for so many of the kids. Oh, you too Michele, because I heard that was amazing. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Kathleen. JoAnn?

Ms. Taylor:

I'd like to say thank you to the community for coming out to support our budget in a very unusual way this year. The amount of response that we got was amazing. And the positive vote was just wonderful to all of us, and to our students. Thank you to the community for believing in us. And thank you to our

administrative team, our teachers, our complete staff for putting out a responsible budget and making it work for our kids.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Thank you, JoAnn. And I would echo all those comments too. Karen Curran? There you are.

Ms. Curran:

Yep. I'm here. Hi there.

Mr. Buono:

Hi Karen.

Ms. Curran:

I want to echo also what everybody has said. It was really an amazing year, with everybody pulling through this trying time. I want to thank everybody for the great budget vote pass. And Larry, for all your hard work. And all the staff in the business department pulling it all together. Everybody working collaboratively. It really was great to pull out such a great vote.

Ms. Curran:

And bear with me for this one. It's really with a heavy heart that I've decided to resign my position as a school board member, due to some personal and medical issues. It really has been an amazing journey, and honor, and privilege for me to serve the East Greenbush Central School District in the manner in which I have for over the past 13 years. I want to thank everybody that's been involved in allowing me to serve our community in this capacity.

Ms. Curran:

Over my tenure in the District, we've had many good times and many challenges, but we've really all worked together collaboratively to overcome. With the collaboration of all stakeholders in this community, we've developed some amazing programs and opportunities for all of our students, while still maintaining a fiscally responsible budget. There's been so much growth over the years, even with all of the state and federal guidelines and cuts that we've had to face and overcome in public education.

Ms. Curran:

This year in particular, everybody's displayed much professionalism. As we, as a district, have stayed above the curve of planning and program development while dealing with COVID-19 and all of the restrictions with remote learning that this has caused. It is through collaboration that we're able to keep our students education a priority, and monitoring, maintaining their safety and well being at the same time.

Ms. Curran:

I really am proud and thankful that I've been able to be a part of this amazing journey over the past 13 years. I have a genuine respect for everyone involved in public education and our system. I know how dedicated everybody in East Greenbush really is, to provide the best quality education to our students. Like I said, it's really been a long journey, and it does take an entire team and village of people collaborative ...

Mr. Buono:

Can you unmute her, Peter?

Peter Goodwin:

I can't unmute her. I think she-

Mr. Buono:

Karen, you're on mute. We missed the last-

Ms. Curran:

Have I been on mute a long time?

Peter Goodwin:

About 20 seconds.

Mr. Buono:

About 20 seconds.

Mr. Simons:

I think village was the last word.

Mr. Buono:

We heard village and then-

Ms. Curran:

All right, sorry. I just think it takes a village. And I want to thank everybody again, from the families and students of the District, to teachers and TAs, the buildings and grounds staff, bus drivers, and mechanics, secretaries, and nurses, custodial staff. Hold on, I'm losing my spot. Sorry.

Mr. Buono:

It's okay. Take your time.

Ms. Curran:

Administrators, Assistant superintendent's, Jeff, our current Superintendent, and this very Board of Education. You all have really been a privilege and an honor to be around. You're so professional. And I really enjoyed every moment that I've had with you all. There's so many of you that have helped guide me and my children throughout their years in school, which has made them successful young adults as well.

Ms. Curran:

The foundation that we give our children is crucial for their future. And my hope for the future of East Greenbush is that everyone is able to personally reflect and see that we are all here for our children and their futures. Education is a very challenging place to be in during these hard times.

Ms. Curran:

I totally respect everybody for all their hard work and dedication that we all have for our children. And hope that in the future, we're able to maintain all the wonderful staff that we have, maintain and expand our programs for kids, and be the leaders in public education for the betterment of our students, while still being fiscally responsible to our citizens like we have always been. Thanks again for this opportunity tonight to take a few minutes and talk to you guys. And I will miss you all terribly, but thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks Karen. I know how challenging it has been for you. We so much appreciate all the service that you've given to the District and to this Board, and especially in the last couple of years, and this last year, knowing what you've been going through. And just your persistence. And we wish you the best of luck. I hope we can honor you at a future Board meeting where we're all together, for your service. And I'll stand up and give you a round of applause for everything.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you. Thank you. You don't need to do that. I appreciate it.

Mr. Buono:

No, it's well deserved, and you've been through a lot, and helped so much the District through tough times, good times, and you've always been there. And we appreciate your counsel and the history you've brought, and everything that you brought to this Board in helping us be a solid team. So again, thank you so much for that, and the wonderful letter and sentiment that you just read too. I'm glad you did it that way.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you. Thank you so much.

Mr. Buono:

Any other comments from Board members? You can do that right now if you'd like, or later on. No? All right. I do also want to ... I see Kara, you're here, our new Assistant Director of PPS is here. Good to see you at your first meeting here. Excellent. Jeff, do you have anything?

Mr. Simons:

I have a couple of things. I also want to welcome Kara to the administrative team. She started earlier this week. I do want to reiterate what Mr. Bruno said, regarding the appreciation that we have for Karen's service on the Board. To serve on the Board of Education for 13 years is a remarkable tenure as a Board Member. And in my interactions with you, Karen, over the last four years, almost four years now, your focus has always been on the kids and the children, and what was best for everyone. And so I really appreciate that community outlook that you brought to the Board, the advocacy for the kids.

Mr. Simons:

I will miss working with you. And I want to thank you personally, for the support that you've given me as the new Superintendent over the last four years. It's been very much appreciated. And I hope that you will continue to connect with me and the administrative team as a citizen, and continue to be involved

in some way or another, because you've really done a lot of good work on behalf of the students of East Greenbush. And it's very much appreciated from the administration.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you, Jeff. I appreciate that. And I will. I certainly will.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you. Great.

Mr. Simons:

There is one other item that I just want to remind everybody, we are limiting participation, due to the state regulations, in our commencement ceremony, which is on Saturday, starting early in the morning around 9:00, and probably ending around 4:30-4:45. We sent out a reminder today, and I'll send a copy of that reminder letter to the Board tomorrow, regarding the procedures that we're going to follow. We had a meeting yesterday just to coordinate to make sure that everything was in place. And it is.

Mr. Simons:

But also to talk about the forecast. The forecast is not ideal, but ultimately we know upstate New York, it could change. In the event that the weather is such that we would need to postpone one of the groupings, the morning group would be notified through school messenger, email and text around 8:00 AM. And the first ceremony starts at nine. In the event that group six through 10, that are in the afternoon, would be impacted by increment weather, we will notify that group by noon.

Mr. Simons:

Hopefully, there'll be enough clear skies in between the rain to accomplish this on Saturday, but we also have Sunday reserved as a backup date. If we move it any further down, the weather forecast didn't get any better during the week next week. And then we're into 4th of July. So we're going to try to get it in. We hope that we'll be able to do that with as few rain drops and thunder showers as possible, but we do have a system in place to communicate with the families about an hour in advance of their time of arrival. And I thank Mr. Harkin and Mr. Adam for putting that together today, and sending it out.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Okay. We'll now move on to our discussion items. First on the agenda, item A, is the Athletic Code of Conduct for 2020-2021. Any comments, Mr. Simons?

Mr. Simons:

This is an annual review that is conducted by our Athletic Director, Mr. Leonard, which outlines the expectations of students for participation in interscholastic athletics. There's a committee that represents Mr. Leonard, as well as some coaches and our Board. I believe Mr. Buono is on that committee, and Mrs. Taylor. I think that's correct.

Mr. Buono:

Yeah, that's correct.

Mr. Simons:

And they reviewed the document. We made some changes a couple of years ago to make sure that the rules were aligned with the District's Code of Conduct for students. It includes no changes. So there are no changes that we're asking the Board to approve from the Athletic Code of Conduct on the agenda tonight, and what's been in place for the current school year. Nothing's been revised.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Any comments or questions about the Athletic Code of Conduct? Again, no changes and ... We'll just proceed as we did last year then?

Mr. Simons:

Yep.

Mr. Buono:

And it's on the agenda later on, the consent. Summer APEX program.

Mr. Simons:

Yes. As we have completed the school year, in part due to remote learning, we were not able, during the school year, to provide an opportunity for students to participate in a computer based credit recovery program called APEX. Typically, if a student were needing extra support to pass a course during the first semester, for example, or even entering into the third quarter, we would be able to provide some individual support through APEX for the students to pass the course, recover their credits and be eligible for course credit.

Mr. Simons:

We took a look, through Mr. Harkin's review, at a number of students that may need extra support to pass classes, particularly as we are moving into summer. And several students were impacted by the inability to get the support during the school year. So we're recommending, if the district goes into phase four, or if the area goes into phase four, that we would implement a summer APEX program, as we've done in the past.

