

**Transcript of Board of Education Meeting
January 27, 2021**

Mr. Buono:

Mark, I see Mark, John, Jennifer, Joanne. Just missing Michelle. Deanna, Frank, and myself, is here. We'll give Michelle a minute. Okay. So I gave her a minute and it's 7:01, so I call the meeting to order. Welcome to the January 27, East Greenbush School District Board of Education meeting. Present tonight are all the board members except for Michelle Skumurski. Michelle just signed on, so we have all board members present. Hi Michelle. So with that, we have all board members present, the meeting is called to order. Let's please rise and join me in 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, everyone you may be seated. We'll now move to our student council from Columbia. We have Kate and Ryan. Hi guys, how are you doing?

Katie Asenbauer:

Hi. We just have a very brief update tonight. So this winter student council, we decided at our last meeting we're going to focus on charitable events. So last week we sent out a poll for different fundraising ideas for members to vote on. And we went over those results at our meeting after school today, and we've decided to focus on raising money for the Make-A-Wish foundation and to have a selection for a local animal shelter or the ASPCA. So Ryan is going to explain some of our ideas for those.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Katie.

Ryan Seely:

We're also going to have, or we're discussing having a candy bar or a hot chocolate sale to raise money for those charities. But were looking into being able to do those with Corona Virus restriction. And Goff just finished up with the food drive, so we were also planning to have one later in the year.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Anything else? You guys are doing good? How was the virtual examinations?

Katie Asenbauer:

It went well.

Mr. Buono:

It went well?

Katie Asenbauer:

It did.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent. Yeah, I heard positive things. Good to be back though, right?

Ryan Seely:

Yes.

Katie Asenbauer:

Definitely.

Mr. Buono:

Awesome. Thanks guys. Have a good one.

Katie Asenbauer:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

All right. We'll now move to the public forum of our Board Meeting. Residents, students, employees, and business representatives of the East Greenbush Central School District may address the Board on matters concerning programs and/or operation 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. Those persons wishing to address the Board will be recognized by the chair of the meeting. They should state for the record, their name and address, or affiliation with district or business. While the Board does not wish to infringe upon free speech protections, it must be stressed that the visitor's forum is not deemed to be open forum. The Board President will conduct the forum in the orderly division operation of Board business. In addition, any remarks which can be considered defamatory or stigmatizing are prohibited and will be declared out of order.

Mr. Buono:

So as we have during the virtual meetings, we have a public email address that is set up for our community members to email us. That email is typically monitored by Ms. Wager and she is... Are you logged on?

Ms. Wager:

I logged in and there are no public comments at this time.

Mr. Buono:

There are no public comments at this time. Very good. And those members of the public who may be watching the meeting can have their opportunity to address the board via email later on during the second public forum. So with that, I will go to the board forum and [inaudible 00:04:40], we'll start with our board members as I see on the screen and we'll do the in-person posts. So I'll start with Mark. Mark Mann. You're good. JoAnn Taylor, I see you. You're good. Kathleen Curtin. Jennifer Massey. And Michele Skumurski. Michelle, good. And John Dunn. John Dunn's good. All right.

Mr. Buono:

And on my right Deanna?

Deanna Muth:

I'm good.

Mr. Buono:

You're good. And Frank?

Frank Yeboah:

Good.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Okay. And I don't have any at this time. A lot of agenda items, discussion, a lot of things happening in the district and in the community. There aren't any updates on it so we'll get right down to business and I'll turn over to Mr. Simons for the Superintendent report.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you, Mr. Buono. I want to welcome members of the community and our members of the board to the public forum this evening. We do have a lot of topics to talk about. And why don't we take an opportunity to provide the community in particular, our board, students and parents with information about what is happening related to recent announcement that occurred at the state level that our districts are permitted to operate winter sports, including high risk sports. Up until now, we've only been operating bowling for our girls and our boys on a virtual basis. But last Friday, this past Friday evening, it was announced that the governor would permit schools to operate what the state has classified as high-risk sports, such as basketball, wrestling, indoor track, cheerleading, and some sports that East Greenbush currently doesn't offer such as swimming. The criteria established by the State of New York indicates that the County Health Department with jurisdiction within the area of a school district really has the final determination as to whether or not the schools will be permitted to do this.

Mr. Simons:

So the State's approval is subject to the permission of the County. And during the past several days, Mr. Leonard, our athletic director and myself have been preparing and planning for the operation of sports subject to the approval of the County. There are some challenges and complications related to way that the State has approved this option for our student athletes. In our district, for example, we compete in the Suburban Council League and our Suburban Council League is made up of school districts from not just one county, Rensselaer County, but four counties, Schenectady County, Albany County, Saratoga County, and Rensselaer County. And each respective County Department of Health has to approve the operation of high risk winter sports in order for our league to fully function. So, Mr. Leonard has been discussing the planning with the respect of athletic directors from each of the districts that compete in the suburban council.

Mr. Simons:

And I have been in discussions with each of the superintendents of the districts of the suburban council about how we would go about operating our sports in the event that those four respective counties

approve them. As of this afternoon, at a meeting I had with Rensselaer County Executive, Steve McLaughlin, and Rensselaer County Health Director, Mary Wachunas, the counties have not resolved their differences regarding whether or not they will approve the operation of winter sports and what criteria they would apply to make that determination. So there is disagreement among the counties as to whether this will happen and what criteria will be used to determine that school districts are permitted to proceed with sports. The difficulty that I feel regarding this is as the superintendent, and I'm sure many superintendents feel this way, we want to see our students engaged. And we recognize the importance of engagement for our kids.

Mr. Simons:

Particularly now, as we have been dealing with higher levels of confinement of our students, because of the limited social activities. And we have only been able to offer one sport this winter, and we are offering virtual extracurricular clubs, which we believe are important for the students. So the announcement that sports could happen or might happen. I've got some kids excited about it, and some parents are really advocating for it. And I would like to see the kids out there; however, this determination does not solely rest with the superintendent of the district nor our board of education. So we still have some ways to go over the next few days to know whether or not we will be permitted to offer winter sports. There are some differences in views among our County Departments of Health. They are trying to reconcile those differences. And we were told this afternoon that there's an ongoing effort to see what could be done.

Mr. Simons:

As we read different announcements from different areas of the state as to whether or not they're permitting it. In some cases they are in other cases are not. So as an advocate for the kids, our board will continue to review this matter and we will be discussing it further this evening. And at this point, I want to ask Mr. Leonard to talk about the work that the suburban council athletic vectors have been doing really since last Friday night. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday through today, the athletic directors have been working on this in anticipation of it happening. And what safety and health protocols would need to be in place. I will say before I introduce Mr. Leonard, our fall season went remarkably well, and I could not have been more proud of our student athletes, our Athletic Director Mr. Leonard, our coaches, and our parents of the job that we did at East Greenbush School District of operating our sports programs safe.

Mr. Simons:

It was a great reflection on everybody within the community. The difference as we move into today, the infection rate is still higher and that is causing the counties to have concern. And no one was prepared for this announcement that came on Friday. We were thinking we would get through the decline that we're experiencing now in the cases that resulted from the holidays. Most of us were thinking about and hopeful that spring sports would occur. So this caught the county by surprise and it caught the school districts by surprise, and we've been working through it. So I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Leonard to talk about the development of the guidelines that's occurring right now, in accordance with what the state is asking us to do regarding the operation of sports. Mr. Leonard.

Mr. Leonard:

Good evening, can everybody hear me okay? Yes no. Okay. Yeah, it's kind of a bombshell that got dropped about 6:00 or 4:00 last Friday, and I have the lovely job of being Suburban Council President

this year out of all of the years. I came back up to school Friday night and had stuff pending, worked for a couple hours Friday night. Saturday, about six, seven hours, Sunday for about 10 hours. And developed the guidelines, criteria, duties and responsibilities, similar to what we did with the fall. I want to chime in on what Mr. Simons said, I'm extremely proud of our student athletes, our parents, and coaches this fall. We didn't have any issues. Like a few other schools, we struggled a little bit with a couple teams, but we got through the entire season through reflection of what type of people we have. So basically your copy, you have something called "The Suburban Council Athletics Standard Operating Procedures for Winter High-Risk Sports 2021."

Mr. Leonard:

So basically we take all the documentation from New York State interim guidance for sport recreation from this though, which is New York State Public High School Athletic Association with tier based scholastic athletics. As well as some other guide we researched with this, but as well as section two. So basically we put together a kind of a playbook so to speak of how our leagues going to operate. And I want to, it's very critical that all 15 schools are on the same page. So if we have teams going to Shen the same expectations, safety protocols and procedures are the same. Whether they come to Columbia, you go Shen, you go to Shaker. So that's very critical for the safety, the continuity of the programs. From this fall I'm not sure if anybody... We created badges for our spectators, we taped our bleachers, we had contact tracers. So it's the same thing here at Columbia as well as other suburban schools. I'm just going to quickly go through a couple of different general considerations.

Mr. Leonard:

We all use a health screening. So every single day, the student athlete will come to a practice, whether they're an A student or a B student, or a fully remote student who will be practicing athletics, then will get a daily health screening. We have a log, we have a checklist, and they also get a temperature check. They were asked the simpler questions, and those logs are handed in to me. After each week, we double check them and we keep over and we file them. We're doing daily health screenings, which I think is very important. Some other general considerations, masks are always on this winter. Except for the sport of wrestling and I'll get to wrestling, but masks are required at all the times. So for example, if you're playing boys basketball, you were wearing a mask all the time. The only time that you wouldn't be wearing a mask is during a play and the mask is knocked off your face. The play will be finished, as soon as the play was finished, the ball was dead, the whistle blows, that athlete with their mask back on.

