

**Transcript of Board of Education Meeting
August 19, 2020**

Mr. Buono:

Call the meeting to order, it is 7:00 p.m. For attendance Ms. Muth will not be here and Ms. Massey will be joining us shortly. With that please join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone:

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:

There is no Student Council tonight so we will move on to the public forum.

Mr. Buono:

Residents, students, employees, and business representatives of the East Greenbush Central School District may address the Board on matters concerning programs and/or operations of the District, other than matters involving personnel. Members of the Board do not directly respond to citizen concerns during the Public Forum. If a response is appropriate either the President or Superintendent will contact the individual in the near future. Those persons wishing to address the Board will be recognized by the chair of the meeting and should state for the record their name and address, or affiliation with the District or business. While the Board does not wish to infringe upon free speech protections, it must be stressed that the "Visitors' Forum" is not deemed to be an "open forum". The Board president will conduct the forum for the orderly and efficient operation of Board business. In addition, any remarks which may be considered defamatory or stigmatizing are prohibited and will be declared out of order. So with that we will monitor our public email forum.

Mr. Simons:

From what I've heard, that's a great attendance, so at the end of the review of the public comments, so we appreciate Ms. Wager doing that.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Linda.

Mr. Simons:

The District has now held three forums, this would be the fourth forum, to address questions and concerns that may exist among parents and our community regarding school reopening plan. During last evening's forum, we did engage members of our administrative team and several members of the public and the discussion was broke down by elementary, middle school and high school, so that we can delineate more of our responses specifically to those particular levels. The District is continuing to encourage everyone within the community to read the plan and the subsequent plans that were posted on the website.

Mr. Simons:

There is the preliminary reopening plan, which I'm going to ask the Board to approve this evening. There are also specific elements of the plan that we are required by the State to separate out and make sure that the public had an opportunity to review. Those specific plans included the full remote learning plan, as well as the district's plan to work with the school and Rensselaer County to ensure that we had a plan for testing any students suspected of having COVID-19 and any contact tracing that would need to be done.

Mr. Simons:

So all of those plans are on our website, along with a frequently asked questions document, which has been updated after every public session. We have not updated it as of last evening. We are still working on that right now. So many of the questions that people may have or asked last night, there's a general sense that some of the people that were at the forum last night had not been at previous forums, because some of the questions were posted, were answered on the FAQ. So we're encouraging people to look at that FAQ document.

Mr. Simons:

In addition to tonight's fourth community forum, we will be having faculty and staff meetings starting tomorrow. And those faculty and staff meetings will include the high school with a separate meeting, the elementaries coming together for combined meeting, and the middle school. I think there's also one of the meetings on Friday. So over the next two days there will be a meeting at each level with our faculty and staff.

Mr. Simons:

We are working to schedule separate meetings for our transportation department, our food service department together with our maintenance department. I think we're looking for next Tuesday or Wednesday to have those meetings and discussions. We've established a dedicated email, which the Governor wanted, dedicated email, and we do have a dedicated email, not the email that people are sending tonight, but one that's permanently set up for specific reopening questions. People can always email me or the number of people that will have that email and me. I only got a few of them after last night's meeting, generally positive, or specific to some thoughts on the childcare issue.

Mr. Simons:

We're doing everything we can to make sure that the community is informed. Sometimes we get a question that causes us to go back and refine our plans, and we've had that happen, and that's a good thing. If there are unique situations regarding individual children or specific questions that relate to an individual concern regarding a child, those questions are best addressed by contacting your child's respective building principal, who've been very responsive to the emails.

Mr. Simons:

Okay? So without further ado, we'll open it up for public comment.

Mr. Buono:

Linda, do we have any public comments at this time?

Ms. Wager:

We have two questions so far. The first is from a parent of a seventh grader, who would like to know why was the decision made to have students change classes versus the teachers changing rooms.

Mr. Simons:

At both the middle school and the high school level we are having students change classes because it was really the only way to offer all of the courses that we currently offer. The guidance indicates, where feasible, we should try to limit mixing of groups of students. We made a determination that this whole complement of middle school courses and high school courses, including electives AP courses, should be offered, because we were doing a hybrid from the beginning.

Mr. Simons:

The desks will be cleaned in between classes. As I said last evening, there are discussions that we have to have as a school district with our employee groups about how that will be done. For example, the CSEA union represents our custodian and maintenance employees, and Teachers represent our teachers, counselors and social workers. SRP, school-related personnel, represents aides and clerical employees and computer technicians and other groups of employees. So given some of the shifts that we're making in what we normally would do, and given the cleaning requirements, each of those respective bargaining units could be in place could be impacted by whatever procedures we develop, so we are making sure that those procedures are understood by everybody, who's going to do it, when they're going to do it, and how it's going to be done.

Mr. Simons:

We're still having those discussions. We'll be cleaning the desks in between groups. We have products that kill COVID-19. We've identified two products, one that we use all the time and a different product that may kill it quicker, and we're ordering the supplies and materials to make it happen. But we have to sort out the issues regarding our bargaining units before we can finalize the procedures.

Mr. Buono:

I think, too, we want to offer as many educational opportunities for our students in terms of classes and things like that, so having the students move, that mixes are possible.

Mr. Simons:

We are limiting the ways that they can move. Ms. Barker did a very good job last night of explaining what they're doing at the middle school. They're staggering dismissal of the students, so even though the class on in person days would be reduced by about 50% and some classes will be less than that because of the way the scheduling works, and it won't work out even, because kids take different classes, but half the class would be dismissed first, have an opportunity to transition to their next classroom, and then it would be stayed and the next group would come out. So that will enable the social distancing to occur as the kids are leaving the classroom.

Mr. Simons:

There are directional arrows that have been put certain corridors of the schools, stairwells that have been identified as these are only the up stairwells and these are the down stairwells, so people are walking, kids are transitioning differently than they normally would.

Mr. Simons:

It's also important to remember that our schools will not be having crowded hallways, because everyone has seen that image of the school in Georgia. We're going to have half the kids in the building on those days, and so that will not be the image of how we're going about things.

Ms. Wager:

And then a parent has a concern that if high school students will only have two days of direct instruction per week, this parent is concerned that students will not be ready for Regents exams.

Mr. Simons:

Well, we're really having three days of direct instruction, because they're going to have their A-B days two days a week, and then they're going to have virtual live instruction on Wednesday, in which students will follow a period by period schedule and receive all of their courses. Additionally, the curriculum pacing that the teachers will do will be completely in line for preparing kids for the Regents exams, and the assignments and projects that they give on remote days will be supported by the in-person instruction that they give and also aligned with the Regents preparation. So different from last year where the Regents were suspended. The Regents exams are still in place, and the model of curriculum delivery is being put together in such a fashion that in-person instruction supports the assignments, the virtual live instruction, it all works together. At the high school level, the teachers will still follow curriculum that is aligned with the Regents.

Mr. Simons:

Mr. McHugh, anything to add on that?

Mr. McHugh:

No, you've covered it very thoroughly. It's the lesson design, so it's still standards-based instruction. It's the same curriculum. It's just the delivery of that instruction is changed. So it's really maximizing that in-person time and making sure that when students are remote, that they are engaged in productive standards-aligned work at home. That's the application part, of where you're delivering the content, and you're modeling, and you're supporting with guided practice, and then that independent remote time students are actually applying that skill.