Mr. Simons:

That program would involve between 50 and 60 students who did not receive full course credit. We have staffing interest in doing the program. And it does come at an expense, but we think it's an expense worth supporting, and has been successful in the past. And we're hoping that if we are in phase four, we will be able to implement it. And Mr. Harkin has put the logistics in place for all of the planning, including the social distancing and similar requirements to our special ed summer school.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr. Simons:

I don't know if Mr. Harkin is out there, and he wants to add anything in terms of the assignment of the kids, and where the kids will work and so forth. But I think we've got the plan in pretty good shape. Mr. Harkin?

Mr. Harkin:

Yeah, that's correct. That's correct. Mr. Simons. We have four labs open for that. We'll have no more than 10 people in each lab. And a couple of the students, who we identified that completed all their assignments in quarter four, they're going to allow them to work from home, as they've demonstrated they can be responsible students. So we won't exceed the capacity in any of the computer labs.

Mr. Simons:

We have five or six staff, is that correct, or is there more than that?

Mr. Harkin:

We have four. Four staff members in the four labs.

Mr. Simons:

Okay. Very good.

Mr. Buono:

Is there a minimum number we need, to run that this year though, this summer at all?

Mr. Simons:

I don't think we have a minimum number.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr. Harkin:

No, that, we don't even ... We usually fill it up, and we usually do 50 to 60 students every summer. And we're hoping to do the same thing this summer.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Any other questions, Board members, for Mr. Harkin or Mr. Simons about the program? All right. Hearing none, we'll proceed to the next item. So I'm very interested to hear about the update on how the summer school extended school year is going. I don't know if it's you or Molly who's going to go over it.

Mr. Simons:

I'm just going to pass most of this to Molly. And Tom Brownell, who's with us. And Mark Noeth, who's been involved in the planning. And Paul Bickel. The team, under Molly's direction, has done a fantastic job at pulling together our planning for extended school year summer programs for our special education students. We've provided some documents on BoardDocs, but Molly and the team have been working feverishly to put out some additional communications. And I'm going to ask Peter right now, to pull up some of the documents and to share the screen.

Mr. Simons:

So Molly, I'm going to ask you to start. And then if you want to invite Tom, Paul, or Mark or anyone else who's been involved in the discussion, to give us an update on our summer program. I'm really impressed by what you've been able to pull together.

Ms. McGrath:

Thank you, Jeff. So I'll give you a brief summary of all the planning that's going on since June 5th, when Cuomo's Executive order allowed us to move forward with in-person services. We surveyed all 255 families who are eligible. And 175 students have opted in.

Ms. McGrath:

So on the screen right now is the flyer that's going home tomorrow as a welcome packet to families. And it outlines what families need to know. So our class sizes, our largest class size is nine, which is well within the guidelines of below 10. So we have 25 sections. So it will be staffing 25 teachers, 31 teaching assistants and eight related service providers, which are OT, PT, speech and social work.

Ms. McGrath:

We have a training for staff tomorrow afternoon, where we will be reviewing all of the CDC and Department of Health guidelines, which include the proper social distancing, cleaning, disinfecting, face covering for employees. Mandatory health screening before employees arrive at work, which we will be using an app for, just through NERIC, that we just had our final meeting today. So it's been rapid planning, but we're in a really good place.

Ms. McGrath:

Paul Bickel and Mark Adam have secured all of the appropriate signage for hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, just to remind everyone to keep six feet apart, proper hand washing. And then we have a very comprehensive transportation plan, that I will turn it over to Mark, and he can share how we are keeping students socially distant, and his plan for the buses.

Mr. Noeth:

Thanks, Molly. So we have 18 summer school bus routes. There are 12 large buses with 11 students a piece on them, for the social distancing. And six small buses with five, also for social distancing. So every bus will have an aide, either a teacher's aide or a bus aide, who will screen the students before they get on the bus for temperature. Any temperature over 100.4, the student will stay home.

Mr. Noeth:

The drivers and aides, when they arrive at the bus garage, they will also be screened, not by temperature, but there will be a written screening that they'll be required to fill out daily. Drivers and aides will wear proper PPE at all times, and a face shield for the driver. We're not going to require a flat mask for the driver, because it's ... I'm sure you have worn a mask and it fogs up your glasses, they make it tougher to breathe. We do have face shields for all the drivers. However, the bus aides, the teacher's aides, they should wear a flat mask.

Mr. Noeth:

We highly recommend students to wear a mask, but we cannot require of them. The students will all sit in assigned seats by grade level, the oldest students in the rear, the youngest in the front. They'll

maintain their assigned seats throughout. If the student is not there, the seat will be empty. You can't put more students on the bus because there won't be any social distancing.

Mr. Noeth:

So when the bus arrives at the school, it will stop at three different stops. You can see that on your screen. The first one is for kindergarten to three. I'm not sure if you have any kindergartners, but one to three. The first stop is for one to three. Those students get off. They're met by teachers and teacher's aides. The bus is six feet away from the curb. Social distancing is maintained throughout. And then they move into school through the side entrance.

Mr. Noeth:

Then the bus moves up, and drops off four through eight. Same scenario. They're six feet from the curb. Teachers and aides take them into the school through the front entrance. Finally, around the corner, the ninth through 12th.

Mr. Noeth:

After school, the buses will line up six feet away from the curb, all the way around the loop. You can't see me really pointing at it. I'm pointing as I'm talking. But they'll start at the very beginning, and line up 18 buses in a row. And the students will be brought out to the bus, where they'll load in, in their seating assignment order.

Mr. Noeth:

Our buses will be cleaned in between each run, either a driver or another transportation employee will clean the bus with [Oxycut G 00:22:52], which is a hydrogen peroxide based cleaner that the district has already. And it's on the COVID-19 list. The drivers and the cleaners will be wearing proper PPE during cleaning as well. And then they'll be sanitized after each run as well. So there's cleaning and sanitizing. We'll use a bleach solution initially, to sanitize the buses. And we have GenEon is a manufacturer of the foggers or misters that we'll be using. Eventually they'll use a saline solution that's electrostatically charged to provide disinfection. We have it on order. We don't have any in stock. Now, the district does have one.

Mr. Noeth:

Additional notes for transportation are that the routing is, it's harder to pass. In other words, no additional riders, because there's just not room. Alternate locations for students, I didn't enjoy taking away service, but you can't have alternate locations and different drop offs because that means they have to ride a different bus. So they ride the same bus in the morning and the same bus in the afternoon.

Mr. Noeth:

For example, if Johnny Smith wants to get on at GCC in the morning, he has to get off at GCC in the afternoon. We have four additional runs throughout our district runs. Identical cleaning and screening protocol will be followed. And separate transportation will be provided to students who take ill while they're in school. We'll provide a bus for that, and the driver. And that student will sit well away from the driver, so that we can take them home. Additional runs may be added, depending on services that are required. That's about it.

Ms. McGrath:

Thank you, Mark.

Mr. Noeth:

You're welcome.

Ms. McGrath:

Peter, could you pull up the summer school planning memo for the Board? I'm going to ask ... And you can scroll down and show the picture of the classroom. I'm going to have Tom share with you guys our classroom setup, and the safety measures we have in place inside the classroom.

Mr. Brownell:

Thanks, Molly. The theme this year is social distancing door to door. That's all we've been thinking about since we've started planning. You're looking at the mock up classroom there. Maintenance and I are working on getting every classroom marked up kind of like this, where everything is designed around the CDCs requirements, which are students facing forward, students six feet apart, and then if a teacher needs to be in close proximity to the students, they wear a mask.

Mr. Brownell:

So right now we're taping off desks and chairs, so they don't move. We need the teachers to be able to go in, understand where the desks and chairs are supposed to be, and then how they can't move them. A lot of them like to have them in a circle. We can't do that anymore. Not this year, at least. So there's going to be a lot of adjustment by the teachers, but they're well aware of what's going on. And if they have any suggestions, they're going to go through me and Molly, and see if we can help them out. But other than that, it's all going to be pretty much taped out for the teachers.

Mr. Brownell:

We have Mr. Goodwin, the Chromebooks. We have locations for those to be stored away separately from each other, so they're not affected by the cleaning at night. And we also understand that the students will be escorted to the restroom when they need to be. And Mr. Grieco had his guys out there putting the marks down. As I was there the other day, it looked really good. Six feet apart, waiting for the restroom. So everything is going to be socially distant. And I think everybody is on board and we're ready to go.