Mr. Leonard:

So masks are on and up the entire time. And in the fall, if a student athlete or parent deemed that it was not as tolerable, they had the option of pulling it down and putting it back up. Section two just came out that if a student athlete feels that it's not tolerable, they now have provide a medical documentation and provide that to the school, why it's not been tolerated. I can tell you this fall, we got a great success of our student athletes listening. I've been around numerous times, right in the beginning, and just told the students, if we're going to have success, you got to wear your masks. Took a couple days, but I was proud to watch cross country meets, soccer games, and field hockey. And a lot of kids wear their masks because they realized the success of playing and being able to play was wearing masks.. Our coaches did a super great job. And what I like about our winter approach is that it's kind of the approach to the fall, so they're familiar with a lot of the procedures.

Mr. Leonard:

I'm going to pretty much just talk here about a couple of sports, give some highlights of examples of what we came up with. So for example, in basketball... Basketball, I'm not sure, I think it's in your packet. I'm not sure if you can see this diagram but that's the diagram I've been working off of. Basically, we're almost to the NBA, where instead of having a straight long bench of 15 to 20 chairs side by side, they're going to be staggered back in rows. Six feet apart, going back, going back and each chair is labeled. So for example, if I'm on the basketball team, I have a chair shared that has a name plate that says Mike Leonard. So, if I am in the game no one's sitting in my chair. If Mr. Simons is on the team and there's a chair that says Jeff Simons, and he comes in for me, I can't go sit in Jeff Simons chair and I can go only to Mike Leonard's chair. In my six by six cube, I have my water and my personal bag and belongings.

Mr. Leonard:

The score table, normally we have the scorekeeper, the announcer, and the two people that take the home book and the away book. We'll only have the announcer and the scoreboard person. And then we'll have to set up side tables for each home and away scorekeeper that are six foot away. We will have now an official's table that is behind. The officials used to leave their jackets and their water on the score table. That no longer will be, they will have their own designated table, six feet beyond the floor where they can leave their personal items and their water.

Mr. Leonard:

Also, on our sports table because it sits four, there will be Clorox wipes and extra masks. Because at every basketballs game, we found this out before, a lot of kids their masks would break, the string would break. We have individual masks wrapped in baggies that we provided and it worked out great. So we always have extra masks at practice and at games. So each coach will receive hand sanitizers, big ones, the small little portable hand sanitizers, the temperature gauge, baggies, gloves, towels, disinfectants, right. So all those things will be at every game and all those coaches have those things. And we have throughout the athletic wing there's a ton of hand sanitizer stations that we've had since the fall.

Mr. Leonard:

So those are some of the things, particularly like in basketball, at a basketball game after the first quarter that basketball is taken out of the game and a new clean basketball is brought into the game. And you would do that after the first quarter, second quarter, half time, third quarter, and obviously at the end of the game. So you're constantly trying to clean that equipment and turn that over. So, that's just got a couple highlights with basketball.

Mr. Leonard:

At basketball practice, I just want to talk about practice. You had a lot of success within our practices our coaches will develop cohort rules. So for example, let's say there's 15 boys on the team, myself and Jim McHugh would be partners pretty much the whole entire year and we would be assigned a basket. So our two will be partners for shooting drills, with defensive sliding drills. So really a small little cohort with me and Jim McHugh. And then another cohort might be John Dunn and Mark Mann at another basket. So this way we can track it, who's together for a period of time. So we've done a great job in developing small cohorts.

Mr. Leonard:

Same thing in indoor track we'll have groups. So it will be all the throwers, all the shot putters. Chris Dedrick's our throw coach, so he would have the boys and girls that throw shot put together. That's a cohort group. Chris Hosley does a lot of the jumping events, high jump. So he would have that group as a cohort. So it's easier to track those kids who are together. Obviously in basketball you'll be doing some scrimmaging, so you will have an opportunity for those kids that will be together as a whole. And those kids that are out of the game, or not in the scrimmage, or not in a drill, they're on the sideline six feet apart. Again, everybody has their mask on.

Mr. Leonard:

I'll quickly talk about, we do ice hockey, it's a virtual program with Shaker, Averill Park, Colonie, and Tamarac. Right now, all five schools as Mr. Simon said, are waiting and pending they're DOH approval. Mr. Simons also mentioned that a few County health departments are all under that. So us and Averill Park are Rensselaer County, Shaker and Colonie are Albany County. So that may impact ice hockey if Rensselaer County gets the green light and Albany County doesn't. So that may impact hockey. Hockey has their own set of rules. They show up to the rink ready to go, they carry their skates. 30 minutes before their practice they change into the skates and they get out on the ice. Best thing about hockey, a lot of equipment, total face all padding so there's a lot of protectives. And there's also an internal face shield. And a lot of them now wear a mask, which they've been doing now, for ice hockey inside. So that's also another protective with ice hockey.

Mr. Leonard:

Let me briefly talk about cheerleading. All these practices will be spread out to our district using Columbia, Goff, and Green Meadow. Our cheerleading program traditionally has been at Green Meadow and will continue to be at Green Meadow. They'll probably go 4:00 to 7:00, 7:30. The JV team will practice, the JV coach and the varsity coach will clean the cheerleader mat, and then the varsity team. Same thing, it's a small cohort. It's that group. All cheerleading competitions are virtual. Hopefully they'll be four Saturdays. And [Connie 00:23:22] is our league chairperson and on Saturday's we'll do a virtual cheerleading meet and the three judges will actually watch our live competition from Green Meadow and they'll judge it. And some of those things have been going on for quite some time.

Mr. Leonard:

Again, indoor track, when it's nice out and it hasn't been too bad of a winter, we're outside. Just like we were in the fall with cross country, we're outside, we're socially distant, masks are up. The tracks been clear except for today. But for the most part, when we'd be outside a lot. If they're inside, it's small cohorts like I said. The throwers, there will only be like 20 in that group, and 20 in the high jump, that's all that would be in a gym. And maybe another group might be up in the sunshine hallway running. So they're all different groups, the whole track teams never coming together unless they are outside socially distant. And we can do that.

Mr. Leonard:

Wrestling, there's a lot of different challenges to wrestling. And I thought we did a great job in this diagram, coming out with a lot of different things. Obviously with wrestling, it's very difficult avoiding physical contact, as well as wearing a mask. But within wrestling, the practice room, you would have same thing with training partners. You have one or two train partners. Those partners would be the only ones you would train with the whole entire year. Then within our wrestling room, we normally have what's called wrestling circles, and that's part of wrestling. So what you would do is just spread them

out. You would have two to three guys at one circle, skip a circle, two or three guys, so they're socially distant. Again, small cohort group in wrestling.

Mr. Leonard:

One thing I want to bring up is that a lot of schools are on the fence with wrestling. And a lot of schools feel that a weekly testing is mandatory for participation in the sport of wrestling. I'm not really sure about our capability of testing. In who we're testing, the big wrestling match in our league, that are athletic directors thought the morning of a match would be tested. It's a quick rapid test they would take to determine if a positive result comes out or not. But those are some things about wrestling.

Mr. Leonard:

Like I said, we've been meeting since Friday, Saturday, Sunday, all the time/ We've come up with a great document that all the schools and all of our students athletes will be on the same page, the same expectation. I think that's very important that everybody is doing the same thing. And the standard is the same thing. I'm not sure if anybody has any questions, or Mr. Simons do you need to cover anything else?

Mr. Simons:

One of the things I just want to emphasize is going back to the fall. As we talked with other districts outside of the suburban council, we were reminded of how good the suburban council... What a good job they did. They had the same standards for both teams in place at every contest. And it was very consistent. That was not necessarily the case in some of the other leagues. So we were really proud of that. I guess I just like to open up an opportunity for anybody on the board to express their questions or concerns right now and we'll do our best to try to answer them.

Mr. Buono:

Feedback Board Members? Kathleen?

Ms. Curtin:

I kind of hate to be the wet blanket here, but there was a news story on, just at 6:00, that Albany County has said that their schools will not be participating in the high risk sports. They have chosen to follow CDC guidelines, which wants your infection rate below 4% and Albany County it's still above six. So I don't know... I feel so bad because obviously a lot of work and a lot of thought has gone into this. So I don't know if there's any wiggle room with the counties. Like I said, that's just what I've heard at 6:00.

Mr. Simons:

At our meeting this afternoon, we were told by Rensselaer County that that 4% index would be advocated for, by some of the other counties. And that our county was not in agreement with that. So we were also advised that they would be working together to try to resolve their differences regarding that and that we would expect perhaps to hear more information by Saturday. So what's being reported is inconsistent with what's being said. And I believe it's probably true, but again if that is the case that would affect Guilderland's participation, Albany City Schools participation, Shaker High School and North Colonie's participation, and South Colonie's participation, and Bethlehem's participation.

Mr. Leonard:

And CBA.

Mr. Simons:

And CBA. So those are six schools that, if what's being reported is accurate, would not be able to participate in the suburban council. One thing that has been discussed is, could you operate a league or an organization of some kind with the teams that are in the counties that do approve it? And there's a real question about whether or not districts should do that, whether boards would support us operating differently than other districts, and it's still an open question. So for example, Troy, Averill Park, and East Greenbush are all in Rensselaer County. If Rensselaer County decided that they supported the operation of sports and they weren't applying the 4% infection rate threshold. Could we do something with Troy and Averill Park?

Mr. Simons:

And I don't, I honestly haven't fully formulated my own views on that. And that would allow the kids to participate to some degree. Nor do their superintendents know how their boards feel about that as well. But we've talked about the concept, but not in any kind of detail. We were hoping that our County Health Departments could work together to come to consensus. And it's disappointing, quite frankly, that they can't.