Mr. Buono:

There's one more that just came in. Is there any chance that kindergartners will be able to go more than just two days a week? I don't know how the kids will learn only being in classrooms two days a week.

Mr. Simons:

There is no chance of that currently as we open up in September. As we move into the year and we monitor what is happening within the region, there is a chance that we could increase in person learning. I think the State will have to play a role in enabling districts to do that. The guidance may need to be looked at the State level.

Mr. Simons:

We also anticipate that there could be some shifting of students who may feel that remote families may feel that remote is a better option, so those two things working together could potentially indicate that we could accommodate more children. In the event that we could, we certainly would prioritize what

grade levels that occurred in, and I would have a strong view that our kindergartens and our first graders should be first consideration.

Mr. Buono:

Do you have a sense of the numbers who will go for the full remote option?

Mr. Simons:

As of about 5:30 this afternoon when I checked in with Mark Adam, I will-

Mr. Buono:

The deadline is Friday?

Mr. Simons:

The deadline's Friday. I believe there's about 23% for the full remote option and 77% for the hybrid at this time, and approximately 2300 responses to the enrollment form. So we still have a number of families that haven't responded. Mr. McHugh made a good observation before we started this meeting. When we get all the responses in, it's likely that that percentage of remote may come down, because people haven't responded yet.

Mr. Buono:

So the assumption is that if you haven't responded, the conclusion is you're in-person.

Mr. Simons:

Right, the assumption is that if you don't respond, we'll schedule in for your AB, the AB classes.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, sounds good. Anything else come in, Linda?

Ms. Wager:

One more.

Mr. Buono:

One more came in? Okay. We've got time.

Mrs. Wager:

Besides prioritizing for families, how will the groupings be done, specifically at the high school level? There are rumors that it'll be done either alphabetical or based on where you live.

Mr. Simons:

Neither one of those are completely... The one about where you live is completely not true. At the high school, it is a difficult task. We had a meeting with our administrators yesterday to check in and see how that process is going. It's based on course requests and enrollment numbers that need to be maintained within each of those courses to practice the social distancing, so it doesn't line up in a way that you could do it strictly by alphabetical order.

Mr. Simons:

In addition to the courses, the needs of the students, so if a student is receiving a special education support class of some kind, that has to go into factoring that in. It's not a sequential process. The Principals have to keep going back and forth and saying, "Okay, I've got this child, courses that they need, but yet I need to figure out how to get another course for this other child," so it's kind of a back and forth type of process. So there's no linear way to do it. There are probably 10 different filters that they have to run it through to figure out the right mix to come up with about even in the classes.

Mr. Simons:

It's a tough thing to do. I'll defer to Mr. Harkin, if wants to add anything, but it's really ... At the middle school, I was, the classes they need, some courses that are required, trying to make sure that the classes are fairly balanced with the staff that we have that's certified in those areas.

Mr. Buono:

Microphone. No microphones?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah.

Mr. Harkin:

Yes, Mr. Simons, you're correct. We have to look into filter out the single [inaudible 00:15:08] classes that we offer, especially special ed, but also our higher level classes. Laboratory may split a class, but then we have the 15 kids one day and then 38 kids the other day for our Labs B classes. So there's about 10 different variables, knock on wood, and then towards the end of it there'll be the transportation. We can't have too many on the bus, so there's a lot of factors that are in play when we try to do that. Like you said, right, at this point now we're going back and forth moving kids. Just because you move one kid out of science class to get that worked out, then maybe a math class goes back above the limit. It's just kind of like a game of checkers that we're playing right now, going back and forth.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Mr. Harkin. And that process will probably continue-

Mr. Simons:

Probably till next Friday.

Mr. Buono:

Next Friday.

Mr. Simons:

We're hoping to release those schedules in draft forms, where parents can take a look at them. If they see something's missing, they can let us know by the 28th.

Mr. Buono:

Again, we want to reiterate that the number of electives and courses that we offer at the high school, we want to begin to continue to offer an extensive amount of opportunities for our students, and that means we have to do those kinds of shifts to keep the class numbers down, but also fill the class appropriately and make shifts. It's like a whack-a-mole kind of situation, adjusting these things.

Mr. Simons:

That's a good metaphor, Mr. Buono.

Mr. Buono:

Until we get those accurate enough to send in, schedules are a whack-a-mole process. It's a complicated process, and I think that ... And then there's also the schedules come out, and then there's things after that, right? So we'll do our best.

Mr. Simons:

The elementary process was a lot easier, to be honest with you. It's a straight grade level.

Mr. Buono:

So once those schedules are ...

Mr. Buono:

... put together, then generally speaking, after that, we'll see how things are going, and it may not be a pure alpha. You know, we have other considerations we have to put in place first. Good question. I know I get it for my daughter all the time.

Mr. Simons:

Anything else?

Mr. Buono:

Yes. There is a question, and I think you want to-

Mr. Buono:

Before you ... And this is part of the public comment. People are supposed to identify themselves and where they live. Are they doing that?

Ms. Wager:

They are identifying themselves.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, could you do that too? Because they're supposed to meet .. In a public forum typically, just so people know in the stream that they are asked to identify themselves and their relationship with the District, where they're from. Okay, thank you.

Ms. Wager:

This question is from Leo Perez. This person has read the current Frequently Asked Questions from the website and realize that this has been addressed, but wondering if it could be reconsidered. A family started out in the in-person hybrid plan and became uncomfortable with it, could they changed their plan?

Mr. Simons:

I would say, and I said this to the administrators the other day, the 10 week commitment is a general commitment to enable the District to be able to accommodate a shift from someone who is assigned to remote to in-person. If it were a shift from in-person to remote, I think we would consider it if they contacted the principal, and we would take it under consideration. I think that would be an easier shift once we have that full remote in place to accommodate. And we've always been flexible and encourage the parents to talk with principals about individual situations. So if you make a commitment to the full remote program, it maybe harder to assimilate children back into the hybrid model before the 10 week period, but the opposite way we might be able to work something out.

Mr. Buono:

Would that change the student's schedule, perhaps?

Mr. Simons:

There is a possibility that in doing that, teachers would change, the courses would change.

Mr. Buono:

That's something a parent has to keep in mind if they're considering that, because because we're going to try to build a structure for our students as they come in and work through a process of getting them comfortable returning to school, and I think to have someone enter two or three weeks into the school would be challenging, but again, in reverse, maybe we will go, but it could have an impact on the child's schedule.

Ms. Wager:

If I can't tell who is sending this, do you want me to read these questions? I don't have the name and address.

Mr. Buono:

You don't have a name. Is it an appropriate question?

Mr. Buono:

Yes. How will the special ed classes work for full remote students for those within IEP that have co-teaching services?

Mr. Simons:

Okay, I know that Ms. McGrath is working on this. I know that she doesn't have everything arranged as of this point. Ms. McGrath, are you out there?

Ms. McGrath:

I am. I'm in my ... Can you hear me?

Mr. Simons:

You need the volume to come up just a little bit, but we are, we are talking about how the scheduling of co-teaching would occur for students that are on full remote. And we know that it is a challenge based on this questions we've just had this week.

Ms. McGrath:

Right. So right now we're still waiting to see how many take per class the full remote option by grade level with their IEP consideration. At this point, does the question refer to a grade level?

Ms. Wager:

No, it doesn't.