Ms. McGrath:

Thanks, Tom. Peter, if you could just pull up the page two and page three of the welcome packet. I just want to share two final things. This will be going home with families tomorrow. This is a daily health screening that we're going to be encouraging ... Go up to the health screening, Peter. Thanks. The health screening. These are the three critical questions. We're encouraging families to monitor at home. In an effort to minimize illness, a healthy school really starts at home.

Ms. McGrath:

So we're asking parents and guardians to monitor their children for any symptoms listed on this slide. And then to ask three questions. Has my child been around anyone with the listed symptoms, or

diagnosis of COVID in the past 14 days? Yes or no? Has anyone in our household been sick in the past 14 days? Yes or no? Has my child adhered to our state's guidelines for ...

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:28:04]

Ms. McGrath:

... days? Yes or no. Has my child adhered to our state's guidelines regarding COVID-19? Yes or no. So if they answer yes to any of those questions, we encourage them to stay home. We've given them a monthly calendar. The program is six weeks, so they can record their temperature at home if they'd like, and any symptoms.

Ms. McGrath:

Then the last page, we know that our students have not been in our building since March. I was very worried about anxious, nervous students arriving at an unfamiliar building, Columbia High, greeted by unfamiliar staff with masks, so we asked all of our staff to send a selfie without the masks on, so they can see our nice, friendly smiling teacher faces, and then a picture of them with the mask on, that says, "This is what I will look like when you see me on the first day of school, so I can keep us healthy," as well as the teaching assistants, who will be very heavily involved this year escorting students from the bus to their class space, to the bathrooms, things like that. That's the brief version of the planning. Does anyone have any questions or comments?

Mr. Buono:

Anybody? Very comprehensive, very impressive to see the level of detail, Molly, Mark and Paul. Peter, I know you were involved in terms of the computer part.

Mr. Buono:

The training, I hope it goes well tomorrow, and really, really interested to see how we kick off. As always, with any start of any kind of program, there will be a few hiccups, but I'm sure we'll get through them, and have a successful extended school year program.

Mr. Simons:

Molly, I want to, again, congratulate you and the team for what a great job you did. One thing I would mention, and it's on the documents, you've been consulting with Dr. Albert, the school's physician, along the way with doing the screenings, some of the protocols for isolating kids in the event that they get sick. Dr. Albert has been very, very responsive and supportive of what we're doing. I appreciate all the effort that's going into this, particularly as we did not have a lot of time to put this together. I'm very encouraged, and I'm looking forward to the first day on July 6th.

Mr. Buono:

Yeah, great. It looks like a nice model. I can see how things work here. Then again, a lot of schools chose to do a hybrid model, or a virtual model, and I commend the district for providing in person instruction for our special education students, so they can continue to learn over the summer and get the services that they need. Thank you.

Ms. Curtin:

Molly, I was especially impressed with the pictures at the end of the teachers with or without the masks. That was a great touch, and I think you really covered all the bases on everything. Mark, Peter, everybody did a great job.

Ms. McGrath:

Thanks, I haven't slept since June 5th, so ...

Mr. Buono:

Any other comments, Board members? Hearing none, we'll move to the next discussion item regarding facilities and grounds during COVID-19.

Mr. Simons:

Yes. We had a discussion at the last Board meeting about the rules that we're under regarding opening up our school facilities for outside groups, such as summer camps and sports activities. It was suggested by the Board, it was a good suggestion, that we send a letter letting everyone know that we were hoping to make our facilities and grounds available as soon as the state determines that the Capital region is in phase four, and that we are ready to do so. I want to thank Paul Bickel, who put the letter together which is posted on the agenda. He has sent it out to all the groups that we know about in terms of the building requests that we typically receive. We are supportive of community use of the facilities; we just want to make sure that we're doing it with the authority of the state. That letter went out on June 19th, and the groups that we have been in communication with are being very patient.

Mr. Mann:

I know with phase four, there are several exceptions to things in phase four.

Mr. Simons:

Yes.

Mr. Mann:

Larger type venues and events and things like that are not going to be allowed to open in phase four. Do we know what this is included in, like any movie theaters, malls, larger venues that hold more than X number of people?

Mr. Simons:

These are generally sports activities and sports related camps, like Girls Softball Association, baseball, [inaudible 00:33:14] baseball. Some of our coaches that work independently and operate sports camps are all under ... If they're operating on our property, they have to abide by this, but it doesn't include authorizing, for example, the dance recital to use the Columbia High School auditorium. That would not be permitted.

Mr. Mann:

But outside is?

Mr. Simons:

Outside, outside within the parameters. Now, there was another Executive order that indicated if we were still in phase three on July 6th, certain sports could operate, such as tennis, field hockey, I think, was another one, baseball, softball. That was kind of separate, because that generally applied to any of those types of activities that aren't on school grounds. But if we're in phase four, we can permit utilization, so that might even occur before July 6th. Paul, are there any groups that I'm not aware of, any types of activities that I'm not aware of? Does it generally cover sports?

Paul:

Yes, sports for the most part, but I did open it up to be more general than anything. If somebody wanted to have an outdoor group gathering of any kind, they would have to submit a special plan, but it's basically sports related at this point where we [inaudible 00:34:45].

Mr. Simons:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Do we have to modify our agreement at all, to address any issues as in reopening, if someone wants to come in? Should we modify our agreement at all to account for them and still be [inaudible 00:35:00]?

Mr. Simons:

Our forms, you mean?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah.

Mr. Simons:

I don't believe we have to modify them. They just have to submit a plan. I think it's fairly similar to what the reopening plan is for the private businesses.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr. Simons:

The criteria is included within the New York forwarded document the governor's obviously ... It's really coordinated by the Office of Economic Development.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr. Mann:

So anybody that wants to use a field has to submit a plan to the District, saying this is how we're going to operate?

Mr. Simons:

They have to have a plan that's developed to operate. So far, the groups that have requested it, like the Girls Softball Association, have given us a copy of their plan. I'm not sure they're required to give us the plan; they just have to have a plan.

Mr. Mann:

But, when Mike's talking about revising our form, are we going to make that a requirement, so we know? If they just say they're going to open up, and you've got places filled with people, is that ... I don't know what the state's guidelines are.

Mr. Simons:

Our letter indicates that along with the certificates of insurance are good, [inaudible 00:36:11] must provide the district with a written plan as to how they plan to follow New York state COVID-19 protocols. That includes limitations on group sizes, social distancing, covering faces. For a complete updated list of the protocols, they are directed to go to the website [coronavirus.health](https://www.coronavirus.health).

Mr. Mann:

Tony's the muscle-

Mr. Simons:

They submit the plan. I stand corrected. They submit the plan with the forms.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent.

Mr. Mann:

It won't be signed off until then?

Mr. Simons:

Yeah, so basically, until we get the plan, we don't do the approval.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent.

Mr. Simons:

Oh, I had that base covered.

Mr. Buono:

Nice. Any other questions on the facilities' use, Board members? No? All right. Our final discussion item regarding GCC, we've talked about this a little bit.

Mr. Simons:

Yeah. The last meeting we discussed Greenbush Child Care's request to open up their summer program, childcare program, which they have operated in the past at Genet Elementary School. We advised GCC that we couldn't open the building up until phase four, and we discussed developing an agreement that

was more comprehensive in light of the COVID-19 concerns. GCC and the district worked very collaboratively to put together this agreement that we bring before the Board this evening. It includes an appendix which outlines the New York state guidelines for operations of childcare programs related to the health procedures that need to be in place. The agreement was reviewed and developed by our attorney, Jeff Lewis, from the Ferrara firm, and reviewed by GCC's Board. We are all in agreement with the terms of the agreement. I was informed today that, in addition to all of the provisions within the agreement, GCC will provide a staff member who is a licensed nurse. That was an additional add. That was not something that the district required. It was something that they offered to do, and have made the decision to include that staff member.

Mr. Simons:

This agreement, if approved by the Board, indicates that they would have permission to begin enrolling kids in the program, predicated on the phase. For an event that we are not in phase four, we won't be able to let them use the building, but we're hoping to be able to do so. Mr. [Graynot 00:38:38] has been involved in the conversations with GCC, Paul Bickei has been involved as far as furniture arrangements, the number of classrooms that are needed, the availability of individual desks, use of the gym, and cleaning procedures for the classrooms as well as the playground. We think we're in pretty good shape.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent. Any further questions? All right. Excellent. We'll see those couple of items on the agenda a little bit later on the consent side, and we'll now move to committee reports. We'll start with Mr. Simons on the school reopening.