Mr. Leonard:

Just to jump back in. We're supposed to start this Monday, the first, and it's going to be a six week season. So basically everything except wrestling needs six practices, wrestling needs 10 practices. So basically they're going to practice for about a week and we're going to probably have you... We started working on schedules last night and today. I'm trying to get 11, 12 games for everybody. Another good question was spectators. We felt as athletic directors, we were going to start with no spectators because it's inside and we really wanted to get everything going first to ensure safety, to troubleshoot, and then phase spectators in similar to like two guests per player. Socially distant, contact trace as they come in the door, assigned seating. But to do that right away... We got to get the game's going, there's a lot of moving parts in a game. And so I wanted to hopefully kind of phase in spectators.

Mr. Leonard:

Prior to phasing in, we'll definitely honor them and have a senior night. I think that's important. We would have two guests per player, similar to what we did last spring. We did a senior night during spring sports. And it worked out great. But I think that's very important to do that. So say you had four boys that were seniors on the basketball team, I would have eight parents socially distant on the other side in chairs, wearing masks, to do that honor. I think that's important.

Mr. Buono:

Mark. Anything? This doesn't pop up on your screen, Mark.

Mr. Mann:

Yep...

Mr. Buono:

This wasn't a pop-up on your screen, Mark.

Mr. Mann:

I got a question.

Mr. Buono:

Sure.

Mr. Mann:

Two questions. One is, if Rensselaer County doesn't give us approval, today's Wednesday, we've got Thursday, Friday and the weekend, we can't start anything February 1st, correct?

Mr. Simons:

Correct.

Mr. Buono:

Correct.

Mr. Mann:

And secondly, great plan Mike, lot of effort, I appreciate it. I'd love to hear from Paul Bickel on what is the procedure for cleanings. It's one thing to go work on a classroom, now you're talking a large gymnasium and the large wrestling rooms. Have we addressed those? Is that going to involve some extra people? What time do these sports end? Are we going to have to bring in additional people that work late to disinfect those rooms?

Mr. Bickel:

Can you hear me?

Mr. Simons:

I think Paul's out right now.

Mr. Buono:

We can hear you Paul, speak up.

Mr. Bickel:

Mark, to answer your question, I've been working with Jim VanBuren at the high school, we're looking into options, how we're going to go about this. Right now we've got, technically there's two night people that work the third shift. One of them was hold up on to the 3:30 to midnight shift right now, so we're talking about putting him back to the overnight shift that will help with the cleaning, disinfecting at the high school. And that we're also going to put another gentleman who's working Monday through Friday right now and during a normal situation, he can actually work on a Tuesday through Saturday shift.

Mr. Bickel:

So we're going to end up putting him back on that shift, bring a substitute in to cover on Mondays for him. And we're actually doing a little bit better on substitutes right now, so we're still playing out how we're going to do what exactly. Waiting for athletics plan before we react, we need to know when the end times will be for sports, so that we can make sure we have the right amount of time built in for the cleaning and disinfecting. We are helping them do it and following closely, in working with the athletics department to make sure that things will be taken care of properly.

Mr. Mann:

Thanks Paul.

Mr. Leonard:

So for example, Mark, real quick, to answer your question, the chairs on the basketball, for a game, the JV might play, last time, Sean Leggett and we had one of my supervisors, we sprayed down the chairs, cleaned them, and then the varsity came in. After the game, Sean Leggett and one of my game supervisors did it, it worked out extremely well. A lot of other schools are using, I think it's called, the fogger, I guess. I'm not sure if that's the right word, to clean wrestling rooms, weight rooms, if you use bleachers, basketball courts, they just drive the machine in the stadium now. It looks like a golf cart but it has bobbins or a squeegee, it pushes down the hallway right now, you would just do that in the basketball court too. And that helps you with the disinfectant solution.

Mr. Bickel:

One more thing, if I can just bring it up, we are in a much better place right now, as far as actually having the chemicals needed to disinfect and having the pools do it. And then we made that large purchase of the misters in the fall, originally we only had one of those in the district and it was at the high school and it was used mainly for athletics because they work great. You would come walk into a room and literally just mist everything and disinfect it. So those, now that we have the capacity with those, plus the people over we need, I don't think it's going to be any issue taking care of the bigger spaces for sports, to open them up.

Mr. Leonard:

And then by utilizing Green Meadow, Columbia and Goff, and with Wes levels, the only levels we're looking at having to really do it is varsity and JV for boy's and girl's basketball and cheerleading. Wrestling would be at a varsity level and indoor track, basically a varsity, JV. And we'll do virtual meets as well. Gillen and Shannon already started some virtual indoor track meets. The track is nice, the weather's nice, they go out and do some hurdles, some sprinting. They time their guys and they are there to support us. That's what we're doing right now with bowling, it's all virtual. So we have a bowling match and then our coach takes our scores and he calls up the Shaker coach and they compare scores to first, second, third and who won the bowling match. So we do that now with swimming, we did that in the fall with swimming and cross country, we start with a daily run against other schools. Cross country, our team ran and then the other team ran in cohorts, they would just merge the scores and find out, first, second, third, so on and so forth.

Mr. Buono:

Any other questions for Mike or Jeff? Michelle? Go ahead Michelle.

Ms. Skumurski:

So two questions. First is, do we have any concerns that we're crossing over cohorts? Meaning, we've got the high schoolers going to the elementary school or middle school to practice, are we nervous about that? Should we try to keep them separated? And the high schoolers with high school? I know we don't have the money to have room at Columbia, but I don't know if that causes more risk, that we might be contaminating elementary school. And then second of all, and don't shoot me on this, but is there a possibility that we consider testing these kids or mandating testing of the participants legally, or is that not allowed?

Mr. Simons:

I'll answer the second question about testing first and I'll let Mike talk about the coordination of the schedule and whether or not the kids would be... They have to be using the space, but they wouldn't necessarily be in the building at the same time. The issue of testing has been discussed both, within our superintendents group, as well as along the suburban council superintendents. The type of testing that we're approved to do right now as request are OCS is specifically licensed to respond to a designation that we are in a yellow, orange or red zone and not approved for use for surveillance testing and we were trying to navigate through that from Craig Hansen, to get some clarity as to how we might be able to use this supply of tests that we've procured and whether or not it makes sense to do that on some intermittent basis or some random basis, as far as sports are concerned.

Mr. Simons:

Some districts feel strongly that we shouldn't do it. Some feel that it is a good idea. I think it's a good idea if it helps facilitate the engagement of the kids, but we don't have clear direction or guidance and how we would do that. I raised that issue with the county health department director today, testing was one of the areas that we were told was going to be explored and talked about as a potential option between the counties. And again, that was a meeting at noon, this morning. So I'm open to some type of testing if we can do it based on health department guidance. And obviously if it enables the kids to play, I'd like to see the kids playing. As far as scheduling and intermixing with the elementary and middle school levels, typically we do have practices after the elementary kids are dismissed. Correct Mike?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah. So Michelle, to answer your question. For example, at Green Meadow, the earliest cheerleading would start would be four o'clock.

Ms. Skumurski:

So we wouldn't have time to clean the gyms and get them ready for it, or will that already be done? I'm just worried about the timing of all the cleanup.

Mr. Leonard:

I think they're just going to go to the gym, I'm not worried about the contamination. They are going to go in, roll out their cheerleading mats, no one else is going to be using them. The elementary school is not going to be using them and they'll use their cheerleading mat. And then after the JV practice, they're going to wipe down, the coach is going to do that, or spray down and then after the varsity we'll spray down again, because want it where it's not dirty and then they'll roll it up and place it against the wall. But the team would only use, because you can't have six people go in the bathroom, they'll use the bathroom near coach G's office. That's a designated bathroom for cheerleaders, so this is why it's not

down around the cafeteria or little kids by the vent, I don't know if GGC is in there but they'll be very distant and very spread out. They'll have a designated bathroom and then this way at the end of the night, a custodian or maintenance can clean that bathroom.

Ms. Skumurski:

Gotcha, okay. Thanks.

Mr. Simons:

One of my concerns about testing is, will we be able to get more tests if we run out of the supply that we've ordered for the eventual required testing that we were anticipating? I would want to know that we could be given a sufficient number of tests to make it sustainable.

Ms. Skumurski:

And some parents may not want to have their kid tested, but if it was up to me and I could have sports on if I got them tested, by all means, test them.

Mr. Simons:

The concept we talked about was taking the student athletes who were already in the pool of families who consented to the test, clarifying with the families that we can go ahead and do it, and then moving forward on it. Again, it's having the approval to do it and having sufficient supply of a test to do it, how you do it with direction from the county in a way that has some validity to it, where my questions. But yeah, we're not opposed. I'm not personally opposed to that.

Mr. Buono:

And I think the vibe remember, is this only came out Friday evening as Mr. Leonard said and we're going to get more information guides because there's a lot of districts across the state that are asking the same questions. I do want to echo what Mark said about thanking the team for all the work that's been done. I think the section will help out with this. I know that the guidance has given the authority, to the local health departments, the county health departments. And without those written guidance, I'm all for proceeding based on the success we've had, but without those approvals in place, we're not doing anything. I think that has to be clear to the community, unfortunately they have now already to decide how we move forward.

Mr. Buono:

Our job is to plan, prep and be ready for when that happens so we can give our students athlete's families an opportunity to participate as Mike has outlined here. And I think the district has done a terrific job in the fall, as you mentioned tonight, about being successful with our sports programs so far this year. And just thinking back throughout graduation with the different things we've done, we are number one, is always going to be the safety of our students and our families. And we can make those things happen. We just have to make sure that the people who can give us the okay, give us the formal okay and we proceed under that, because we don't want to anybody else in jeopardy either. Definitely is a cooperation effort. Is there any other views that want to be expressed? John?