Ms. McGrath:

Okay, so when a K-5 class [inaudible 00:20:55], like you said, they'd be in a remote class and followed by their case manager, their interactions during the day, and we're working it out right now to see how the numbers fall.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you, Ms. McGrath. If I call on anybody who's participating remotely, would a microphone, put a microphone up to the speaker work?

Mr. Goodwin:

Yeah, let me try that.

Mr. Simons:

The old fashioned way.

Mr. Goodwin:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

I think if the parent wants to contact Ms. McGrath, that question as well in their office, that may be a better opportunity for them to get into the specifics of their child, and then address the question more accurately for them. It's hard given that we're still collecting some of the information to address specific information grade level, like Molly said, in the circumstances, so I would encourage that person to reach out to the special ed director, Ms. McGrath.

Ms. McGrath:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

This same parent is asking how will ensembles work for full remote students, orchestra, band, et cetera.

Mr. Simons:

The music department, phys-ed department, art department, library media specialists were working this week on coordination of their plan to deliver their programs. And there is information that is soon to be up on our website. Actually, Mr. McHugh is going to report on that a little bit tonight, but we'll ask him to talk about it a little bit right now. There are lots of things occurring in terms of discussions of music, how music will be delivered. It could be done safely. We think we've figured it out and how that music will be delivered virtually versus in person versus full remote. There will be some differences and restrictions on what we normally would be able to do. Mr. McHugh?

Mr. McHugh:

Sure.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:23:04]

Mr. McHugh:

Thank you.

Mr. McHugh:

Sure. So our music department met this week just to really articulate exactly what that structure would look like. There are some technology platforms that will help us quite a bit, one being Soundtrack. But specifically I believe the question was more towards the high school band and orchestra. So for fully remote instruction, using composition activities, using Noteflight will be utilized, active listening assignments, audio-video recordings of student work, sight-reading factory assignments, participation in recorded Zoom and Google Meet lessons. And provide virtual instruction, they will use Zoom and Google Meets use for small virtual ensembles and small lesson groups.

Ms. Wager:

Mr. Simons?, Melissa Carbonaro would like to know if school books and materials will be provided for fully-home students.

Mr. Simons:

Yes, any materials that would be needed will be provided by the school, including textbooks where utilized. There'll be a lot of curriculum materials posted through the Google Classroom and available electronically. But yes, in all cases the materials that would be necessary for the students to learn will be provided through the remote.

Ms. Wager:

This has been addressed, but Lisa Lankevac has just signed on. She'd like to know how many students so far have chosen full remote, and when will we receive confirmation that we are on full remote list, after we have chosen it on the survey?

Mr. Simons:

The number of students K-12 is about 500 right now for full remote. I checked it at about 5:30 this evening, approximately 22% of those families have responded. That's distributed across K-12. What was the second part of the question?

Ms. Wager:

I'm sorry, I have to go back to it. When will she be notified after she has completed the survey?

Mr. Simons:

Okay. If it's a request for a full remote program, those parents of those students would be notified approximately September 2nd. The assignment of the AB groupings will be notified on the 28th of August.

Mr. Buono:

August.

Mr. Simons:

August. I said that again. No I did that in my update and I don't know why I'm saying April. April 28th must be something.

Mr. Simons:

August. We're not going back to April. I don't know why I'm doing that, sorry.

Ms. McGrath:

We have confirmed you're on the list.

Mr. Buono:

That's all for the questions right now.

Mr. Simons:

Okay. Okay, great.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Linda. Appreciate that. I also appreciate the community participating in the board meeting and the committee forum to ask the questions and refer to FAQ if you do have a question before sending it out. And then there is a second public forum as part, for those of you who don't come for our meetings, there's a second public forum. So if you have questions, we'll go back and later in the meeting, the second public forum to address any other questions that do come in.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, great. Moving on. We have a very positive thing we want to do tonight in recognizing our high school and our Red Mill Elementary School as Recognition Schools].

Mr. Simons:

We're very proud to the recognizing two of our schools who have received statewide recognition and the principals of both of those schools are here. The New York State Education Department looks at student performance and improvement in student performance in all of its schools. And it's a small number of schools that are classified in New York State as Recognition Schools. A recognition school is a school that is not only achieving high standards based on State assessments, Regents exams in the case

of the high school, but is also making improvements overall on a stable basis. Part of that improvement measure is closing the gap between all of our students and some of our student groups such as our economically disadvantaged students and our students with disabilities.

Mr. Simons:

So to have two schools in one district recognized is remarkable. Additionally, Columbia High School has been recognized twice as a Recognition School and once as a Reward School. So these indicators, along with the most recently released State rankings has shown that East Greenbush Central School District is one of the top performing districts among 87 districts in the Capital Region. I think we're ranked to eighth or ninth.

Mr. McHugh:

Eighth, I believe.

Mr. Simons:

Eighth. So I'm pleased to have received from the State Education Department certificates of recognition for both Red Mill School and Columbia High School. And I'm going to ask the principals to come up in just a minute, but I'm going to put my mask on first.

Mr. Simons:

And from the State University of New York Education Department, the celebration of New York State schools that have high academic achievement, high growth and graduation rates, and have made progress during the 2018-19 school year, your school is considered a school of the station as a Recognition School. And this certificate acknowledges the achievement of Red Mill Elementary School as a New York State Recognition School. And I would like to congratulate all of the staff at Red Mill. And particularly our Principal Mrs. Squillace will come up now and receive the certificate from the State Education Department.

Mr. Simons:

Mr. Harkin is the Principal at Columbia High School and he's here with us this evening. And Columbia High School is one of the best high schools in the country and recognized in New York State as one of the best high schools in our state. And again Columbia High School is recognized for high academic achievement, growth and graduation rate, performance during the 2018-19 school year. This designation is a recognition of the excellence that Columbia High School provides to its students and the reflection on the quality of the instruction and support provided by all the faculty and staff at Columbia High School. So congratulations, on behalf of Shannon Tahoe, our Interim Commissioner, and the State Education Department. Mr. Harkin for in recognition of the school, once again.

Mr. Buono:

Extremely proud of all our students and staff for the accomplishments that they have. And in particular at the high school and Red Mill. All of our elementary schools or middle schools are some of the best schools in the State and in the region. So as a Board, we support high academic achievements, it's one of our primary goals here in the district. And it's one of the things too, that we considered as being developed our reopening plan. It's so important for us, as a board, to support our students' families in their academic achievement goals with the kindergarten through 12th grade and beyond. So it's a

recognition and I'm really pleased to be part of this district and it's education program. And I'll put Mr. McHugh on the spot about our graduation rate last year.

Mr. McHugh:

Where we're at, Mr. Harkin?

Mr. Harkin:

97%, but we expect it to go up. We build our stakes on that list.

Mr. Buono:

Wow. 97% graduation rate and looking at the data, because we think it's higher. Awesome. Terrific. Thank you, Mr. Harkin. Awesome job.

Mr. Buono:

So with that, we will move to our Board forum. Peter can you bring up some of the folks in the virtual world, or especially Mr. Dunn and Ms. Skumurski? Is that possible? Or we have some issues?

Mr. Goodwin:

We're having a problem with grid view.

Mr. Buono:

Grid view is a little off, it sounds like tonight.

New Speaker:

What's that?

Mr. Buono:

Jennifer Massey is on also.

Mr. Buono:

Jennifer Massey is on as well. Okay. Do we have a time when she came in from the Board record at all?