Mr. Simons:

So the District formed a reopening task force, which is represented by 71 or so members of the staff who were all eager to serve, from key administrators to teachers, nurses to teaching assistants, to clerical staff, to custodial staff. We've had two meetings, and they've been very well attended. We determined at our first meeting that we would organize subcommittees. Between the first meeting and the second meeting, we provided an assignment for each of the staff members, either based on their interest in serving on a particular subcommittee, or where we needed to make sure that we had representation from various roles within the district. The subcommittees are organized around the same topics and areas that the state task force is looking at. Those subcommittees, I'm trying to find it right now, have already had a couple of meetings in between our last meeting. There's a health and safety committee. There's a transportation, facilities, and nutrition committee. There's a teaching and learning committee, digital equity and access, budget and fiscal, social, emotional needs, special education, bilingual education, and staffing and human resources.

Mr. Simons:

A little bit later on in the agenda, Jim McHugh, who chairs the teaching and learning committee as well as the bilingual education committee, will give a report. Mr. Edson is chairing the business finance budget and fiscal committee along with Linda Wager who will be our **Director** of Business and Finance. They have had a meeting. Ms. Cannon is chairing the staffing and human resources, and she will give a report on that.

Mr. Simons:

We're following, basically, the same organizational structure that the state is following. We have asked each subcommittee to review some of the documents that have been provided, and Queststar BOCES to make a checklist of the topics and the areas that that particular subcommittee needs to make recommendations on. Additionally, Questar, at my request, has provided some sample reopening plans from other states that we will take a look at, at our next meeting, so we think that our process is pretty well moving forward.

Mr. Simons:

We are looking at three scenarios, as is the state. If we are in a reopen with students and staff fully coming back, what would the procedures be to ensure health and safety, so that we are in compliance with the guidelines? The second scenario would be some type of a combination or hybrid where students are engaged in remote learning for part of the day, and attending physically school during another part of the day. Or if we are in a period of time where remote learning is maintained, what can we learn from what we've experienced, the crisis response mode since March 13th, that will add more structure, and improve what we can do should we have to continue to engage our students and our teachers and our families in remote learning? Each subcommittee is looking at those three models.

Mr. Simons:

I was very encouraged and excited about participating in the State process for reopening. I participated in that meeting on Monday. There were more than 350 people on the meeting, which was unprecedented in and of itself. The meeting was well organized through Zoom. We had started the meeting with 350 people, and we received a presentation from a physician at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, which I believe was in Brooklyn, on COVID-19. It was a nice summary of what COVID-19 is, what factors are involved, what the symptoms are, and what some of the considerations are in prevention.

Mr. Simons:

Then we had a very insightful presentation from an individual who talked about social, emotional needs of kids. Frank provided a framework for the districts to consider in transitioning kids back to school, not only their own individual mental health and social, emotional needs, but also community needs, and how we can, as a school district, make sure that we are thinking about all the aspects of transition for kids who have been isolated for a pretty significant period of time. Then we broke into subgroups, which was a pretty neat trick for the State Education Department to pull off, and they pulled it off very well.

Mr. Simons:

They automatically assigned people by code to a subcommittee, so we were moved from a group of 350 to a group of about 23. I was assigned to the subcommittee on transportation, facilities, and nutrition services along with 22 other individuals. We were asked to answer and respond to three questions that were provided by the state. The first question was related to, what do you think the greatest challenges that schools and school districts will face under each of the three instructional models in person, remote, or a combination of the two? That was an opportunity to identify what some of the constraints would be, what some of the concerns and challenges would be.

Mr. Simons:

Second question was, can you provide some concrete examples of creative solutions to challenging problems that would work within your school or school district in each of the three scenarios? The third

question, which was a good one, can you tell us how the regions and the Department of Ed can help eliminate any institutional, budgetary, or regulatory obstacles that stand in the way of your success?

Mr. Simons:

Looking at the three focus areas, nutrition, transportation, and facilities, the most challenging of those three, in my view, is the transportation piece. How do you socially distance kids on a bus, and what would be the overall impact on transportation if the district was required to be in some hybrid model? Of all of the models, my own view is that the hybrid model is the most complicated, the most difficult to implement. We would have a situation where our families would be impacted. For example, if elementary is operating on a different day than high school, or groups of kids are coming in for half the day and home for half the day. That may present a challenge for working families that have to go to work. I think that the continued remote learning, I think families are starting to feel that the social emotional impact of that is a factor that is causing many more parents to hope that we can return to school in person. The in person model is a problem with concerns about how do we protect the kids and the staff when they come back.

Mr. Simons:

It was a really interesting conversation. It was a rich conversation. We didn't come up with any solutions that we know for sure would be adopted by SED, or the Board of Regents, but we got a chance to contribute our ideas. That information is being compiled by an independent group called WestEd, which is a US Department of Education funded not-for-profit organization that does research on schools, and then that information will be presented to the Board of Regents on July 13th.

Mr. Simons:

One of the concerns that we have is to make sure that whatever guidance is provided, that it be provided sooner than later, because there'll be a lot of decisions that need to be made by September if, in fact, we are opening in September. The other tension, so to speak, within the dialogue was there are a number of districts that like flexibility regarding the guidelines from the state, but we also want specificity. It's kind of hard, I would think, from the State Education Department standpoint, to provide enough discretion for districts to be able to develop plans that work for their particular communities, but also have enough specificity in the guidelines so that we're all doing something that's fairly consistent, safe and healthy for our educational community. I think that's where the tension really comes.

Mr. Simons:

It was a very good, productive session, and I was glad to be part of it. Mr. Alvey was also part of it. He was assigned to a group that had the same focus areas as I did, but there were two groups, so he wasn't in the same group as I was. We haven't had a chance to collaborate yet, but we will be doing that. Very thoughtful process. It worked really well.

Mr. Buono:

Any questions for Mr. Simons? Good. We now move to Mr. McHugh.

Mr. McHugh:

Good evening. I've had the opportunity to participate in a three week symposium through Stony Brook University School of Professional Development. It has been a worthwhile experience. One of the things right off the start that just was interesting, and was a good thing to consider, is during the three week symposium, in order to get credit for participating, I need to ask at least one question in the chat room, and I need to respond in a meaningful way to two other participant's questions. Even that gets you thinking about increasing the accountability for students in remote learning.

Mr. McHugh:

The first symposium was really talking a lot about facility readiness, and just gives you great things to think about, about creating checklists, and being very specific and intentional when you talk about what needs to be done in order to make sure our facilities are safe, so identifying the areas that need to be cleaned, the frequency that those areas should be cleaned. Maybe the logistics are a little different from classrooms, hallways, to locker rooms, or gymnasiums, or fitness centers, or science labs, those areas where there's a little bit more contact, or where it's a little bit more challenging to actually individualize the sharing of equipment, so bathrooms, things like that.

Mr. McHugh:

They discussed protocols for large events, so if we were to return and we were able to have some of those large events like sports or concerts or readings, what are the protocols for setting up and cleaning? They include specifying exactly what products should be used. Throughout the symposium so far, they talk about how important it is to really be clear with all stakeholders in communicating, and making sure that our school community knows what we're working on. They talked about the need to revise the emergency plan, so you think about a typical fire drill or an emergency evacuation, our emergency plans may need to change a little bit and be adjusted due to COVID-19. They talked about COVID policies, and the importance of really establishing some clear, documented policies that our public is aware of. For example, how do we handle a [referred 00:51:49] case of COVID-19? How do we handle a student or an employee that may be symptomatic of COVID-19, or if we're aware that somebody was exposed to COVID-19, exactly how do we handle those situations?

Mr. McHugh:

They did define direct contact versus indirect contact. I found that interesting, the way they really advised direct contact is exposed for 15 minutes or longer within the six feet social distancing to a person that has a confirmed case of COVID-19. They talked a lot about responsibility, and really being specific in your planner who does that communication, who informs, and what exactly is communicated? They talked about a lot of different considerations. Do we require a note from a physician? They talked about the importance of establishing a chain of command. We've talked about cafeteria, and the challenges that are involved in providing breakfast and lunch to our students. For example, in a lot of our cafeterias we've been accustomed to some of the items being self-service, and of course they discourage that, so what's your plan? How do the students get through that line? How do they get fed, and how do they get their meals? You didn't design the cafeteria.

Mr. McHugh:

A big topic that they talked about in the first week supposedly was access control, how students, faculty, staff and visitors will enter and exit our buildings. We become a single point of entry, so do we establish more than one entry and exit for our buildings, so that all of our students aren't following into a single location? They talked about the possibility of staggering bus runs. They talked about even how we

handle the internal traffic in the hallway. Internal traffic could really be driven by the population, and the number of students is an important factor. They talked about such things as staggering bells, bell schedules, even during the school day, trying to plan to limit travel as much as possible, and the importance of having the appropriate signage clearly visible both inside and outside of our building. Even making sure that we have that a six foot separation monitor in our entrance and exit areas, directly inside and outside of the building.