Mr. Dunn:

I just wanted to make a comment that I am supportive of this concept of trying to bring back some normalcy to these kids and giving them opportunities to be active, because unfortunately during this pandemic, everybody's becoming complacent and lethargic. So thanks to Mike and Paul and everyone that put this together. Again, we have to just be mindful that we're here to support the entire education and experience for the students in a safe manner. So I am supportive of exploring this further.

Mr. Buono:

Another comment I want to make, I think that it's important to make a distinction, school districts as a public agency, a public entity, we are held by our standard. I know that there are other sports are happening out there, we know that, but they're not under our jurisdiction, our jurisdiction, our oversight come from the state and the local health departments. And we have to follow guidance that we are given. And as much as that is difficult, when we know that other sports are happening in other areas outside the school jurisdiction, we are dually bound to do the right thing by the packets. So, it's a conflict, I know, for a lot of families who want to do this, but we'll proceed as best we can. Once we have clearance and the board is satisfied that all the approvals have been met that and some of the folks are ready. Thank you. Appreciate all the work Mike, stay at it, I'm sure things will change and you'll brief us again as things happen.

Mr. Leonard:

Yes. Thank you. Before I leave, I just want to let you know that one of our former athletes, Selena Lott scored her 1,000 points at Marquette, becoming the 30th in school history. And that's an unbelievable accomplishment by Selena, it's unbelievable. In Marquette's history, she's the only the 30th, girls' basketball player to score a thousand points at college. Thank you everybody, by all means, if anybody has any questions, please let me know. Have a great night.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Mike. Okay, anything else? Mr. Simons?

Mr. Simons:

I will reserve any other comments about reopening and the school operation for maybe the second round.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Second round. Okay. So that took quite a lot of time as an important topic to our community, our sports folks. And one thing I have to also say, is that when they open up sports hybrid sports like this to potentially playing, our folks who do the arts and music, we feel free to, because I think that is also something has to be addressed with the guidance to allow, not just student athletes, but also our artists our musicians and clubs, to be able to do some of these things too. Because those things that they do are just as important as our athletics and this district has always shown that we're a huge supporter of the arts here at the district, music programs folks, as well as athletics. So it's for everyone.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you for saying that Mike, I know some districts have expressed this concern about consistency of the criteria as being applied to sports, music. I will say that our music department has done a wonderful

job of trying to find a way to have band orchestra and chorus this year. If you come to the high school, we're not having visitors, but they let me in, in the morning, you go down to the cafeteria. Our band kids are practicing 12 feet apart with their music stands and their instruments. Then you walk down to the auditorium and our choral groups are spread out in the auditorium and they're singing with their masks on and then you walk around the corner and you go down to some of the music rooms and our strings kids are playing. And it's really nice. So they found a way and over the holidays, they presented the community with a virtual performance. So they're doing a great job.

Mr. Buono:

That's great. Always encouraging. So we'll now move to other topics, is the discussion items, so we'll move to the 21-22 budget discussion.

Mr. Simons:

So we are in budget season and at this point, the governor has released to the residents of the state of New York is executive governor's proposal for the budget for next year, which includes the portions of the budget related to state schooling. And that information was provided to us from our elected legislators. And we began to do a review of it to determine what the State is proposing at this point as advisory process for our revenues, which is relying very heavily on an assumption that a large amount of federal aid will flow into the state, which will be distributed through a formula to the schools. Linda Wager, who is our Director of Business and Finance has worked to review the data on the projected state aid for our schools. She has also worked with Questar, which has a statewide department called State Aid Planning that helps us to understand our state aid scenarios. So I'm going to turn it over to Linda to talk about the state aid analysis, and then we'll jump back and forth.

Ms. Wager:

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Simons. So I wanted to provide the board tonight, some general and very preliminary information on a few different topics. One is the governor's executive budget, and then how that pertains to our district, as well as I wanted to just give some general information on where we are with health insurance rates, BOCES's rates, a review of the budget request items and just an update on the enrollment projection. So Mr. Goodwin, if you could pull up the file under budget discussion, that's called New York state budget for school aid comparison. That was fine.

Mr. Simons:

He's got to share the screen. There we go.

Ms. Wager:

Great. Thank you. Okay. This is an overview of the executive budget as it pertains to school aid and education. And there's a couple of items that I just want to point out to you. The governor prepared this budget with an assumption of \$6 billion in federal aid. That is not a guarantee at this point, but he felt it was a strong assumption. He is however, asking the federal government for \$15 billion for New York State, but this budget was prepared with \$6 billion in mind. In that first section there that you're seeing on top, where it says total state funded school aid, that includes that \$6 billion that I was referring to. Another item in here is foundation aid, that is the largest part of our general aid that we receive and that is staying the same as it is in the 2021 school year, which is also the same as it was in the 2020 school year, so that is a three-year flat rate. Another item that the governor proposed was taking a series of aid categories and summarizing them into a category called services aid.

Ms. Wager:

And if you look, the categories include BOCES's aid, transportation aid, instructional material aides, those are the main categories in our district that will be consolidated into the services aid category. If we could stay in at first sheet, Peter, that's be great. And I'll tell you when to move up. And so if you look at that in the 2021 proposal, is \$3.7 billion, but next year he is projecting \$3.3 billion. So he's consolidating those aids and it is being decreased. And it's interesting how it falls with our district, which we'll discuss in a minute. Another item that he put into his budget this year, which has not been included in prior years is the STAR reimbursement. So there are two types of STAR, one is a credit, and that is where a homeowner pays the taxes and then receives a check back from the government. And the other, which applies to us, is an exemption on a home owner's taxes. So therefore the homeowner pays less in taxes, and then the state makes the district whole with the STAR aid and that has never been included as state aid.

Ms. Wager:

We always include that as part of our taxes, so that is something to consider. And he is also reflecting a negative funding adjustment against that. And then very importantly, at the bottom there, is a COVID-19 supplemental stimulus act, and that is \$3.8 billion that he has included in the budget. That is a second source of federal revenue and that is the money that was approved by the president in December. So of that allocation, total allocation federal wide, New York state is receiving a certain amount about four billion and \$3.8 billion of that is plugged into the state aid projections. That's a concern not only for next year, because that is not supplemental revenue to us, but it's a concern for years after that, because if the state doesn't have that federal money in the 22-23 school year coming from the federal government has got to come from somewhere.

Ms. Wager:

So it will come most likely in the form of reductions in state aid. So that's something for us to keep in mind that this pandemic has not only affected this year, next year, but the following year. If we can move on to the next sheet there Peter, Mr. Goodman. The governor's budget is then spread out over the districts and we receive state aid runs and I took our state aid run and I compared it a side-by-side comparison for this current year versus projected for next year. When we receive the runs, it's in a vertical format, but I thought this would be easier to take a look at. So, as I said, the foundation aid is staying static at \$17.1 million. The services aid in our case, is projected to increase. And I'm going to go over what makes up that aid in a little bit and why I'm concerned about it. If you go down a little bit farther, you can see our ATAR payment. Our STAR payment this year was almost \$4.2 million it's projected to be four million next year.

Ms. Wager:

So that alone is a decrease in the STAR program that I spoke about. He also included in that area, the local district funding adjustment of \$3.9 million, so that \$3.9 million adjustment is East Greenbush district's portion of that \$3.8 billion that I referred to on the previous page. So he's actually reducing that from the STAR payment. So there's some question right now and the state aid planners are actually in contact with our legislators, trying to figure out exactly how that adjustment will be taken. We'll receive that in less STAR aid, which will affect our ability to tax, or will it be a deduct from our regular state aid? So the next sheet there, Peter.

Ms. Wager:

I referred to the services aid. So in our current year, the combination of those aids is \$5.9 million. It's projected next year at \$7.1 million. So I was concerned about that because those projections seemed high to me and I looked at our BOCES is projected to increase 300,000, our transportation aid 900,000, and these numbers seem artificially high to me. So those numbers, I talked with the state aid planners, so those numbers are projections and the truth is, those payments will be made based on our expenditures for this year. Our aid ratios went up slightly. Transportation aid went from 65.2 is projected at 66% next year, but that does not account for that large increase in transportation aid. So I just caution everyone that these are very preliminary and most likely will be changing. That is what I had, that was just a general overview of what we know so far about the state aid. Now I can go on to the other topics or we can stop there and I can answer some questions.

Mr. Simons:

Why don't we do that, see if there're any questions about state aid before we go any further.

Mr. Buono:

Since we're screen sharing, I can't see anybody so if you want to talk, you can go ahead and ask a question. I don't see any questions. Okay.

Ms. Wager:

Okay. All right.

Mr. Buono:

Again, I just want to say, this is the executive proposal.

Ms. Wager:

Yes. Right. So the next thing I wanted to talk about was health insurance rates, that's a large part of our budget is our health insurance expense. Right now we are in conversations with Amsure, our insurance agent, there are slight increases in the premium rates for our Blue Shield plans. I don't know the increase in rates for the CDPHP plans yet, but what we are looking at is trying to use some of the reserve money that we have with cash at our health insurance consortium. We have reserves on file with them, and we will be talking with them about using some of those reserves so that we can keep our health insurance rates in check, basically. So there'll be more information to come on that. And we expect that I'll be able to have final rates probably towards the end of February.