Mrs. Wager:

7:03.

Mr. Buono:

7:03, okay. Welcome, Jennifer. Sorry, I didn't know you came. So we'll start with the Board members here that are present in the library. We'll all go around and start my left with Mr. Mann? Mr. Mann is good. Kathleen? She's good. Ms. Taylor always has something to add.

Ms. Taylor:

Just say congratulations to Red Mill and Columbia on their recognition. And I just want to point out that we have to bear in mind that Columbia is fed by five great elementary schools and middle schools. So there's the product of our work and great job to the staff and to the community.

Mr. Buono:

Just to summarize. I know you heard Ms. Taylor because it is on microphone but she said wonderful things about the schools and the staff and great comments.

Mr. Buono:

We'll go out to, we'll start with Mr. Dunn. Can you hear me, John? Okay, then you're good? All right. Ms. Massey, how are you? Anything? You're good. And Ms. Skumurski? She's thumbs up. Good. Okay. And again, I just want to congratulate the staff on the recognition. Just a comment about the committee forums. I appreciate all the support, we've gotten 2-300 using PERFORM, the thought exchange process. I thought it went very well.

Mr. Buono:

We've shifted some things, answered questions, refined our questions, refined our processes. You know, one of the reasons that the Board approved the change in the schedule for start time is to allow for things, because we know things are going to shift. New comes out every day, aid issues, things came out today. So the Governor really made the announcements on a regular basis, impacts the planning we do, the financial picture for our District and districts across the state. And we have to react to those rather quickly, knowing the fact that we are going to have students both in person and remote starting in a few weeks. So it's really coming down to crunch time. But again, things continue to shift.

Mr. Buono:

Please continue to ask questions. Review information, that is on our reopening plan. And we hope that we can make this work for everyone across the District as best we can. Anything else?

Mr. Simons:

I would like to talk about the information that we received today regarding State Aid payments. The District, at the time that we approved our budget, just grew by about 75% of our voters. We made sure that we've informed everyone that we could anticipate a 20% reduction in our Foundation Aid. The Board put forth a conservative budget that was well within the tax cap, but understood that the expenses related to COVID-19 and reopening were unknown at the time.

Mr. Simons:

We also put forth a budget to the community, as the United States Congress, House of Representatives, and the Senate were talking about possibly providing federal monies to help states impacted by COVID. The districts were informed today at a meeting which invited numbers to request our policy, State Aid planning to come and explain what could be happening come September. The decision has been made by the State to begin the process of reducing State Aid payments to the district by 20%. So we should anticipate that our State Aid payment that is scheduled to come in September, would be about 20% less than what it otherwise would be. And that is based on formulas regarding our expenses from prior years.

Mr. Simons:

So without federal action or some kind of change in the State level, we have to be very careful and deliberate how it will forward. Our District, thanks to this Board, prior Boards, Mr. Edson who's a retired business official, Linda Wager who is our current business official, and everyone is a fiscally cautious and

fiscally stable District. And in being fiscally stable, our Board had the good sense to set aside monies and reserves, and to ensure that there is sufficient fund balance within the District to maintain adequate cash flow at times, such as these. That does not mean that we are out of the woods or that we can sustain the complete 20% cut in our aid.

Mr. Simons:

After receiving the news today, I spoke to Mrs. Wager, our business official, and we have verified that at this point, we should not anticipate any cash flow issues. And we want to be cautious about not overreacting to today's news. As we reopened our schools, we believe that we will be able to reopen under the current hybrid plan. We believe that we'll be able to successfully sustain some of the expenses associated with reopening, and we'll have to monitor what happens in the first semester.

Mr. Simons:

What happens financially for the District within the first semester could affect what we're able to do in the second semester. Some districts received the news today, and due to their own individual circumstances, they may have to change their reopening plans. I am not recommending that we do that. The districts that are most seriously impacted by the State Aid cuts are those that rely on State Aid more than they do the local tax bodies.

Mr. Simons:

So your rural school districts, your city districts like Troy, their budgets are built counting on that State Aid, where our budgets are built on cutting on that state, but not as much as the percentage. We have districts in our area where 80-90% of the revenue to support their kids comes from State Aid. We don't know what they're going to do. But at this point, due to the good long-range planning that's been done in years past by our Board and our administration, we are not going to take any type of significant and or drastic action until we see what comes out of this.

Mr. Simons:

There is some sense that things could change in regarding federal support as we roll closer to the election or after the election, we don't know that to be true. The State revenues are down and the State told us this was coming. But at this point, we want to be cautious about not over-responding to it. And Linda has taken steps today to make sure that our revenue projections are adjustable to assume that most State Aid payments will be reduced and doing a cash flow analysis. Linda, you want to comment on those reports involving that?

Ms. Wager:

Sure. I am preparing a cash flow statement. And basically I'm going to take all of the State Aid payments that have statutory due dates and reduce those by 20%. So that will give us an idea of when we will run into issues and so that we can properly address them. But basically the cash flow statement will show cash estimated to come in by month. And I will be updating it monthly so that the projected amounts will become actual, and it will carry forward. So we'll have cash, the revenues coming in, any expenditure's going out. Our main expenditures being payroll and debt service payments, those types of items are scheduled. And the main revenue coming in is our State Aid and our taxes. So both of those items, we'll be watching closely.

Mr. Buono:

Just a quick question, Linda. What are some of the biggest areas around State Aid? Transportation, Building Aid, Textbook Aid?

Ms. Wager:

The main area, as a matter of fact, I spoke to State Aid planners today and I was reading up on the items that they're looking to cut, our main aid categories that we're watching are our General Foundation Aid and our Excess Cost Aid payments and possibly Building Aid. Now the Excess Cost Aid payment that we had recorded as of June 30th, we received the ACH payment on that, and that was already cut 20%. So it was \$176,000 less than we expected.

Mr. Simons:

The Excess Cost Aid and the Transportation Aid. Excess Cost Aid is for some students who receive special education towards the services that we provide are expensive and eligible for reimbursement specifications. Students often receive smaller classes, supporting teaching assistants, we made them services. The difficulty with this particular category is we've already provided that service last year under a rule that would reimburse us at a certain amount for that service, so the expense has already been incurred, but the revenue isn't following based on what we projected.

Mr. Simons:

Transportation aid is reimbursed across the State for our Districts' operation of their buses. There is some effect of the March through June closure on our overall Transportation Aid, but there's also been a cut projected. So those are big categories of aid.

Mr. Simons:

Building Aid, when we go out to the voters, we're required to share with the voters the check and share of the building project that the State would pay. Historically, Building Aid has not been reduced when it's been discussed to be reduced. It's been reserved. The Building Aid payments schedule, however, could be adjusted to give us less and spread it out over time.

Mr. Simons:

So we're really not sure whether these reductions of payments would be made up at some point or whether they represent an overall reduction of 20%, or a slowing of the payments. But you have to be cautious to plan that it is a 20% cut.

Mr. Buono:

Well, into our experience with the acclimation has been, the State doesn't really make up their payments pretty well. Let's keep our fingers crossed. But I appreciate seeing that information, Linda, and sharing with the Board. I think you really helped the impact. Thanks for the update, Mr. Simons. Any questions on that, Board members?

Mr. Buono:

We'll now move to discussion items. I don't have anything. Board members? Or anything that was not scheduled? Then if nothing there, we will go to Committee reports and we'll start with Marissa.