Mr. McHugh:

They talked about rules and responsibilities. We covered topics of classroom setup, classroom supplies, especially in our younger grades who are so used to the sharing of materials. You'll have a big ban on markers or crayons or glue sticks on the table. Everybody shares at that table, and really having to change that practice. One of the things that they really talk about, and you can see why it's so important, is we're all in personal protection equipment. Really, you need a PPE manager, and really, who's responsible? Who's responsible for ordering, for distribution, for keeping an inventory, for enforcement, and for communication?

Mr. McHugh:

Some other things that were interesting was they talked a lot of discussion about social distancing. A lot of people are saying we're really uncomfortable with the term social distancing, that our students need that social aspect of school more than ever now. They started to raise it as physical distancing, and they talked about social, emotional wellness, and our students really need that opportunity to engage socially. They talked about ways that you could promote that, but also the need to educate, especially our youngest learners. When they come in, do they really understand where that physical distancing is, and the proper etiquette? We did talk a little bit about establishing isolation rooms. A lot of school districts are considering that. What do you do when ...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:56:04]

Mr. McHugh:

A lot of school districts are considering that. What do you do when a student is symptomatic and comes to school and the school nurse is unable to get in contact with the parent or guardian? The student should go home at 9:00 AM, they're still in your building at 1:00 PM. They talked a little bit about if you have that ability to establish that isolation room, that that has a purpose.

Mr. McHugh:

They talked about trying to explore teachers staying in their classrooms, meaning that there aren't multiple faculty members sharing the same instructional space. Trying to schedule in a way that you're minimizing that travel and that sharing of classroom space. They talk a lot about the ability to try to redesign a building. You take a high school, a lot of districts are considering trying to put the four core content area teachers in the same wing and breaking up the old, that's the math wing, or that's the English wing, and making a schedule so those students stay in that small isolated area within a building.

Mr. McHugh:

People shared some of their plans. There was a school district that talked about that they're going to utilize older buildings in the district, and if they can't fully return K through 12, that K-6 and students with an IEP that are in a self contained classroom will come back for in person instruction. Their older

learners will stay remote. They talked about taking support staff from teaching assistants and pairing them with the classroom teacher. For example, you might have a class of 24 in a grade 4. 12 of those students would be with the classroom teacher and in the AM in one room, the room right next to that classroom, the teaching assistant or support staff member would have the other 12 students and they would flip in the afternoon. That was a lot to do with they talk about six foot social distancing, physical distancing, and that's really difficult in our classrooms to really spread students out that much.

Mr. McHugh:

During the second symposium, they talked about some schools and districts are requesting the flexibility to adjust their school calendar. We see that locally in our news, Sienna College, University of Albany are doing that. Those colleges are going back early, they're ending the first semester before that Thanksgiving break and trying to increase the amount of time that students are home, especially during that difficult flu season. That was another topic that was spoken about.

Mr. McHugh:

They talked about the social distancing requirements. They touched a little bit that really it's unrealistic. All the districts are really looking for more guidance. They talked about the fact that there's a lot of technology platforms and educational sales people are out there and are taking advantage of the situation and are trying to sell a lot of these instructional platforms, but they also talked about the unplanned costs that are associated with Covid-19. We're getting the news that we have a reduction in our funding and then all the unanticipated costs that are associated with the pandemic.

Mr. McHugh:

They also talked about, which I thought was really important, is that the tremendous amount of effort that has been made over the last two or three years to improve our students' soft skills. The ability to work together and the ability to collaborate, and we've gotten rid of the old single desk and we put in this flexible furniture which students are sitting at groups and at tables, and a lot of districts are struggling because they don't even have that available furniture to really ensure that six foot social distancing is enforced. There was a discussion rethinking things like science labs where there's sharing of microscopes and how to rethink those labs and how we're going to conduct those labs. They talk our professional faculty needs that professional time to rethink their methodologies and think about how they're going to teach the content.

Mr. McHugh:

Some districts are exploring reshuffling their content. Some of the content in the annual 10 month school year lends itself a little bit more favorably to remote learning. Making sure that they're adjusting the pacing calendar so that just in case if we went back to school, for some reason you had to go back to remote for a period of time during flu season, that we had made those adjustments in advance that the content that was a little bit easier to teach through remote instruction would be at that same time. A lot of discussion like Mr. Simons talked about reprioritizing the things that we really need to address, and the social/emotional needs being number one.

Mr. McHugh:

There was a general discussion, it was over 100 school districts participating about the need to increase the accountability for all stakeholders. Increasing accountability from the students we serve, increasing the accountability for all employees, and there was a lot of discussion about creating instructional

blocks, especially for our 6 through 12. For example, maybe at 7:15 to 8:30 AM, all English teachers would be live, and then following that there would be a period where all math teachers were live. It's a little bit problematic for some of our support staff members. We'll get to that in one of our subgroups.

Mr. McHugh:

The general consensus for is that students were overwhelmed during this period of remote learning. The general consensus was that the work and the delivery of work seemed more like homework rather than instruction. When you ask our learners, what do they like the least about school, typically that would be homework. Just the need to rethink our delivery practices.

Mr. McHugh:

Our teaching and learning subcommittee from Mr. Simons' reopening committee task force met on June 16th, and we talk about the same thing. We reviewed the Questar document. We talked about sharing of school supplies, classroom set ups. We talked a lot about typical large groupings like chorus, physical education, band, wherever, grade 5 in our elementary schools they all get together once a week for band or for chorus and the need to have to rethink whether or not that was able to continue especially at the beginning of the year. Our music department was a little concerned because there are some instruments that are shared, and really having to rethink that.

Mr. McHugh:

One of the things we discussed, that committee talked about our middle school students which is a unique age group, and there seemed to be an over reluctance of really being on camera during any Google or live instruction. A lot of the student didn't want to be on live. We talked a lot about the way we've always purchased textbooks and we introduce and recommend new textbooks, and really stopping that practice unless there's a digital component to that textbook series. What else?

Mr. McHugh:

The need to really explore expanding the one to one initiative so that we have our K-2 population covered. However we have a lot to teachers from those primary grades that shared that the need for those hard packets was still there, and that it was really difficult, because a five year old or a six year old is not going to log on at live instruction at 9:00 in the morning unless there's somebody there to help support that. Unless mom, dad, or there's another adult that can help that child log on and stay on for that live instruction.

Mr. McHugh:

Our primary teachers were typically starting their day where 8:00 in the morning before mom or dad went to work until 8:00 at night when they came home from work. There was that need. That was a unique challenge.

Mr. McHugh:

That subcommittee for our Bilingual Education we met on June 19th and we talked about making sure that our parent communications and everything that's going on regarding Covid-19, it's at least translated in Spanish, Chinese, and Urdu. We have a large population of parents that need that. The social/emotional needs, the feeling was that it's either a little bit more severe for our English language

learners. There's that lack of connectedness. There's a need to expand our outreach. We really need to maximize our face to face interactions with that population of students.

Mr. McHugh:

Those families are a little bit more reluctant to ask for help. The challenge associated again to make sure they understand what physical distancing, social distancing means and what the expectations are. All of our English Language Learner teachers were a part of that subcommittee. They talked about the challenges with online learning and remote learning that it was really difficult to connect with some of our families earlier in the day. The simple thing was the families were connecting with family members back in their home country and the difference in time schedules that they were up quite late and it was tough to make those connections.

Mr. McHugh:

We talked about strategies that we currently have in place of use of outside services like Lexikeet, and all language translators that help us translate documents. We talked about refining our orientation program regardless of what our strategy is to open up the school year, but we really need to make sure that we clearly explain what our role is as a school district and that our families are aware of the available resources both inside our school and in our community.

Mr. McHugh:

We talked about the challenges associated with social distancing with our oriental population. Some of our teaching spaces for our oriental teachers are very small and restrictive. We're talking about that and we're exploring whether or not some of those spaces can change, at least for the beginning of the year. The last thing that I'll mention is that we really talked about the challenges of wearing those masks with the groups like our ENL population that relies so much on social cues and the formation of our words, that's a unique challenge. We talked about the use of facial shields rather than the masks.

Mr. McHugh:

The other part was that it's difficult for our ENL service providers to provide their services in any kind of fully remote learning situation to support all of those blocks and also get their required minutes in as well. A lot of great discussion and we'll be meeting again after our whole committee meets. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Jim. Any questions? Very comprehensive. It sounds like you've been a little busy. I hope a lot of those ideas do make it into the ... The symposium sounds like it was just like the reopening task force on a very condensed version of that. A lot of what you're learning and hearing about will eventually be incorporated into a statewide plan with some local flexibility. Fingers crossed. A lot there and expensive, obviously a lot of financial issues to consider, people issues to consider. Kathleen.