Ms. Wager:

The next item is BOCES rates. I'm just going to give a quick overview on that because I see we have a further presentation on that. BOCES rates look very good this year. There are three components to the rates, the administration, the rent and capital, and then the services. The administration and the rent and capital sections have a 0% increase this year. The services rates, that consists of all of the programs that we sign up for. Many of them, instructional programs that we sign up for with BOCES and 94% of those programs have a less than or equal to 2% increase. So those rate increases are very acceptable and we'll be going into some further information on that. The next item I wanted to talk about was the budget request items and Mr. Goodwin, there is a spreadsheet on that if you could pull that up.

Ms. Wager:

So over the last month to month and a half, I met with all of the building administrators, department heads, supervisors, directors, and we talked about items that are important to them in this next budget and we also spoke about the fact that we are in a pandemic and we are facing a financial crisis. So we have decided that in this next budget, our main priority will be focused on academic intervention services. As we went through this, I tried to categorize all of these requests into a priority, A, B or C. So basically all of the AIS...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [01:04:04]

Ms. Wager:

B or C. So basically all of the AIS requests uploading goes in a column in primary A, which is in the, I guess, in blue. And the reason I did that, it's not saying that these items are going in. It's just saying that these items are on the top priority of the requests we received. And all of these requests are subject to budget or State aid. However revenue is coming out and our enrollment review. So a couple of the items I wanted to point out, most of the elementary buildings are looking for an additional 0.5 AIS teacher. And I calculated those salaries based on, I used step three of the salary schedule for 21/22. And I did that because we don't always bring all of our teachers in, in step one. And sometimes they're a little bit higher than step three, they could be step five. So I used step three. I used the TRS expense percentage of 10% FICA and 7.65%. On the non-instructional salaries I used an ERS a percentage of 16.2%, which I do have that supporting documentation from ERS and TRS.

Ms. Wager:

As far as the health insurance, I projected using family health insurance plans with a district share of 82%. So that would be an employee contribution of 18%. So each of the elementaries have really requested an additional 0.5 AIS. Genet has requested a little bit more than that, but that was in light of we're looking at enrollment and it appears that we have a large kindergarten projection for enrollment. It seems out of line with the other years. So based on that, based on increased enrollment and also based on the fact that we've had some families leave the district when we reopened and they may be coming back next year. So that's why we're talking about extra AIS teachers and possibly the need for extra grade level teachers as well. In the middle school, their priority was the same thing, AIS. They are looking for additional help with AIS, as well as additional help with homework clubs and after school, where the teachers are staying now for an hour, twice a week, helping students. We currently have four teachers doing that and they're requesting to increase that to six teachers.

Ms. Wager:

At the high school, we felt may be a priority for increased Apex licenses through our BOCES. And we currently have 50 and we are assuming that we could probably have a need for another 40. Under the curriculum instruction. We have the Savvas, I that's how you say it, Savvas EnVision Program. This is a K8 program that we renew the subscription for every three years. So this is a three-year subscription and it is quite expensive. But while we're thinking is that we may need to take some of the allocation that we've made to the buildings for textbooks and reclassify that to this district wide code so that we can cover that expense.

Ms. Wager:

I'm going to come back to technology and pupil personnel services department. A few years ago when the responsibilities for registrar was moved over to that office, it short-staffed the office by approximately a 0.5 typist. So we're looking to either re-staff that office with a 0.5, reassign responsibilities, from another type of position to that office, or possibly there is a power school online, which has the most expensive option and something that we may need to consider in a future year. But what this would allow the registrar to do is, it would allow the families to register online and all of the documentation would be going back and forth through a secure online portal.

Ms. Wager:

In Athletics. The main priority is a coach for the girls golf team. That sport has been growing over the last few years. And there is some difficulty in scheduling with the boys golf team and the girls golf team together. And then there was also a request for some just additional assistant coaching positions by season. In operations and maintenance, next year in the 21/22 school year, we are required to have a building condition survey completed, and that's estimated to be \$50,000.

Ms. Wager:

The infrared radiant heating system is, there are three heating systems in the bus bay garage at the transportation center. All three of them have failed. Two of them have been repaired and this year and the \$44,000 is to repair the third one next year. There is also, as part of our vehicle replacement plan, we need to replace a Ford F150 pickup, we will be replacing a 2009 F250 pickup. And then there are a couple of other items that we, a salt shed for storing salt, which we will discuss with the town of East Greenbush, sharing that service as well as a platform. This platform is super straddled. Why that is, is that is when they have to change the light bulbs in the auditorium at the high school and Genet. At the high school, they actually have to unbolt all of those seats so that they can get a piece of equipment in there to get up and change those light bulbs. And so this would make it easier, but we are looking into possibility of renting that from possibly next door at the True Value.

Ms. Wager:

Human Resources department. We are looking into, there is a need for additional clerical assistance during their peak times. And we are also looking into exploring a service for investigations that need to be done, and that's very time consuming for that department. So we're just looking into that. In the transportation department, I listed there, the replacement of eight buses, which that's part of our replacement plan. I did not put those in a priority category because that \$736,000 is covered by the bus reserve that we have. And that bus reserve plan we add in the State aid from the bus purchases every year. And we try to add to that. So at the end of June 30th 2020, we had over \$900,000 in there. So those buses will be covered.

Ms. Wager:

The transportation department is requesting to update their Transfinder program to a cloud based program so that in the event of power outages, they would still have access to that. And that is \$15,000. Those are the main requests that we had. And as I said, we're focusing our efforts on AIS and we definitely do need to renew the EnVision license for the next three years.

Mr. Simons:

Did a nice job of summarizing everything and detailing everything, really great organization so that the board can see and the public can see what the requests are. One of the things that I'll reemphasize that Mrs. Wager said was that this was just a starting point and a preliminary review of what our building administrators, directors, and supervisors have identified as requests. There are aspects of the budget that go off automatically such as health insurance, salaries and benefits including retirement projections that relate to TRS and ERS. So some of these requests are dependent upon where we go with revenues, where we go with the tax cap, which is likely to be very low this year.

Ms. Wager:

That's correct. I'm sorry, but I did not go back to the technology department and I do want to go back to that for a minute because we are having a needs assessment and there's a lot of numbers there. So I did want to cover a couple of things. We are having an assessment of our technology needs being done, which is just getting started by an outside firm. So I just wanted to highlight that, but some items that we do need to think about are the replacement of the VM-ware systems. This year, we replaced about a \$100,000 worth towards that system. And there's another \$35,000 that's needed for next year. We have also some contracts that have come as a result of the capital projects that we did. We have maintenance contracts on the telephone PA system. And those are set, they're approximately \$60,000.

Ms. Wager:

There is a request for some additional professional development within the technology department. And then the line item that I really wanted to talk to you about is the \$140,000. And what that is, is that's for the replacement we're in the third year of our lighthouse program or a one-to-one Chromebook program. So that entire \$40,000 represents 3000 Chromebooks and licenses. The reason I hadn't put it into a category is because we have smart schools money left to take care of this purchase. We have to submit the plan, which in February you'll be hearing about. And then there was a public comment period before we actually submit the application, which will be in March, but I don't know the timeframe for the approval of that application. So I don't want to put \$840,000 into the budget because I won't be able to estimate the revenue to go along with that until know that there is an approved application.

Ms. Wager:

Are there any questions on that? Then the last category I just wanted to just brief you on is the enrollment projection. I just today received the draft report from CRPC. I will be reviewing it this week and we expect the final report to be issued next week. So I'll have that for the board the first week in February. I do want to reiterate that they are still projecting a high kindergarten enrollment this year. Our kindergarten enrollment dates are set for February and March. So we'll know how that comes out. We'll be able to give you updates on the progression of that.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks Linda. Any questions from members? No? Again, I want to review what you just said, the ton of work going on here and the breaking it out for the community and for the board to see really specifically kind of what the needs are with the executive level. What kind of things that they're doing to support school districts or not. And then kind of what our role is going to be to take this information, make sure the team gets it, start working on our budget and what we need to do as a community to support our

students and families. But also recognize that our tax payers have been stressed during this pandemic too. So it's going to be a very delicate balancing act for us to navigate. Anything else?

Ms. Wager:

That's all I have. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Moving on to the next discussion. There was a request to our budget review for 21/22. To mention the rates briefly, everyone is happy with the rates?

Ms. Wager:

Yes. They do.

Mr. Simons:

Just one thing that I was going to say about it. So that was good. And that will save us some time. I appreciate you summarizing that. The only thing I would point out and I would encourage the board and members of the community to really read the presentation. The crossfire policies is mindful of the appointed district's financial circumstances, as we just described. And has really done a good job of being as efficient as they can be with zero increases was mentioned in the administrative budget, an average of 2%, and some of the programs, most of the programs. It's a very tight budget request for Questar in terms of backpedaling staff, and making some of those officers with that we're going to have to pick. So I am appreciative of that. But in the document, we go through it about 43 pages in, there's information that helps to understand what our responsibilities are within the component districts, which are 23 component districts in Questar.

Mr. Simons:

Our enrollment and current technical education programs are offered by Questar. And in the Tech Valley high school was a specialized STEM program upgraded at the CNSCE campus in Albany has increased over the last few years. And that is due to some changes in practice that have enabled more kids who may be able to pursue career and technical education and you have a career field interest that sparks you to come to enroll in a course at Questar. And changes in our registration process that offers the full complement of courses to students that, A may want to take them and B can fit them into their schedule.

Mr. Simons:

So the numbers in the budget are more reflective of our participation in the Questar programs, as well as, as our enrollment grows, which is growing, our portion of the share of the overall expenses associated based on a formula called RWADA is weighted average daily attendance. We contribute more, being a larger district in the Boces in having growing enrollment. And it's a formula that is averaged over a few years. So our kids are doing well in BOCES programs. And the Questar are doing a good job of managing their costs.