Ms. Cannon:

Each year the school districts in the State of New York need to file with the State Education Department, the School Safety and Educational Climate Summary data form. The as SSEC is part of SED's implementation of DASA and VADIR, regarding violent or disruptive incidents and harassment and bullying. During the 2019-2020 school year, we had a total of 22 incidents reported across all school districts. This-

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:46:04]

Ms. Cannon:

Reporting across all school districts. This is down from the 48 incidents that were reported in the 2018 - 2019 school year. Reasonably, we can conclude that the decreased amount of incidents was largely due to the shortage in person school year with remote learning commencing in March. Just to go over a breakdown, there are several categories that the SSCC for collects on, one being assault physical injury. This year, there were a total of four incidents in that category. One was at DPS, three were at Columbia High School. We had one incident of a weapons possession. It was at DPS and it involved a knife. We had a total of eight incidents of discrimination, harassment, and bullying, excluding cyber bullying, three of these incidents were at Goff and five were at Columbia High School. And then we had two counts of cyber bullying, those were at Columbia High School. One incident of false alarm at Columbia, and then the use, possession or sale of drugs we had six incidents at Columbia High School. There were no use, possession or sale of alcohol this year. So again, a total of 22 counts of incidents. And this is down the 48 incidents from the previous school year.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Marissa. Any questions for Marissa?

Mr. Buono:

I'm seeing none, we will move on to the next person. Linda? Anything from you?.

Ms. Wager:

I have nothing at this time.

Mr. Buono:

Mr McHugh.

Mr. McHugh:

Just a brief update on the work that has taken place over the last week or so regarding the Eastern or Central school district virtual plan. We had a total of 32 teachers that work to really articulate what the expectations are. Just to highlight a few of those points for K5 teachers define what the remote expectations were in regards to the duration of time that students should be working on remote days for the grade's, kindergarten through seventh grade, 45 to 60 minutes of independent asynchronous learning. Asynchronous means that it's flexible in time, when students engage in that work. Once you get into grades three through five, that expectation was 60 to 90 minutes of independent work. For a wide virtual instruction, something that our teachers recognize right away was that we serve population that has a diverse diversity and their needs and regards to their ability to support their child at home and worry are cognizant of developmental appropriateness.

Mr. McHugh:

So in regards to attending live instruction, our teachers made sure that part of that plan is that some of those lessons will be recorded so that families and students can access that assigned work. So in other words, there's the framework that we created, if it does not work for a parent and the child cannot log on it at that time since nine to 11 o'clock that those lessons would be accessible for parents at a later time. Just to give me an example for kindergarten through second grade of sample framework for a virtual instruction, that would be that there would be a morning core content instruction, approximately 120 minutes. There would be approximately 60 minutes allowed for that lunch and recess. There will be office hours for families to reach out to the child's teacher, providing that. And then there's an afternoon core content structured, which is 70 minutes of variation.

Mr. McHugh:

And then, again, so office hours you have for the core content structure. We talked about that, that's five instruction, including the whole and small group, independent learning. So we said there's 120 minutes in the morning that 120 minutes could be utilized for a whole group. It could be utilized for small group and it could be utilized for some independent learning. It's also possible that a child will also have their special schedule during that time. So they may have art, music, library, education during that time. And that instruction will also be provided during live virtual office hours. We really define that as the classroom futures available to offer additional support and answer your questions about assignments or expectations. So if a parent has a question, our teachers each will have a set, a 30 minute block where they will have office hours, the three, five settler their level of life for our morning routine, just so that we try to make that academic day as normal as possible, the morning routine would allow students to check into their classroom, complete readiness class.

Mr. McHugh:

And then again, a core content instructional block in the am, as well as one in the afternoon. And then again, office hours for parents to be able to connect with their child's teacher. For those students that are choosing the full revolt option, that core content instruction would be able to land of synchronous and asynchronous synchronous, meaning that it's live, it's more rigid in its design, but it is interactive. So students and teacher interacted at answering and ask questions with also a blend of asynchronous opportunities where teachers could, or where students could access additional resources and lessons and projects. A few other things in regards to spread six through eight, we are trying to determine what that bell schedule will be for the duration of the periods of the schedule. But in general, teachers are following their instructional schedules. Students will follow their academic schedules. Attendance will be delayed, period, by period. For physical education, we're going to maximize the opportunity to be outside this early fall.

Mr. McHugh:

So whenever it is possible, classes will be outside. For our grades six through 12, we are not going to have students change. We do not want that time in the locker room, in a confined space. So students are going to immediately go outside for the physical education and engage in a variety of activities that are developmentally appropriate. We'll list those samples, we'll get this on our websiteso people can see it with greater detail. In regards to general music, our Gate via posts are going to use a new platform called Music Plays it's an online program both in full, remote, as well as live virtual instruction. Once we get up into fifth grade band and orchestra, teacher guided instruction and using essential elements,

that's an online program and there will be an opportunity for students to engage with small virtual ensembles and less in groups on those virtual instruction.

Mr. McHugh:

That's a benefit of having that live virtual day because of things we may not be able to facilitate in person time. So, that live virtual date lends itself to those types of activities. We talked about our upper grades in music, just a couple of things in regards to art, still going to remain skill-based instruction, the near and State standards are basic instruction teacher and or student led. We're going to continue to design those lessons so that they're hands on experience. Our teachers were very thoughtful and mindful with regards to distribution of materials and creating actual art case for students so, or minimizing the times and the instances, the likelihood that students have to share resources. So we're trying to make sure that if we can prepare those art kits for students, so they have their own materials that would be needed for their classes. One other highlight that I just want to mention that really shows the depth of thought put into this was in the library.

Mr. McHugh:

So the K-5 in person and virtual, they're going to focus on standards based instruction, priority concepts of library, introduction, Follett introduction. That's the new platform that the Board approved over a year ago and database use and inquiry literature appreciation digital citizenship. On remote days there'll be some choice Boards by virtue of most learning activities that students could select from. But what I do want to highlight is a really articulated what this circulation plan would be. So the expectation for students to use hand sanitizer before and after you're browsing, maintaining social distancing from others, returning books that had been handled, but not checked out to a designated cart. So those are materials won't go right back at the shelf. Library books. Students will have the ability to still browse while burning the first time students and teachers will be instructed on how to browse and request books through Follett Destiny, so they don't have to go right to the shelves, but they'll be able to use that platform.

Mr. McHugh:

And then when processing return library books, the book return bins are going to be set up for each day of the week, the return bins will be added to your daily quarantine bin. And those posts will be stored for one week, sanitized and then reshelved for circulation after that one week period. So folks covered all of the bases with that. Any questions?

Mr. McHugh:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Can I thank the staff that came in to work on this.

Mr. McHugh:

Yes, we will get it posted up as soon as possible.

Mr. Buono:

I just wanted to get a sense about the engagement of our teachers, you said some really great things about engagement in the activity, in their positive energy that you felt with that group.

Mr. McHugh:

Great experience.

Mr. Buono:

Great experiences you said yourself, everyone's looking forward to coming back. I think clearly there's a plan in place. The more details you can share with the parents, it gives them a comfort level and support them. Thank you. Any other questions for Jim?