Ms. Curtin:

Jim, I've got a question. In the symposium, have they had any discussion on if they think any of these things are going to be incorporated consistently into education now? I mean, little things, you're talking about the crayons always being separate. Do we have to rethink how we do some stuff? I know I'm on the board for a camp and they're saying that some of the things we've done in the past will never come back. Do you see any of that happening here?

Mr. McHugh:

That's a great question. Our Queatar, we had a CIA meeting this afternoon. [Terry Bornell 01:09:35] connected us with [Tom Murray 01:09:37] who's going to work with our Board of Districts. He talked about this is really an opportunity to really change the delivery of education, the product of education. He's very optimistic that we're finding that there are students that learn better remotely. He encouraged us to approach it not necessarily for a period of time, but for moving forward permanently that that could change.

Mr. McHugh:

I think some of the things are temporary. Community resources and things like that. We have a unique community that's already reached out to us to try to help support our schools with the local business, local company that was trying to support both Red Mill and Donald P. Sutherland, Title I schools. The one thing I will add is there's over 100 districts participating in the symposium, and we have a lot of work to do, but we're in pretty good shape. It's the collaborative effort of our entire administrative team and our teachers. We're in pretty good shape compared to some other districts. We have a lot of work to do, but the things that come up, we've been on them.

Ms. Curtin:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Anyone else? Thanks, Jim. We're going to move to Marissa.

Ms. Cannon:

The Human Resources and Staffing subcommittee met on Thursday June 18th. We first reviewed the Questar resource together, then, broke out our discussion into separate categories. For social distancing protocols, really identifying what those will be in September. Will our students need to be spaced six feet apart in classrooms? That is a concern, because not all classrooms would be large enough for that. Potentially using more than one point of entry for our students to gain access into the building. What does that look like in terms of staffing? Will we have to stagger staff to help monitor those areas?

Ms. Cannon:

Looking at our high school and middle school bell schedule, how are students are going to be moving from point A to point B with the traffic flow? Will that need to be reworked? Identifying the number of people that can be in common rooms together. Looking at the lunch room for staff, the copy room, the lobby, making sure we have proper signage and posters on those areas so all of our staff know what is the occupancy for a safe and healthy environment?

Ms. Cannon:

In terms of employee management, making sure we're monitoring daily attendance and making sure we have contact tracing. For our staff that not only go and do one building but have multiple building assignments, making sure that's accounted for. Looking at virtual meetings when practical instead of in person depending on the size of the meeting. Providing training for all staff on all new policies in terms of social distancing, wearing of appropriate PPE, addressing any medical concerns that they may have that would potentially prohibit them from coming back into the workforce if Covid-19 is still present in

the fall. Looking at potentially of rotating of staff schedules and the event of a hybrid model if that's used. Potential survey for staff about what their concerns would be in terms of medical reasons and how do we best support that?

Ms. Cannon:

Another item we discussed was a plan for delivery of education and health services in case of reduced staff due to the pandemic. If we have two nurses out, do we have the substitute nursing staff available that would be able to go into our buildings and fill those roles? There may be a potential need to recruit more substitutes in those critical areas over the summer to prepare themselves for what could be in the fall.

Ms. Cannon:

In terms of PPE, we have been very diligent about ordering masks and face shields, gloves, goggles for our staff who need them, ensuring all our employees have access to those, and making sure they know how to safely wear the PPE and how to wash the PPE. Reviewing our District policies and procedures to make sure we're in compliance with any local and state policy.

Ms. Cannon:

We need to make sure that the employees that do need to use their leave time have the knowledge on how to use that time. Ensuring all of our information on Covid-19 federal leave is posted in all of our buildings. They have released posters at this point, so making sure we're in compliance with that. Currently we have a service, Capital EAP, informing our staff of the available mental health resources that they have to them, workshops and how to cope with stress.

Ms. Cannon:

Making sure we have an adequate visitor policy. Who needs to gain entry into the building and who could drop off something right in that vestibule area so they don't need to go through the building. Putting protocols in place for our parent teacher conferences, open houses, freshman orientation, really potentially redesigning what that might look like, instead of it being all done online, maybe we have smaller groups that come in and we stagger that.

Ms. Cannon:

Some of the general concerns from my committee that have already been mentioned were school buses. How do we social distance on a school bus if that protocol is in place? Employee illness. Really are there enough substitutes to cover all the absences that we might see without jeopardizing our educational and health services? The last concern that my group had was the temperature checks. If those are mandatory, what does that time commitment look like? How are we going to be able to provide a temperature check for every single student that's coming through our buildings? That was my subcommittee group. Does anyone have any questions on that? Okay. I do have two other items I wanted to discuss.

Ms. Cannon:

One is our staffing. As of today, all of our instructional and non-instructional positions have been posted. We did start our internal screening for this week. In our teacher's agreement, teachers do have the right

to transfer into the vacancies. That process started. We also have all of our postings listed on our district website. Mr. Adam put that up this morning.

Ms. Cannon:

Lastly, similar to Athletic code of conduct, the code of conduct for our School District was reviewed by the committee. The committee has decided at this point that a number of changes were made last year to the code, and we would like to roll over the code of conduct to the following school year, so 2020-2021. We're not looking for the Board to make any changes to that. It is on the consent agenda, it's the exact same code that we used this year. Essentially the code is to ensure that we are providing a safe and orderly school environment where students and district personnel can deliver the quality educational services without any disruption and interference and making sure we have responsible behavior that is essential to achieving our goals.

Mr. Buono:

Any questions for Marissa on those two other items? Nope? Thank you Marissa.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Mr. Edson?

Mr. Edson:

Our subcommittee ... Peter always does that and asks me to speak up. Our subcommittee met today. Wondering if Linda Wager is out there, she's chairing our subcommittee. If she'd like to make the report? Linda? Okay.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. Yes. Our subcommittee budget/fiscal subcommittee met this morning at 10:00. I haven't prepared the report yet, but I will review a little bit of our discussion. We reviewed the Questar guide, which was provided to us. We talked about the importance of tracking the unique costs that are associated with Covid-19 which I have been doing since the beginning. I've been tracking expenses including PPE and supplies, as well as daycare and some of the salaries that went along with that.

Ms. Wager:

We also talked about the possibility of possibly being reimbursed by FEMA for eligible expenses. It's a little bit questionable as to what those eligible expenses are, but that reimbursement rate is at 75%. We'll be looking into that further. I also reviewed with the committee I found from the controller's office a report called Resources to Manage School Distinct Budgeting During the Covid-19 Crisis. This was a little more comprehensive and it made me feel good because a lot what was in this document either we are currently doing, have done, or we do on a regular basis.

Ms. Wager:

It really talked about the importance of monitoring our fund balance, reviewing our reserves, and it even suggested looking at our debt and could we possibly refinance or pay off some of that debt? In December, you will remember that we refinanced some debt then, which provided a savings to us.

Ms. Wager:

We also talked about the possibility of looking at how do we spend our federal money. Possibly we might be able to use some of our federal grant money to provide Covid-19 professional development or additional supplies as needed. Overall, we realized that there is a lot of unknown right now and we are looking at the importance of monitoring those fund balance, the reserves, and most importantly, cash flow. We may face a revenue shortage by the year if we have a state aid cut.

Ms. Wager:

At this point, we're going to wait until we get together again on the 29th as a task force and hear what the other committees have to say. Most important is going to be important that we all realize that there is a cost to every one of these subcommittees, and there's going to be a need to possibly have to prioritize. That is basically a summary to what we did today. Does anyone have any questions?

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Linda. That concludes our committee reports?

Mr. Simons:

Yes. Very good.

Mr. Buono:

Now, just a comment Ms. Skumurski had to step away from the meeting. She was feeling ill, so she is not present any longer at the meeting. Just want to make everyone aware, she is a little under the weather. Moving to the approval of minutes. Any comments, questions, revisions on the minutes for June 10th? Hearing none, and with Michelle absent, she's not here now, so any motion to approve those minutes? Kathleen? Second? Joanne, all those in favor? Approved. Now we'll go to the regular business. The voting report. Anxious to hear about that. Who's delivering that?

Mr. Simons:

That would be Mr. Edson.

Mr. Buono:

Mr. Edson?

Mr. Edson:

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Okay.

Mr. Buono:

Star of the show. I saw you on live stream.