Mr. Buono:

Any questions? I think the RWADA chart is starts on 09/10 and goes through 19/20 is on page 39. If you have a chance to look at that you can see how the district... I think it's a testament to our committee

and our district that we've seen a trend where students and families are enrolling in our program under our district. Whereas significant differences throughout the region and I think it speaks to the quality of education, the community about people being attracted to live and work in our community and then send their children to schools. So it's a positive trend. It's good to see that with more families probably coming in in the future with some of the development in general and other industries, I see the increase and we still want to offer a compliment of services or programs to our community. To best educate, prepare our students for college and careers. Bit of information.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you very much.

Mr. Buono:

Any other comments? Before we move onto other discussion items. No. Okay. Well, we'll move onto to committee reports and Marissa, you're up first. Appendix D.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you. So our Appendix D committee met on Thursday, January 21st. And we started off the committee meeting by scheduling some future meeting dates through March of 2021. As of now, we are scheduled three meetings in February and an additional three in March. So far, we have a draft evaluation tool ready, and we also have the draft application tool. And what we've been struggling on as a committee, is the cost matrix. So what we've done during this most recent meeting was kind of looking at it through a new lens and JoAnn had taken a close look at our matrix that we have been working on for the holiday break and recommended that perhaps we look at an hourly rate for the new cost structure. We've been very focused on trying to make Appendix C, which is our coaches model, Appendix D, and it's really, it's been trying to put a square peg round hole and it's just not working.

Ms. Cannon:

So when JoAnn had suggested that our committee thought it was a good idea to look at all of our options, including what could be an hourly rate. Something similar perhaps to an intramural rate. And we've also decided while looking at that hourly rate to see if we could potentially develop different tiers and look at commonalities between some of the appendix D clubs and we could have potentially three tiers. And each of those three tiers could be at a different rate, depending on the club functions and activities. We discussed several areas of exploration, such as setting parameters. So what would be the maximum cap on the highest number of earnings for that hourly rate? How would we look at preparation time? How would that be compensated? And then how many times per year. There is language in the contract that states that our appendix D advisors are paid two times a year. So really looking at how would that hourly rate work at two times a year where we have to keep the payslips and disperse, is there room for potential new language in the contract?

Ms. Cannon:

So that's where we've we locked it. It was really a good brainstorming session. So we will continue to update you on where these items go moving forward. And we will be hopefully out together a cost matrix with some hourly figures and seeing where that goes.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Marissa, anything you want to add JoAnn?

Ms. Taylor:

I think Marissa summed it up pretty well. Once you get into to look at it, it's a lot more complex than meets the eye, to say, just to set up a new matrix. There's so many different variables. And even just saying, what about an hourly rate? There's so many different variables that need to be adjusted and shifted, maybe we could do something like that. Maybe we should step into something else, but there's just so many ambiguities that we need to really take the time and sit and go through it, plug numbers in. Really play with it to see what's going to work best once we actually start it.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you JoAnn. Appreciate it all your teams work to the next date. Any questions for JoAnn or Marissa? Thank you. We'll move to Linda. Any reports?

Ms. Wager:

I don't have anything else.

Mr. Buono:

You don't have anything so far. Thank you. Jim, you?

Mr. McHugh:

I don't have any reports at this time.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. I know you're on the agenda later, too. Mr Simons?

Mr. Simons:

Yes, real quickly. The advocacy committee, which was established last year to work with our community, to address issues for all of our schools, including the state aid discussion that we've been talking about tonight. We met on January 22nd east zone, and we are discussing the idea of having another thought exchange for the community on or about February 11th, where in addition to giving the community an update regarding our school operations and COVID, talking about some of the financial issues that make our community more aware. And hopefully end up with some type of a virtual forum where we talk with our legislators, as we did in a live forum last year about some of our challenges. And that was included our state legislators and our federal representatives. And then I asked, Mrs. Curtin, a member of our board talked a little bit about the school boards association unanimous is coming up. We timed this after Ms. Curtin attends some of the activities going on sponsored by the New York State School Boards Association. Ms. Curtin.

Ms. Curtin:

Okay. And next Wednesday, February 3rd, there is going to be about, I don't remember the name of it now, but basically it's the advocacy component of the New York State School Boards Association. And they're going to be doing a whole presentation on executive budget. I know I'm planning on attending. I believe Ms. Massey also. And once we kind of listened to that, kind of get where the school board association is going with, what they feel about priorities are for advocacy. I think that will help give us some ideas of what the rest of the state's going. That doesn't mean we have to be at the same spot, but at least gives us some ideas of where we can get some additional help from other people who are in a

very similar situation as us. And I think the hardest thing this year is everybody needs money. And we're going to be told there is none. So it's going to be an interesting year for advocacy all the way around I think.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Ms. Curtin.

Mr. Simons:

The other committee I want to report on, which is a very important committee, is our committee on quality education. This committee was formed last year to address concerns regarding diversity. To make sure that as a district, we continue to offer an inclusive and supportive and accepting environment that respects all students, all staff members and all community members. We have been meeting and discussing what we could do as a district to continue to address issues around race, ethnicity, discrimination, acceptance, and inclusion. The committee is broken into four sub groups, and each of those subgroups is chaired by respective administrator and or teacher. So we have family and community engagement. We have policies and procedures. We have teaching and learning and we have professional development. And we come up with some priority activities for this year that we want to continue to highlight to our community. The professional development committee will be sponsoring a book study for teachers and staff with a book that is all about racial justice, including transforming communities through mindfulness.

Mr. Simons:

There are five sessions set up for the book study in March, April and May. That book study is open to any of the committee members or anybody else who wants to join us. And we're in the process of registering people and ordering the book. Additionally, we want to develop an ambassador program in each school that would reach out to new parents, students and staff who are coming from outside the community including those families that are coming maybe from outside the state or outside our country. And formally welcoming them and assist them at adjusting to a new school district and a new community and help them navigate what resources are available within the community. We have a curriculum instruction committee that is looking at a formal research-based instruments that can be used to look at our curricular resources to ensure that we are mindful of any ethnic or racial bias within our instructional materials.

Mr. Simons:

And Mr. McHugh's development committee is looking at ways that we can incorporate some training and professional development for all staff next year, including the inclusion of some of the topics around diversity into our curriculum through some curriculum projects. Recently, we brought to the attention of our staff, we sent this out, there are workshops being sponsored by the Capital District Regional Partnership, including culturally responsive practices. There's a workshop on February 25th on family engagement, community and culture. On March 11th, fundamentals of equity, exploring equity and cultural responsiveness. And in April, 29th of April, what does it mean to be a culturally responsive educator? Those are free freshman development opportunities that we have brought to the attention of our staffs. So we're doing a lot of work in this area. We know that it is an important thing we need to continue to emphasize. And our committee is very excited about that.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent. All great activities. I appreciate the committee's work on that. Any questions for Mr. Simons on the committee's work for quality education? I wanted to go back about the advocacy. I know that the inter-commissioner and the chancellor also wrote a letter, a public letter that I think went out through an email from SCD really supporting the fact that a lot of the governor's budget talked about these being one shots and making sure that the impact on these things long-term would be devastating for school districts. So I thought it was very well. And it's the first time I think I've seen an SCD in a long time come out very strongly about advocating for schools in that way. So it was good to see that in terms of the responses.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you Mike. I can close my report.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Mr. Simons. Moving on to the next topic is the approval of draft minutes for January 13, all members were present either virtually or in person. Any changes or revisions to those minutes. Said nothing, a motion to approve the minutes? Kathleen, and Jennifer second, all those in favor? Approved. Moving to a regular business. Approval of programs for present children with disabilities, any questions? I need a motion to approve that. Joanne second, Michelle, all those in favor? Approved. Moving to our goal objectives. We've had conversations about the goals and objectives and recent meetings. This is an opportunity to formalize those. Any final comments regarding the goals and objectives for 2020/2021.

Mr. Buono:

I had asked Mr. Simons to make sure that also that we think about our planning processes in terms of continuing to look at reopening at the elementary school in terms of more days in person. All the activities that we put in place before this Thursday and after the holidays and making sure that that's also on the forefront of our planning and thinking, as we think about the goals for this year.

Mr. Simons:

We have started to discuss that, re-establishing that process of looking at some of the options that we were considering prior to the holiday increase in COVID cases. Mr. McHugh and I are talking about how to meet with our principals to get that process started.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent. Although there's a lot going on I think that's important for our community knowing that as we move past this surge of cases, that they'll be more efforts to help the district move into more elementary in person instruction. So with that again, is there's any questions or comments on the goals and objectives? Motion to approve those? Mark, second, John, all those in favor? Approved. Thank you. Reports and presentations on the schools increases the graduation rate by suburb by human interest, Mr. McHugh.

Mr. Simons:

I get to pass this off to my assistant superintendent for reconstruction, Mr. McHugh.

Mr. McHugh:

Good evening everyone.

Mr. Buono:

Good evening Jim.

Mr. McHugh:

So [inaudible 01:36:00] thank you. So New York State Education Department coll...

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:36:04]

Mr. McHugh:

[inaudible 01:36:01] So New York State Education Department collects the graduation data for approximately 200,000 students per year. They look at over 700 public school districts and over 200 charter schools and [inaudible 01:36:14]. Whenever you see [inaudible 01:36:16], that is what they're referring to.

Mr. McHugh:

The data is referred by cohort group, and how they describe the cohort group is the year that the students that graduated in the class entered year nine for the first time. So last year's graduating class of 2020 was the cohort group of 2016.