Mr. Buono:

All right, moving to the next thing I would say, as we distributed to the Board members before the meeting, the updated committee report that we provide you that has the list of the committees. And I know that Stephanie sent your assignments earlier, the first page first or second page, which has to be in fact, presented. Those will be reviewed in the first meetings that we have. We may update those over the years. So you might get a supplement handout to plug into your binder because we haven't had those paychecks.

Mr. Buono:

So we're typically in the beginning of the year, our first few days of the year update the objectives. And we'll do we have our copies for our Board members were four children, is that we will certainly do that. Yes. [crosstalk 00:58:02] So Michelle, there was this little folder here. Just a quick question. Last time we talked about the tablets for K 1, any updates at all on the order, the K 1 tablets? Just thought I'd ask. All right. Now moving to our next topic is the draft minutes for July 29th, any revisions or corrections to the minutes I have everyone's present for those the last minute. No, now I need a motion to approve those minutes. Joanne, second?, Michelle, all those in favor? Approved! The next set of minutes we have is from August 12th. I heard that Michelle you were not here for that meeting, any revisions or corrections to those minutes, see none of these motions approve that.

Mr. Buono:

Kathleen second, Mark, all those in favor? All those abstain? Michelle, approved! Moving to regular business. We have, as Mr Simons said earlier. We have the approval of the East Greenbush Central School District reopening plan. I'm going to read the resolution here. I think it's important that everyone understand what we're trying to do here. On the recommendation, the script and our schools? The Board of education here by approves the screen with central school reopening plan and directs the Superintendent didn't want the plan before 2020 in accordance with the one year to take guidelines and regulations. It is understood that such school reopening plans are subject to adjustments in response to evolving circumstances within the district or region and the State. Thus, the Superintendent is directed to ensure that the Board is kept informed regarding the implementation of the plans. Any potential changes that would be necessary needs for students to have the health and safety.

Mr. Buono:

I thought it was very important to read that because it does reiterate the fact that adjustments may have to be made and the board accepting the plan moving forward for this plan again, circumstances and adjustments needed to address the needs. I think we've been through this quite a bit.

Mr. Buono:

Is there any final comments you'd like to make before we move forward with any comments? If not in a motion to approve the reopening plan, Mark, I need a second, John, all those in favor?

Mr. Buono:

We'll need to do the next item special education programs for resident children with disabilities. Any questions, seeing none of your motion to approve that? Kathleen, Second Jennifer, all those in favor, that's approved. Next we have a memorandum of agreement with these teacher's association. Mr Simon, you want to comment on that?

Mr Simon:

Yes, I am pleased that I'm able to recommend to the Board, the memorandum agreement related to a successor agreement where the EG teachers' association. The current agreement expired in June of 2019. Well, we did have an extended negotiation period. I believe that this agreement is a fair agreement for both the District and the members of the EG teacher's association. The District team represented by our central administration and our attorney as needed and the East Greenbush negotiation team. We really worked hard on us during a protracted period of negotiations. There were thoughtful exchanges and give and take at various points.

Mr Simon:

The teacher's association leadership of Drew Romanowski, Mr. Ciccone and the entire team. I want to congratulate them for all their work on that. I think the agreement reflects the quality of the education that we want to continue to provide students in East Greenbush. And we want to continue to provide affordability to our taxpayers. So some of the provisions in the agreement that are new are welcomed and appreciated by the District. Particularly as the Teacher's Association has indicated as agreement over time, the life of the contract to help the Districts manage it's increasing health insurance costs. Additionally, there were some items where we felt the teachers had some needs and we were able to address those needs within the contract.

Mr Simon:

Additionally, there are some options that provide some flexibility as we schedule staffing. As we move to the school year, there are some options that provide some incentive for our teachers that they want to go back and seek a certification area. A second certification area which will enhance our ability to provide education in areas that are short, a shortage of teachers, such as in areas of technology, foreign language and other family consumer science and other areas. So this agreement, I'm hundred percent confident is in the best interest of everybody. I appreciate the work that has been done by both negotiating teams and I recommend that you support it.

Mr. Buono:

I will need a motion. Michelle. Second, Kathleen, all those in favor? Approved! Thank you everybody. And we're the teams that worked on it and [inaudible 01:04:27] .

Mr Simon:

I thought it was important to emphasize that this is an ongoing negotiation for since March 2019. So this has been, it's been worked out for a significant period of time. It's not something that's just coming out.

It's just coming out to the Board agenda now, and it is not. It is not in response to any current events and something that's been ongoing for about the last year and a half.

Mr. Buono:

It's perfect for the members of the public, or Let's say, the process does typically start a month before the end of the conclusion of a contract agreement and they're working together with reliable [inaudible 01:05:13] with the pandemic. You're able to reach in and put something in place for the beginning of school year reports and presentations and superintendent schools?

Mr. Buono:

Tabled motions. I have none at this time, old business? Board members, I do have one. We just want to say that the due to Stephanie's help got the interview scheduled for Monday and Tuesday evening. We're all set. Everyone's confirmed. I did send all the Board members the draft questions. If you have any comments or revisions there let's work on that. Kathleen had suggested a rubric perhaps, cause there is eight people we can look at that or university can help us out [crosstalk 01:06:05] suggestions, but we're all set for Monday and Tuesday. So I thank everyone's flexibility and work to get that happening for next week and hopefully, and includes in that process. We can have someone recommended for the remainder of the term.

Mr. Buono:

I did not have anything else on the business going through the consent agenda. Are there any questions? Yeah.

Mr. Buono:

any questions or comments regarding the consent agenda? Jennifer, John, Michelle. Are we good? any Questions. Thumbs up.

Mr Simon:

So you can highlight the different towns and the tax records.

Mr. McHugh:

District has asked me in the Board group, the tax rates or the 2020 21 school year, the proposed budget passed by the community could at a one and a half percent tax increase tax, which represents the total amount of money we need to collect this year to sustain the project, while the tax rates vary in different ways. It will be varied by municipality, and we have tables available if anybody would like to look at that. But then this attached document then tax rates are also impacted by the fact that these Greenbush has a national tax rate and a commercial tax rate, as well as the equalization rates in general, the rates across the municipality from the district are less transparent than they have them in prior to the prior year.

Mr. Simons:

And are more balanced. So while some of the rates go down, some go up in general they don't go up and down as much as they have your year and the past. And part of that is because of the stabilization of the equalization rates. Equalization rates are a factor that used to determine the difference of between the assessed value of the home in the market, the full value of the home. They average it out

across New York state municipalities assess properties differently. So the change as expressed across our five years centrality, is this less, less of a spike or less of a decline in the past that, do you have anything to add about that? That's my general terminology. [crosstalk 01:08:58] Sorry. I want to point out some of the increases.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:09:04]

Mr Simon:

I want to point out some of the increases and decreases by this, that would be helpful. Thank you.

Ms. Wager:

Sure. As Mr. Simons indicated we have in this District a dual tax rate system. So we have a homestead rate and a non-homestead rate. That distinction is determined by the State of New York, but it's generally residential versus commercial. The other factors that go into it, as Mr. Simons said, are the equalization rates, the assessed values, the full values of properties. And on page five of the memo that I've attached, the letter E, shows the tax rates, the homestead tax rates by town in the current year versus last year. You can see that there's not much of a change. Some have gone up, some have gone down a little bit, but basically there is a range of going down by one percent up to increasing by two percent. And as I said, a lot of that has to do with assessed values.