Mr. Edson:

At the start of the process, Superintendent Simons had a challenge for us, and one of the challenges was to have the highest turnout possible. Do you remember what the second one was?

Mr. Simons:

Highest passage rate.

Mr. Edson:

Highest passage rate.

Mr. Simons:

I did say that, didn't I?

Mr. Edson:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

I forgot about that.

Mr. Edson:

Yes. For the highest turnout, we received the blue ribbon. We had 7,300 envelopes that were returned by the June 16th deadline, and that was definitely a record. We found that 7,173 were available and were counted. With regard to the highest passage rate, we did not get the blue ribbon, but we got the red ribbon, the place ribbon, because it was the highest budget percentage in five years. We considered that to be a big victory. We were-

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:24:04]

Mr. Edson:

So we considered that to be a big victory. We were quite excited about the results, which were 5,349 yes. And 1,807 no. That was well over a 3,500 vote margin. The same with the school buses, also passed by a very good margin. And three candidates were elected to the board, Mr. Buono, Ms. Curtin, and Mr. Mann. There were limited write-ins as expected.

Mr. Edson:

We always prepare a voting report for you and it is attached to your agenda where we keep tracking the votes for a 40 year period so that we could be assured where our trends are going. And again, this is the highest turnout that we could find since 1994. We also attract them by voting site, even though we might have had the opportunity to opt out of tracking votes this year by sight, we decided to do it.

Mr. Edson:

So you'll notice that each envelope that voters received on the return envelope, there was a one, two, three or four designating the polling site, and we sorted them and have reported our results that way. And the budget passed not only district-wide, but also in each polling site by good margins. And we had a lot of challenges in the voting process because initially we weren't familiar with the process to account for paper ballots. And so we received a lot of good suggestions from the New York State School Boards Association, our school attorney. We have a lot of support from Mr. Simons, giving us some guidance during the process. We have a lot of help from central office staff to really put together those envelopes when they came in, along with the ballots and get them out within a day and a half. And that was quite an accomplishment.

Mr. Edson:

And then we had a small team of about 10 or so people because we wanted to keep it small due to the COVID-19 concerns, for the vote count. And as we suggested at last meeting, we said it could go into the next day. It was our hope that it wouldn't, but we found that the most difficult part of the process was opening all those envelopes and taking out the ballots. Our accounting procedure we felt was very efficient, but boy opening all those envelopes was a process. And wanted to thank our voting chairperson, who was Maura Przybylek, our District Clerk, Jeanne Pangburn, who fielded a lot of calls about the process, our facilities and maintenance, they put out a drop box in front of central office.

Mr. Edson:

We didn't track how many we received, but I'm estimating about 400 ballots drop off. And we were really pleased at the end because we got some good press during the process. And I had just come up with that idea to do hourly updates, I thought it would be good information. I thought people might be a little bit bored watching us on the live stream with the process. But more people tuned in than I realized and actually texted me or, or emailed me and said, "Oh, I saw you the other night on the live stream." I'm like, "Wow."

Mr. Edson:

And then we continued on the next day at nine o'clock and we were done by about 11:30. We also reported at noontime, we reported the final results. And as usual we prepared a brief voting report for the board. There are so many people to thank, but really those election workers, it was a bit of a tedious process and they really did a great job, probably would have rather gone to the senior driving event, probably was a lot more fun, but we persevered and we're very grateful that our budget passed by a good margin.

Mr. Edson:

We thank the community for great support and hopefully we won't have to do all paper ballot next year. Although we do believe that the governor will possibly look at the turnouts in school elections this year were which were said to be three to five times normal turnouts and think about possibly allowing some sort of paper ballot or absentee ballot rather than just the current reasons in law. So we really think that there's probably more school election reform down the line. And that's all I had. I'd like to ask Mr. Simons, if he has anything to add.

Mr. Simons:

Just wanted to say that Larry and his entire team did an extraordinary job from the time we learned about the requirement, to the last vote being counted, it was a fantastic job Larry. Your organization was so impressive you did a super job.

Mr. Edson:

Thank you.

Mr. Simons:

I had a lot of collaboration with other districts and superintendents, both in Questar but also among the whole area and I can tell you that our process was fraught with a lot fewer problems that other districts experienced and it was because of your organization and dedication to the district.

Mr. Edson:

Well, thank you.

Mr. Simons:

Congratulations.

Mr. Edson:

But we really do appreciate the support that you gave us, which a lot of it was watching and-

Mr. Simons:

Stay out of the way.

Mr. Edson:

... and not a lot of comments but being there when we needed to pass a lot of stuff by you. And as always, we appreciate you meeting and conversing and supporting and motivating the election workers each year at our opening meeting. We had it a week before because we thought the vote might be the next day, but we were ready and we felt we did a good job with the counting for the ballots and envelopes and of course we're extremely excited and pleased with the result. So yes, thank you.

Speaker 4:

Does that mean you're going to come back next year to help?

Mr. Buono:

As an organizer?

Mr. Edson:

To be determined.

Mr. Buono:

I just want to say thank you, Larry and the team began to reiterate our compliments to the team and congratulations to my colleagues, Kathleen and Mark for the reelection. I can't believe it was a tie out of all those votes, but fantastic results. So appreciative of the community and the support that we got for

this budget to help our students and staff and families to deliver high quality education in a difficult time. We recognize everything that people are going through, the difficult circumstances that everyone is in and this community is so strong in supporting its educational needs and its students and families, and just very, very proud to be part of this community. And the ongoing efforts everyone made to be a successful budget. Again, kudos to everyone for that. So much appreciated. Any other comments for Larry at all? And the team.

Ms. Curtin:

Larry, I have to say that I got great feedback out in the community from people that I didn't even know. I went to do early voting and all of the people who were working the polls were from East Greenbush and were saying how much they loved doing it by mail and they're hoping we can do this again. I did mention that it was kind of expensive. I got more people commenting on the vote than I think I ever have. And so definitely I think when the governor looks at this, we can definitely give him some good feedback on, we got a lot of talk and a lot of participation that we hadn't before.

Mr. Buono:

I think part of is that we've spent so much time to look at transparency in this District and informing the community about what's happening. And that really, really is helpful, I think, in this kind of process. We believe in that, we believe in open information and sharing as a testament to the website and financial information, the budget information, and then just district information. So the community can get involved and ask questions and being very informed about what's happening in our District.

Mr. Buono:

I see Jennifer has joined us, I guess her event ended so good to see you, thank you for coming. Any other questions or comments? Board members? No? All right.

Mr. Buono:

Moving on the agenda. We have our approval of programs for resident children with disabilities. Any comments or questions on that? Do I have to accept that report audit Mr. Edson, by the way?

Mr. Edson:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Or was it later on the consent?

Mr. Edson:

No, it's not. You have to accept it.

Mr. Buono:

I have to accept it. So I need a motion to go back to item A, to accept the report. The motion to accept the report.

Mr. Mann:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Mark second. Karen? All those in favor? The report is accepted. Thank you. And then the approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities? Comments, questions? Seeing none, need a motion to approve that. Jennifer second. John? All those in favor? Approved. Reports and presentations with the superintendent?

Mr. Simons:

Nothing further.

Mr. Buono:

Nothing further. Tabled motions, I have none at this time. Old business, none unless the board members have anything? No. So now move to the consent agenda. Very large amount of items here. Are there any questions regarding any of those items A through R? Mr. Dunn? Yes.

Mr. Dunn:

Could we pull item B for a separate vote?

Mr. Buono:

Item B, separate vote.

Mr. Dunn:

Yes sir.

Mr. Mann:

And C.

Mr. Buono:

B and C? Okay. Anything else? Questions or anything that has to be changed or removed? Okay. So we will go with items A through S except items B and C. I need a motion to approve those items. Kathleen, I need a second. Karen. All those in favor? Looks like everybody. All right, so we'll move to item B. I need a motion to approve item B.

Mr. Mann:

I will.

Mr. Buono:

Mark. Second? Deanna. All those in favor? All those abstaining? Mr. Dunn. Approved. Item C need a motion of approval for item C. Kathleen second. Joanne. All those in favor. All those abstaining. Mr. Mann abstaining. It's approved.

Mr. Mann:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Got those counts?

Mr. Edson:

Yup, got them.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, excellent. New business. Board members any new business at all? I do have one item I want to just let the Board know. A lot of schools as the reopening happens and phase four happens, we talked about with Mr. Simon, whether we wanted to start doing a more in-person model that has physical distancing and a larger space or a combination. But I just want to throw that out to the Board to start considering that as we get into July, the summer months and we reopen. We have some larger spaces we could utilize if people are comfortable. So give me some feedback, shoot me an email, but you could use the Genet cafeteria perhaps, and then be spaced out, a lot of room there. And we have some buildings that are large enough I think.