Mr. McHugh:

What's really important for us is that the graduation rates are now calculated for all who we're responsible for, not just the four year graduation rate in June, but also that four year graduation rate in August, the five year graduation rate, and now the six year graduation rate. I'll talk about that a little bit.

Mr. McHugh:

Each year, we get our [inaudible 01:36:58] report, accountability, and it was not a [inaudible 01:37:05] that they [inaudible 01:37:05] this year, but they did give us the data on our six year graduation rate, meaning that a student that doesn't walk across that stage in June, we still have that responsibility to try to get them to graduate for two years after their classmates have graduated. We knew that our six year graduation rate for our students that fall in the category of economically disadvantaged, we needed to start [inaudible 01:37:31] that. I'm going to talk about that a bit more towards the end.

Mr. McHugh:

2020, as you know, wasn't a typical school year. On March 16th, the executive order directed us to close [inaudible 01:37:43] March 18th. There were subsequent executive orders that required schools to stay closed for the remainder of the school year. We lose sight of the fact that where we are today, when we look back to last March, we got two days worth of notice for our schools and all of our teachers, the [inaudible 01:38:04].

Mr. McHugh:

April 2020, the education department gets [inaudible 01:38:11] regents exams, and they forward what the regents direct for our changes. They're exams change to August, 2020 regents exams, and really

what that meant was certain students were exempted. They were exempted from the regents exam, the requirements, passed the board requirements, plus [inaudible 01:38:25]. Parents had the option to decline regents exams exemptions, so the child would remain in school if they so chose to do so.

Mr. McHugh:

Next slide. For [inaudible 01:38:39], we looked at the score. You can assume the regents exam exemption was a factor in the increase in the graduation rate. However, we do not say [inaudible 01:38:51]. New York State overall increased their rate 3.4% to 84.8%. [inaudible 01:38:56] High School was at 97%. It should be noted that we were also 97% in 2019.

Mr. McHugh:

Digging a little deeper, these exemptions, they impacted 16 of our students. 11 of those students [inaudible 01:39:10] students for disability, and four of those students were sitting, were required reading for the first time. We took a deeper look into those 16 students. They were well prepared to take their exams. We were rather confident that they would have done well on those exams, sometimes significantly, but the graduation rate increased. Where you're seeing this modest increase in graduation rate are the highly inner city, [inaudible 01:39:29] city schools.

Mr. McHugh:

[inaudible 01:39:36] students in some of those suburbs that really needed that exemption if they're even [inaudible 01:39:41] to graduate, so the high needs area saw a higher increase in graduation rate, and low needs areas such as [inaudible 01:39:49] saw little or no change in their graduation.

Mr. McHugh:

Why is this important? We continually need to [inaudible 01:39:57] our ability to assess and to respond to possible impact of executive orders. It wasn't just a one year thing. It wasn't just an exemption from regents for last year. It has an impact on our current students, our seniors this year, our juniors this year, our sophomores this year. There could have been a prerequisite course that had a [inaudible 01:40:18]. They're now at a higher level course. We are [inaudible 01:40:22] that impact. We look at our course failures quarterly. We look at our students that are failing one subject or more subjects, and we are trying to make sure that we have supports in place, the supports for students that might need that little extra support.

Mr. McHugh:

Next slide. We need to report either graduation rate by subgroup. This is all students. It's 96%. That includes [inaudible 01:40:52] students that may go into other programs at other schools.

Mr. McHugh:

The next slide, Peter. Our students at [inaudible 01:41:00] high school, that was our 97% graduation rate. You can see where we've been over the years, from 2014 to 2020.

Mr. McHugh:

Next slide, Peter. We break it down by female students. Next slide, male students, next slide, and then by ethnicity. Next slide, Peter. Next one. Next one. In general education students and then students with

disabilities. We look at these cohorts. Next slide, please. Economically disadvantaged students, and you can go to the next slide, Pete.

Mr. McHugh:

Then really what our next steps, we identify who our non-[inaudible 01:41:55] are, so we go back four years to really see who these students are that aren't graduating, are dropping out. We try to make a student profile. That's pretty interesting to do.

Mr. McHugh:

In our 2013 cohort, six students did not graduate. 2014, it's eight students. The 2015 cohort, four, and then last year's graduating class, it was five students. 10 males, 13 females, 10 of those 23 students were students with disabilities. We have seen an increase in [inaudible 01:42:30], so some of the students that did drop out, some of them are on that line, typically between 7th and 10th grade, with some emotional wellness issues that really prevented that student from being successful.

Mr. McHugh:

14 of our students that did not graduate over the last four years, 61% of them fell into the category of economically disadvantaged. We know that's a factor, as is ethnicity as well. Interestingly enough, we don't realize here at [inaudible 01:43:02] the depth of challenges that some of our students face. We had three [inaudible 01:43:05] students that didn't graduate over the last four years.

Mr. McHugh:

Four of the 23 students were in very strong academic standing. If you look just at their grades, they were straight A students, 90s, maybe an occasional 80 or a B, but there were four students that really had strong academic standing, but there was some other reason why they were not able to graduate.

Mr. McHugh:

11 of the students, almost half of those students were students who transferred in and out of the district. Some of them were [inaudible 01:43:38]. They transferred out of the district and then returned, or vice versa, they transferred into the district from another school district.

Mr. McHugh:

Four students, and this is interesting to note, refused district recommended placement. For instance, two of our students who were placed in CETA whose placement was appropriate because their grades were strong and the students were successful. Then the students chose either to homeschool or chose to try to return to the high school setting. Students might be placed in [inaudible 01:44:11] skills program or [inaudible 01:44:16], but what we did note is that there were challenges and contributing factors to why these students didn't graduate, and they included... It just wasn't a single challenge. It was sometimes a combination of multiple challenges.

Mr. McHugh:

Those things, the included homelessness, placement in [inaudible 01:44:37] programs, but you can see that [inaudible 01:44:40] and, of course, chronic absenteeism.

Mr. McHugh:

What are we doing? We got a strong special education and related services program. I would almost guarantee that our [inaudible 01:44:55] leaders, our dropout numbers would increase drastically, but it should be noted that our special education and related services is a program that is under review this year. Our adult services education program is slated to be under review next year. Those are things we're looking at, and we have [inaudible 01:45:17] increased accountability, so we're looking for those commonalities. We're looking for trends. We're looking for missed opportunities. Is there something that we're missing that we could be doing?

Mr. McHugh:

I know COVID-19 has been a tremendous challenge, but there are some students that have flourished in our remote learning, so I think there may be some things that may be an appropriate alternative for some students [inaudible 01:45:42].

Mr. McHugh:

That's the idea. If there are any questions, comments... I appreciate you, John.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Jim. So we'll stop sharing and...

Mr. Simons:

The board has asked us to never rest on our laurels, so the 97% graduation rate is a significant accomplishment, but we are now focusing on the dropout rate, as Mr. McHugh identified in those common indicators of those kids and bring that information back to those program reviews in special ed and ALTA to see what we can do to fill those gaps for those kids, that means those challenges.

Mr. Simons:

I appreciate the work that Mr. McHugh is doing, not only on the presentation, but really going and taking a deep dive into the data, kid by kid. Jim looked at specific children over the last three years, three cohorts, that dropped out, talked with principals and counselors and got a profile of those kids to learn what we could do, or maybe what we missed, to intervene in the future. I really appreciate that work, Jim.

Mr. Buono:

Definitely. The whole team in terms of supporting our families and students, it's good to have it over the finish line, so to speak, so they can have an opportunity once they leave Columbia high schools. Thank you for that.

Mr. Buono:

Moving from graduation rates, table motions? I don't have anything at this time. Old business? Board members, any old business that need mentioned? No? Moving on to the consent agenda, items A through H, any questions or comments for the team? Any [inaudible 01:47:36]?

Speaker 2:

I think everything's pretty straightforward.

Mr. Buono:

I can see we had an appointment for the business office, which is good, right?

Ms. Wager:

It's good.

Mr. Buono:

So yeah, thanks for all the work. It's a difficult time to hire during this period, right Marissa? I appreciate all your work on the personnel side.

Ms. Taylor:

Can I quickly congratulate Wendy, Emily, Kelvin, and Maureen on their upcoming retirements? When you look at the number of years, there's almost 65 years of service to the children of East Greenbush, and it's a remarkable amount of time and a remarkable amount of work.

Mr. Buono:

Great, thanks for mentioning those. Hopefully towards the end of this school year we can do some recognition activities for our retirees and [inaudible 01:48:20] folks that we usually do. Fingers crossed. Thanks for mentioning that, and those are some of the names across the district, so good luck in your retirement. Any other comments or questions? I need a motion to approve the consent agenda. Kathleen, Jennifer, all those in favor? Approved. New business? Board members, any new business to bring to the attention of... Yeah? We do have an item for new business, proposal for a technology department position. You want to speak to that, Charlie?

Mr. Simons:

Yes. I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Goodwin, our director of technology. The board is aware that prior to COVID we wanted to look at the capacity of our technology department. We have a very small technology department and there was a number of people in the department and the position descriptions have been the same for many, many years. During that same time period, particularly over the last four years, we've, through the capital project, installed a new phone system that requires the technology department's support, new security cameras and software that requires the technology department support, a one to one program for Chromebooks and expansion of devices to the teachers and the students [inaudible 01:49:48] through Smart Schools.

Mr. Simons:

The department under Peter's direction does an excellent job, but it is stretched, and that is probably the biggest understatement that I've ever made. We are looking at a full review from the Madison-Oneida Regional Information Center of the capacity of the department, and they will bring back a report by the end of the year.

Mr. Simons:

We've had some meetings this year to get that study back on track, including last week between Mr. [inaudible 01:50:22] and myself and Mr. McHugh.