Mrs. Wager:

There's a small amount of omitted taxes this year. Those omitted taxes are taxes that, a tax advantage that a property owner has had in the past that they weren't entitled to. So that property owner will pay that portion, so that's deducted from the amount that we have to raise from the rest of the community. So, in this memo, there are four resolutions that we need to review. Should I start?

Ms. Wager:

The first resolution is the adoption of the dual tax rate system. In there, you can see that approximately 68% of the properties in our district are considered homestead and 32% are considered non-homestead. The dual tax rate system allows for an advantage to homestead taxpayers. So, first we need a resolution. We need to adopt the resolution to adopt the dual tax rate system.

Ms. Wager:

The second resolution is the tax warrant. As I said in the budget packet, our tax levy this year has \$58,374,546 and the amount we need to raise, adjusted by the omitted taxes is \$58,372,685.07.

Ms. Wager:

The next warrant or resolution, I'm sorry. Number three, regards... The tax law allows a tax levying body to authorize a designated individual to make adjustments or corrections to the tax roll as long as they don't exceed \$2,500. And the reason for this is just to expedite the process. In this case, this resolution is asking that I, as the director of business and finance, am authorized to direct, to perform the duties as set forth in the section 554 of the New York State Real Property Tax Law allowing for these small changes.

Ms. Wager:

The last resolution, number four, is the settlement of tax certiorari cases. This is also asking the Board that I am authorized to settle cases regarding tax certioraris that amount to less than \$30,000. Are there any questions on those?

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Linda. Just a couple of comments from myself on the consent agenda. I just want to... Welcome. I see there's several new teachers, teaching staff and others that are joining us. Normally we have a chance to see them in the Board room and welcome them to the district. Are we having a virtual orientation this year, Marissa?, Or in person?

Ms. Cannon:

We are going to do a virtual orientation on Monday, August 24th. We're going to do the sexual harassment training. Mr. McHugh is going to be going over our District's curriculum initiatives. Miss McGrath is going to be giving an overview of special education. We have Capital EAP doing a presentation as well, to go over their services and how they can be of help. Then Mr. Tooker is doing our safety training for two hours. And then at the end of the day, our new staff members will be able to meet with their associated unions for the last hour of the agenda. So even though it'll be remote, it'll still be a nice time to meet everyone over Zoom and have people meet, and we welcome everyone for the beginning of the school year.

Mr. Buono:

You say that we're going to see the buildings at all, their classrooms they've been assigned to at all yet?

Ms. Cannon:

Haven't seen...

Mr. Buono:

Have they been into their buildings at all or anything like that?

Ms. Cannon:

They actually have not. We have been conducting our first round interviews, just due to the large number of initial candidates, remotely. And then for the final round of interviews with central office, they've been in person. So everyone's seen what central office has looked like, but not yet into the buildings.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, okay. And I want to welcome the staff aboard again, and I know that you're coming into the District at a challenging time, but it's a great District. And we want to thank you for choosing the District to begin your teaching career for those are new. And those who chose to leave their District and come to us, because we're a wonderful district. So, thank you again. And the last thing, I just want to thank, where is it? Gifts authorization, gifts and donations. Just interesting and thankful that 750 face shields from Scott's Miracle-Gro company. I thought that was a wonderful addition to our . Quite a nice donation. Never really did that kind of thing, but it's of course welcome. Any donation of PPE in this time are welcome. Any other comments or questions on the consent agenda? If not, I need-

Mr Simon:

Still, I have a comment about the safety agreement, the safety plan?

Mr. Buono:

Oh yes. Sure.

Mr Simon:

The Board preliminary approved the safety plan about a month ago and we had a public comment period. We did not hear any public comments regarding the safety plan. We were able to get the agreement with the, that was approved by the town, of each being reimbursed for extension of the school resource officer arrangement. I'll be meeting with the chief to discuss the selection of the resource officer. As you know, the former resource officer, Marie Abraham has left and rejoined her old police force. So we will need a new resource officer. We're continuing the arrangement with the Rensselaer County Sheriff's department for the, for Jeff Russo to be the resource officer at the middle school.

Mr Simon:

I did want to say that with Marissa presenting the, what used to be called, the [Vadir report, the school safety index, climate index. Our resource officers play a critical role in intervening and helping kids who may be in need an extra support or direction, so that its a prevention of some of the things that may show up in that type of report. They work in tandem with the counselors, and administrators, and teachers and the families to help kids to be successful. And I've seen many kids saved by a school resource officer. So when I had heard some of the things that have been said about resource officers and taking the resource officers out of our schools, I couldn't disagree more. Because our resource officers are not there as agents of discipline, they're there as mentors and educators and resources to keep the kids safe.

Mr Simon:

So we're fortunate that our Board supports the SRO program and I just want to make sure that members of our community understand that our resource officers are educators or counselors and they're law enforcement officers, but they're not there for any other reason but to help the kids and keep everybody safe.

Mr. Buono:

Just a little question about that. During the pandemic, we didn't have the... The school was out of session. During our current schedule, with the virtual remote day, will those officers be reassigned, or how is that going to work?

Mr Simon:

We haven't figured that out...

Mr. Buono:

Still in process?

Mr Simon:

... at this time. We did get some reprieve and a financial arrangement, as I understand it, from the County. Not sure about East Greenbush as of this point, but there were some adjustments made to the...

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr Simon:

... payments based on the fact that they were back on the road in the spring.

Mr. Buono:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Any opportunity for them to take additional training?

Mr Simon:

Yeah.

Mr. Buono:

Especially in the new virtual [inaudible 01:18:33].

Mr Simon:

[crosstalk 01:18:36].

Mr. Buono:

They credited us the fourth quarter. So, yeah.

Mr Simon:

All right.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, [Mrs. Hines 01:18:44]. Any other comments or questions, consent agendas? If not, I need a motion to approve consent agenda's items. [Inaudible 01:18:54] motion is. Kathleen, second to join. All those in favor? Approved, thank you very much.

Mr. Buono:

New business. I just had two items I want to bring to the Board's attention. MISBO is doing a virtual convention. I don't know how, we've always been closed out of sessions in the past. So I don't know if you've seen the program or not, or if anyone's going to attend, we should sign up through Linda if we're interested in a virtual convention.

Mr. Buono:

What is it?

Mr Simon:

Is that one of the orientation activities that we never went over?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah.

Mr Simon:

I don't know if she knew about that.

Mr. Buono:

We sounded more interesting in person, but if someone is interested, they can just email me and I will sign you up. Register you.

Mr. Buono:

There's the pre law seminar. It's usually pretty good. It'd be interesting to...

Speaker 4:

There's a cost, too, for these virtual sort of...

Mr. Buono:

Yeah. Yeah. A lot of us have in doing virtual trainings and seminars, webinars and that kind of stuff, too. If it's well done and informative, and you get the right topics, it may be worth exploring to those here.

Mr. Buono:

I guess that was it. Okay. Anyone else? Any new business to bring to the Board?

Mr. Buono:

Now moving to our second public forum. Linda if you'd be so kind to check email. If there's any additional that came in.

Mr. Buono:

Yes. [Kim Dunn 00:11:31] is a parent of an incoming kindergartner. And she would like to know when and where will the supply lists be out for parents to purchase school supplies for the year.

Mr Simon:

I'm hoping we have the supply lists, at least on the same date. Every release in the AB proven assignments. And that would be the 28th of August, that would be released.