Mr. Buono:

So as people are more comfortable coming back, I think it sets a good tone. Our staff are coming back. We have in-person summer school, I think it behooves the board to think about whether in-person would work for us or at least more people in-person than here and if we have to come remote in with a few folks, we could do that as well. Okay. So just keep that in mind and think about that.

Mr. Buono:

Now, moving to the second public form. Any comments from the public?

Mr. Simons:

We have a comment entitled: Thank you, Larry. And it is from Christine Dushensky who is a elementary teacher at Red Mill, who is extending her appreciation for Mr. Edson. Thank you, Mr. Edson, for all your years of service to our district, we will miss you, smiley face. Sincerely Christine Dushensky Red Mill Elementary School. So we want to thank her for thanking Larry for his years of service.

Mr. Buono:

Very nice.

Mr. Edson:

Thank you, Ms. Dushensky, very nice.

Mr. Buono:

Any others?

Mr. Simons:

Let me just refresh. Nope, just the one.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Very good. Any comments from the administration or anyone who is present? No? We'll move to the Board forum, I guess I'll go in order. Jennifer you're here, so maybe we'll start with you. Okay then.

Ms. Curtin:

Okay. I just want to say goodbye to Karen and to thank her for everything that she's done. She is our longest serving board member and we have all learned from her over the years and thank you very much for everything that she's done for us and for everything she's helped us with.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks Kathleen. Anyone else?

Ms. Curran:

Thank you Kathleen.

Mr. Buono:

I'll take JoAnn.

Ms. Taylor:

I also would like to say goodbye and good luck to all the retirees. Mr. Edson, and a multitude of other staff that's leaving on a very strange year. We thank you for everything you've done for us wish you luck in your retirement. Also to Karen, my right hand side for the past 12 years, the power of positivity that you've put on this Board has been remarkable. You're always humble, quiet, and always looking for the best in everyone. And we will miss you. And we thank you for everything you've done.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you, JoAnn.

Mr. Buono:

Mr. Dunn, did you have something to say?

Mr. Dunn:

Yes, I do. I got a few items. First and foremost, Larry, thank you for your service. When I first met you before I was on the board, it was at Bible study and I really appreciate the words of wisdom. You've stewarded this District in a great direction, and you really helped us in more ways than we can say. So I'm sad to see you leave, but I'm really happy to see you go into the next phase of your life. Good luck and best wishes.

Mr. Dunn:

To the administrative team and everybody that worked on this budget. I think it's something to be very proud of. In this most difficult times, the community came out and supported us and by the voter turnout, it actually gave people an opportunity to see what we do and the transparency that we've really held our hat on for many years. People got to see a firsthand and they supported us. So let's take this opportunity to continue to serve the people in the manner that we do. To all the people that put together the reports tonight, we understand on the Board that this is a very difficult time and it's very

hard to work in some tough conditions with all the data and so much work. The reports were just so informative tonight. So to everybody that was involved in just doing this great work for our children, I thank you personally.

Mr. Dunn:

Saving the best for last, Karen. I really appreciate having the opportunity to work with you on this Board. I've entered a world that I never thought I would be successful in because of my past employment. And it's been a pleasure to meet you and all the other Board members. You brought a great insight and perspective to the Board service. Your patience and kindness has been very inspiring and we're going to miss you deeply. The good news is that we're all friends and hopefully we'll be able to keep in touch and I will be calling you with the historical perspective on some of these issues. So again, thank you. And this weekend spend time with your family and thank them for sharing you with us because we appreciate them too. So thanks everybody and onto the next move, good luck.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you John.

Mr. Buono:

Anyone else? Final comments?

Ms. Curran:

Sorry, Jen, do you want to talk?

Ms. Massey:

No you go ahead, Karen.

Ms. Curran:

All right. I was just going to say thank you all again. And I forgot to mention earlier I do want to thank Jeff and thank Mike Harkin again, and all the students that provided cards and letters to Loudonville Assisted Living, it was so greatly appreciated. They got many, many of cards and pictures from the students and it really brightened their day. So I just wanted to thank them again as well.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Karen. Jennifer?

Ms. Massey:

Thanks Mike. I wanted to first and foremost say hello to Larry as well as we'll see when we see you. I want to recognize the fact that I had a wonderful opportunity for, I don't even know, it's upwards of 15, maybe close to 20 years, getting a chance to know you. You welcomed me into the District. You welcomed me onto the BRAC community and you also said stay involved. And when I came onto the Board, you really helped guide that process and welcomed me with open arms and really allowed me to be on some great committees and do some great work with you. And I'm humbled and honored to have had that experience with you. You have brought a perspective and guidance through the budgetary process and really did some outstanding work here.

Ms. Massey:

You're recognized across the state for your contributions. And many times you are the individual that other districts wish that they had working with them and for them. And also they use many of your work and your output as templates and guidelines for best practices in their districts. And so I just wish you the best Mr. Edson in your retirement. And again, see you when we see you. I will miss you. I'll definitely miss you when we go to conferences, but we can have some chats about that at another time. But I do wish you a wonderful, wonderful retirement.

Ms. Massey:

In reference to Karen. Karen, you welcomed me onto the Board during a very difficult and strange time and helped to teach me the ropes and I will miss you deeply. And I hope we stay connected and at some point are able to have that cup of coffee that we've been talking about having, and now with social distancing, hoping that that will happen sooner rather than later. I will miss your quiet guidance and your input, it's meant the world to me. And again, I'm hoping that we will stay friends and stay connected. So thanks so much. And I hope everybody has a great night.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you Jen.

Mr. Mann:

Mike.

Mr. Buono:

Yes.

Mr. Mann:

So Karen, you were the last one on the Board when I got here. You're it, now you're leaving. Some of those really late meetings, excitable meetings we used to have, but you were always the calming voice in those meetings. So I appreciate it. Good luck. I enjoyed serving with you on the Board. We're going to miss you, feel free to pop into some Board meetings when you're bored.

Mr. Mann:

And Larry, thank you. You've been around just as long, and I appreciate all your help during the years, all the committees that you've guided us through and two people that I call friends are now not going to be around, but keep in touch.

Mr. Edson:

Thank you, Mark.

Ms. Curran:

Thank you, Mark.

Mr. Buono:

I think that was very well said. Mr. Edson, thank you for everything. I'm sure we'll be in touch in another event where we can celebrate our friends and colleagues in a closer way, in a more connected way. So again, thanks for everything.

Mr. Buono:

As far as business, Mr. Simons do you have anything council [crosstalk 01:46:42]?

Mr. Simons:

I do have one more item. I was sworn to confidentiality by the Association of School Business Officials up until Friday afternoon. I want to inform the Board that Mr. Edson for his outstanding service, not only to our District, but for the Association of School Business Officials, which is their statewide organization, the honored Mr. Edson with Philip B Fredenburg Memorial Award, which has given to a business official and a member as well for distinguished service and the distinguished career. Not only in their work with their district as a business official, but also in the number of activities and the leadership that he has shown through as well. So I want to congratulate Mr. Edson, not only on his retirement and all the nice things that everybody has credited you for within our District, but his colleagues across the State recognized him with a distinguished service award at a Friday virtual happy hour last Friday. So congratulations to Mr. Edson.

Mr. Edson:

Thank you everyone. I was astounded by the award and all the good comments and thank you very much. This is kind of funny, but I was actually planning to be here next time, but I think maybe we'll let Linda handle it. So thank you very much.

Mr. Buono:

You're welcome to come though. Yeah. I know that I had the pleasure of being invited to the annual ceremony and I know that that was one of the highest awards and honors that association can give to a colleague and very well deserved. Very well recognized across the state for your leadership and your professionalism and what you've given back to that group is just tremendous. So congratulations again.

Mr. Edson:

Yeah, thank you.

Mr. Buono:

So with that, we do have need for an Executive session. A brief one, I believe.

Mr. Simons:

Might not be.

Mr. Buono:

May not be brief, okay. I stand corrected. [crosstalk 01:48:43] to sleep. But we'll have about a 10 minute break to have Peter email the link and we'll need all the administrations as well?

Mr. Simons:

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Jim McHugh, Mr. McHugh is not needed at the meeting. Okay. I will need Ms. Cannon and Mr. Edson initially, then I will just need Ms. Cannon. I believe.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Very good. All right everybody, so administration have a of good night, thank you for everything. And then Board members look for that other email and we'll come back in on the executive session.

Female:

Night everybody.

Mr. Simons:

Good night.

Mr. Buono:

Good night.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:50:20]