Mr. Simons:

In the interim, we have a position which has been vacated through a resignation of a network technician, and Mr. Goodwin, who's been reviewing the needs of his department, feels that a different type of position with a different description, different background, different compensation level will support the department capacity a little better. Mr. Goodwin, if you're ready and able not to operate the computer at the same time, can you give us a little bit of an overview of what we're proposing to do?

Mr. Simons:

We're looking to move forward on this if the board supports the concept and we recognize that this is not a good time to add costs, but we also have really a capacity issue. We also think that this position may cut down on some of the overtime. Dwight? Sorry, Peter?

Mr. Goodwin:

Yes, thank you. One of the things that I've noticed, I'm here for every board meeting and I've heard it again and again whenever we have an opening in our staff, that we should reevaluate the position, and so I've done a little bit of that for this particular position. The position primarily serves here at Columbia High School. When you look at the current situation, with the Chromebook one to one program, we've taken on the added support of families and their WiFi experiences at home, an increased demand, unprecedented really, of Chromebook usage now, and so the demands are far different than they were just one or two years ago.

Mr. Goodwin:

I also tried to consider the timeline, so realistically, if our work with the [inaudible 01:52:24] yielded a finding that we needed to add positions, the earliest we could do that would be July of '22. Looking at the needs and the way things have increased, I support the addition of a higher level technician for this particular location, and also to build capacity within the department. We're trying to be the best that we can be. We have several key positions held by people who have been here quite a long time and have done a great job, and we need to make sure that they have backup support, so we can achieve both of those things with this particular move, and it's my recommendation to the board that we post for the educational technology specialist position, which has a different level of technical skill and experience associated with it, rather than post the network technician position, which is currently vacant.

Mr. Buono:

Any questions? Now, Peter's behind the screen, so you can't... [inaudible 01:53:31] the screen out and looking at you guys.

Mr. Goodwin:

Sorry.

Mr. Buono:

That's okay. Any questions for Peter? I think that I assume the rest of you helped with the analysis of the position, and what about the recruiting for the position?

Ms. Cannon:

Next steps, if the board supports this, I would go to the [inaudible 01:53:53] County Civil Service to see if there's an eligible list for this particular position. If there is, we would have to hire off of that list. If not, we would move forward with posting the position as a provisional hire.

Mr. Buono:

Just an example, what are some of the qualifications, Peter, that... Minimum quals that would be in this position versus a network technician, make it a higher skill level?

Mr. Goodwin:

The educational technologist has a higher level of experience and minimum qualifications are higher as well. They're able to handle a wider variety of problems and understand how they relate to the entire network that's in play. Also, it would be a person who would have the ability to perform as a backup for key positions that we have only one person in.

Mr. Buono:

Is that Wayne?

Mr. Goodwin:

Sitting right next to me, yes.

Mr. Buono:

I think I support it. I think those distinctions, and I think given the need for depth, it is an FTE neutral, it is paid higher, but if also it could be someone that supports the overtime and [inaudible 01:55:17] time for backup, it seems like a good way to go. Any comments, folks?

Speaker 3:

So an SRP position, so the outgoing position was represented by SRP. The new position will be represented by SRP, so it's not... They're not losing bargaining unit members.

Mr. Mann:

So you know what the increase is from the current vacant position to what the new position would be salary-wise?

Mr. Buono:

Any estimated, Marissa, on a typical year's salary?

Ms. Cannon:

I would have to get you that information.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. I'm looking at the difference. I stuck one mark on the document, bullet number two, and bullet number three, [inaudible 01:56:09]. It looks like it's about \$12 on step one, and it's consistent around the schedule.

Mr. Simons:

There's an hourly rate differential of, depending on what step the person is in the current position, outgoing position, is \$24.75 on step one. Step 11 is \$35.05, and the new position at comparable steps would be \$36.48 and \$47,50 respectively, so the hourly rate is higher. I don't know, Peter. That puts you on the spot. Do you know what the estimated total salary per year would be? Let's assume it's a step one.

Mr. Goodwin:

I think I could figure that out for you. I don't have it in front of me.

Mr. Simons:

Why don't we, rather than guess, we'll provide that information as a follow up to the board.

Ms. Cannon:

I can work on that tomorrow.

Mr. Buono:

Just use a typical 2080 hours. 75.

Participant:

And I guess then it's the longer budget.

Mr. Buono:

I support it. Does anybody support not moving in that direction? Because it's going to take time to... You say there's a list posting, Michelle?

Ms. Skumurski:

I support it as long as it's fiscally responsible, that we're not an excessive amount of difference. I think Peter and his staff have picked up a tremendous amount of work with all the remote, and I definitely would support it as long as we can financially handle it.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you.

Mr. Simons:

We'll put together the total estimated salary and benefits of the new position, and we'll send that out tomorrow.

Mr. Buono:

Okay, very good. A couple of things, on the end of this, I want to mention... Is there any more for this topic? Yes?

Mr. Dunn:

Just a comment. Again, I'm in support of this moving. I think one of the things we are recognizing as we have vaulted into the technology end of it, that we have to be mindful of the support staff and balancing that, because what's the point of having all the technology if we can't utilize it? In the past, we always buy these programs, and then they never get used to capacity. Even though we might be spending a little money, we're actually going to be saving money if we can more efficiently use and provide service for our staff and students. I think this is a good move that if Peter could let his staff know that we do recognize the tremendous effort that has been put onto them with very limited resources in these times. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. Just a couple of new business items, maybe, Mr. McHugh, you can comment, is the request for a waiver by SCT to the feds about [inaudible 01:59:29] assessments. You know what I mean? I think you sent the email out to the community for comment.

Mr. McHugh:

What I would say is it's been a constant year of let's wait and see. A tremendous amount of planning goes into the three through eight [inaudible 01:59:52] also included the regents. It's a really fine line. We heard a lot back from our parents and our students that once they canceled those regents, the student effort dissipated quite a bit. There's that fine line. We really held our grading policies and put them into full effect [inaudible 02:00:24] here. We are really focused in on the essential standards and content and really pushing our kids.

Mr. McHugh:

There's a fine line there. They come out and make that announcement. There's been [inaudible 02:00:41]. However, we look at that issue a little more globally where we take it for granted that we've been able to remain [inaudible 02:00:50] and they have two in-person days a week, and there are districts that haven't had any in-person learning time within the [inaudible 02:01:00] region, but there are districts that have had multiple closures for weeks at a time. That impacts everyone. When you're looking for equity, it's a [inaudible 02:01:13]. I'm not sure there's a correct answer to it.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks for that. Mr. Hines?

Mr. Hines:

The other issue is the state education department does not have a computer based testing program that has worked real well on the scale that we would be required to do it. There have been [inaudible 02:01:37] that was piloting it over the last few years, the entire school's outing it, but it hasn't really ever been tested to do a full capacity with all students taking it at once, and then we would worry about validity and reliability with regards to the test results.

Mr. Hines:

The other piece to it is the three through eight testing would require the scheduling to be done very differently, because if it can only be done in person, then we'd have to have multiple test days, more so

than we do now, and each grade level is bringing small groups of students in to take the test, and that would be logistically difficult, not impossible, but just logistically difficult.

Mr. Buono:

I understand the challenges. I think what Mr. McHugh said is the engagement level of our kids in the middle and high school level is a concern. We've done a lot to prepare our students. We'd like to make sure people weigh in on this issue. It's important, critical, because it does... It's going to impact our kids. Some may breathe a sigh of relief, but others may be disappointed because they've been putting a ton of effort into our work so far this year.

Mr. Buono:

The other thing is, just on the sports, we may be needing a special meeting next week. I think Mr. Simons had mentioned that. I just want to put that out there that the board will try to meet again as soon as we have more information about winter sports and the coaches and those kinds of things, so we may have to revisit this issue as things progress, and may have to have a special meeting next week to discuss those things. I just want to put that on your radar and the community's radar for the future.

Mr. Buono:

With that we have [inaudible 02:03:31] number two. Ms. [inaudible 02:03:33], anything?

Participant:

No, no public comments.

Mr. Buono:

No public comments. Okay. [inaudible 02:03:40] number two. I'll start at the inverse of folks, Deanna?

Ms. Muth:

I'm good.

Mr. Buono:

Frank?

Mr. Yeboah:

Great.

Mr. Buono:

Good. On the big screen, Mr. Dunn, you're on my left. What's up? Mark?

Mr. Mann:

Just a policy committee, Jeff, we're still waiting on that one policy from Vienna [inaudible 02:04:05] are doing.

Mr. Simons:

Are you talking about the residency policy and non-resident attendance?

Mr. Mann:

Yes.

Mr. Simons:

Yes. I have several sample policies that I want to review, send out to the board. Then I want to have a meeting. There are some that I gathered from New York State School Boards Association, some from other districts, and I wanted to have a virtual meeting to review them and discuss them, given the topic. I still have on my radar to do it. We will be doing it soon.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, Mark. Jennifer? You good? On my right, Michelle.

Ms. Skumurski:

Good.

Mr. Buono:

JoAnn?

Ms. Taylor:

Good.

Mr. Buono:

Kathleen?

Kathleen:

I'm good.

Mr. Buono:

That everybody?

Participant:

So one, two, three, four?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah, and yourself.

Participant:

I don't have anything. I think I've said enough.

Mr. Buono:

We do have need for an executive session for purposes of updating on collective bargaining and personnel. We will take five minutes. Peter's going to send the link to the board members, and I just

want to thank everybody for their participation and the hard work that's gone in, and we'll have an update soon, so have a great night, and board members, be back here in five. Thank you.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [02:05:44]