Mr. Buono:

A lot of things happening at the end of the month. August 28th is coming up. Anything else?

Mr. Buono:

[Amy Scroy 00:12:08] is the parent of an incoming kindergarten student, and would like to know those students that are on full remote, are they going to be interacting with other students via zoom or Google Meet? Or with just their teacher? In addition, approximately how many kindergarten students are full remote out of the approximate 500?

Mr Simon:

Okay. The first part of the question, will the children in kindergarten full remote be interacting with other children signed in from remote? Yes. Okay? They will be interacting with their teachers as well. It will follow a similar structure that the virtual Wednesdays follow for the [inaudible 01:21:55] [Mr. Hughes 00:12;57] spoke about. If you give me just a second, I can probably pull up the number of kindergartners that have signed up for full remote at this time. Just...

Mr. Buono:

Yeah, and if the parent's listing, I think if you can pull up the attachment that Jim just presented, you can see that framework for the full remote K2, and then see the interactive piece there.

Jim:

Yep, that's correct. A morning core content block and then some office hours, then an afternoon core content block. So it will be posted.

Mr. Buono:

It'll be posted, correct.

Jim:

It mirrors our virtual Wednesday.

Mr. Buono:

And that report is under attachment 7C in the reports.

Mr. Buono:

So we have a breakdown under search reports-

Mr Simon:

Yes. Currently...

Jim:

Thirty-something.

Mr Simon:

The number of kindergartners, requesting full remote stands at 35 children. So that would be two classes. Just as of this point.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. [Tiana Pettinger 00:14:02] is the parent of an elementary and middle school students. And she asked, "The full time remote plan newly added to the website indicates that students must use a school issued device or Chromebook, for the remote learning activities. Does this mean that students are not able to use personal laptop computers to do their full time remote learning?" And then, there's a second part to the question.

Mr Simon:

The Board approved the purchase of devices for kindergarten through first grade last Board meeting. In the event that those devices aren't at hand, they would certainly be permitted to use their own devices. I would have to defer to Mr. Goodwin as to the breed. I think there's a particular reason why our devices would facilitate remote learning and provide some assurances of security. I don't know the details. Mr. Goodwin? Can you speak nice and loud?

Mr. Harkin:

Yes, Mr. Simon. Very briefly, we normally would prefer students to use the district issued device because there are certain policies that are pushed out from our [inaudible 01:24:07] onto those devices that help keep children safe and to make sure the devices are working well.

Mr Simon:

But in the event that they don't arrive, they're not distributed, they can certainly use their own devices until such time as we provide them.

Mr. Buono:

The District went to a one to one Chromebook situation last couple of years, and I think we've pushed those down into the kindergarten levels as the devices come in. Students are not prohibited explicitly from using personal devices. Speak from personal experience of my own that the cell phone, the smart phone is quite a well used device by some of the students to do their work on. It's pretty amazing to see someone do a whole paper on a phone.

Mr. Buono:

I think you can reassure our parents that technology will be available. Access will be available. Again, it's about equity, and technology equity, and access equity and opportunity for all our students, as we reiterated through our plan. Great question.

Mrs. Wager:

The second part of that question is, "Is it expected that full time remote students in middle school will be able to be in accelerated science or math if they were accepted into those classes?"

Mr Simon:

We are trying to meet that expectation and we're working on it. Yes. We're working on ways to deliver that. So we're going to do our best on that. If there were any change we would inform the children who qualify for... The parents who qualify for accelerated classes.

Ms. Wager:

That's all I have.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Thank you for comments and the questions. Again, refer to the FAQ. We continue to build that based on the forum from last night and the questions that we received this evening. Next, we'll move to the [Worth Worm 00:17:08]. I'll go to who my colleagues out in the virtual world. Jennifer, anything? You're good? Time's up.

Mr. Buono:

Michelle? You're good? Mr. Dunn?

Mr. John Dunn:

Are you ready?

Mr. Buono:

We always say we urge the [inaudible 01:26:29].

Mr. John Dunn:

I'll be brief. I just wanted to thank everybody. I know we're at full accolades and praises, but in these difficult times, I really wanted to thank the administrative team, Mr. Simons and crew, for continuing to allow the Board to govern the district. Because governance is the main focus of the district in creating policies and procedures and the budget, and without the proper information that we're provided, we can't make the decisions that we make to move this district forward. I really want to thank my fellow Board members for the time and energy of listening to the constituency, listening to all the people involved with this, and really trying to formulate a plan that aligns with our values, our goals, objectives, and maintaining a safe, equitable education for all students.

Mr. John Dunn:

And also keeping in mind the role of taxpayer responsibility with funding in these challenging times. So I just wanted to acknowledge that and without confidence in the administrative team would make our job very difficult. We do hear from people out there. I read the frequently asked questions and it was really a balance to try to address the concerns that our community has. But recognizing that as we made the decision to come up with a plan, I really support this. And the reason why is, we're driving at 50, 60 miles an hour in a fire right now. And I believe that the hybrid product, while not perfect, it does have some bumps and bruises. But it is a plan that will enable us to adjust to the bumps and bruises [inaudible 01:28:26] in whatever direction we're going to be.

Mr. John Dunn:

This isn't going to be forever, folks. We're still a community. We're going to be in it together, whether it be cleaning the desks and doing what we have to do to make everybody happy and safe. And most importantly, this is for these kids. We've all lost a piece of our lives in this time. But think of the children, each stakeholder group has a valid concern and argument to support their cause, but we in coming together the way we have, have at least given them some stability for the opening weeks of school. I think that is really important. We have to remind ourselves of that, and without the great employees of the District, we couldn't achieve that.

Mr. John Dunn:

So I just want to personally thank you, and also my fellow Board members for the time and dedication to make this a safe opening day. And that ends my diatribe for this evening. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, John. Always appreciated. So we'll start on my right. JoAnn?

JoAnn Taylor:

I'm good.

Mr. Buono:

You're good? Kathleen? You're good. Mark, comments?

Mark Mann:

All set.

Mr. Buono:

All set? Okay. Just want to reiterate what Mr. Dunn said, excellent comments. This process continues to evolve. I firmly believe that coming back to school in some form or fashion that we proposed is in the best interest of the community, our kids, our staff to come back to something that resembles the core, call it the "new normal". I think it will evolve. It can change, it can shift, but we'll be prepared. And that's the benefit of planning. It's preparation. And then from there, we'll adjust because we've been through the exercise. We've talked about it a lot, and that way we can best present the best educational opportunities for our students, and to meet the needs of our families. I appreciate all the work that's been done.

Mr. Buono:

And then with that, we do have need for a brief executive session to discuss closing negotiations going into reopening. And with that we'll need 10 minutes. If Mr. Goodwin will send a link to the Board members? So thank you for attendance. I appreciate the parent input. Questions, keep them coming. There's a dedicated email. And as Mr. Simons said regarding the opening, review the FAQs and hopefully we'll answer those questions. Thank you very much again, recognizing and I thank Mr. Harkin and Mrs. Squillace. Thank you for coming in tonight to receive the recognition awards. We appreciate your coming and seeing you. Take care. Good night.

Mr. Buono:

So, 10 minutes Board members? Executive motion to go into executive session. Kathleen? JoAnn? All those in favor? Perfect.

Mr Simon:

Thank you, everyone.

Mr. Buono:

Goodnight.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:31:43]