

**Transcript of Board of Education Meeting
February 24, 2021**

Mr. Buono:

I'm going to call the meeting to order, seven o'clock. In attendance tonight we have three board members here, myself, Kathleen Curtin, Frank Yeboah in person. And the rest of the board members are virtual. Mr. Mann expects to be on shortly. He's running a little late. Just let me know, Peter, when he comes on so we can make a note for the board minutes. And with that if you could please rise and join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ALL:

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. Now moving to our student council reps. So, I had the pleasure of being invited to the student council meeting this afternoon and see some of the students who are part of that. And, tonight we have Katie and Ryan, right? I think I saw Ryan. Hey guys. Good to see you again.

Katie Asenbauer:

Hi. So, we just have a quick few updates as always. Like Mr. Buono said, we had a meeting after school today just to go over a few things for the following months. And, we wanted to say thank you to Mr. Simons and Mr. Buono for coming. That was really great to talk about different things about the board and just being able to communicate with the rest of our student council. As for fundraising updates, we have the week of the eighth we're going to be officially starting our hot chocolate sales and all proceeds for that are going to be donated to the Make a Wish Foundation. Then, I'll hand it off to Ryan for the rest.

Ryan Seely:

Thank you. Since the Valentine's Day decorating went so well the week before our break, today our student council members decided to decorate for St. Patrick's Day as well. So, we're looking forward to that. And, we were also hoping to send out the Google Form soon to student council members to see if there are any questions that the board can help us in answering. As we talked about in our meeting today, and we will stay in contact with the board about that.

Mr. Buono:

Great. That's exactly what we're looking for is and then one of the things I mentioned at the student council is how important it was to have the student voice as part of the input for making their experience at the high school the best it can be, and how they're doing a great job with their peers to try to just continue the spirit of the school, decorating the school and different activities to make it quotes as normal a school year as possible. So, thanks for all your work and the work of the student council and your advisors for that. So, you're welcome to stick around like I said before to enjoy the meeting and thanks again for being here tonight.

Katie Asenbauer:

Thank you.

Ryan Seely:

Thank you very much.

Mr. Buono:

You're welcome. Moving on to the next part of our agenda we'll have the public forum. And again just to note as we have during virtual period, we do have the email link on the board website for folks to email questions or concerns or issues that they want to bring up. Residents, students, employees and business representatives of East Greenbush Central District School District may address the board on matters concerning programs and or operation of the districts other than matters involving personnel. Members of the board do not directly respond to citizens' concerns during the public forum. If a response is appropriate either the president or superintendent will contact the individual in the near future. Those persons wishing to address the board will be recognized by the chair of the meeting and should state for the record their name and address or affiliation, the district or business. So, it's important in the public email to do that. Your name, where you're located and affiliation to the district.

Mr. Buono:

While the board does not wish to infringe upon free speech protections, it must be stressed the visitors' forum is not deemed to be an open forum. The board president will conduct the forum for the orderly and efficient operation of board business. In addition, any remarks which would be considered defamatory or stigmatizing are prohibited and will be declared out of order. So, I will turn to Linda to see if there is any communications?

Ms. Wager:

There are no comments at this time.

Mr. Buono:

Nothing at this time. So, those who are tuning in listening on the live feed just remember there is a second public forum as we go through the contents of the meeting and any issues that come up you're welcome to also email for the second public forum which will be later this evening. So, with that, we will move to the discussion items, and the first topic is Fall II Sports would be the second phase of sports coming into this session. So, I'll turn it over to Mr. Simons.

Mr. Simons:

Yes. We are asking the board this evening to consider approval of the Fall II Sports season. Board is aware that the state has classified certain athletic sports activities as higher risk. Some of those higher risk sports activities occur during the winter and that season is occurring now. And, some of those higher risk sports occurred typically in the fall, but because those types of sports were not approved during the fall season, we could not operate sports such as football, football cheerleading, volleyball and we now have the approval from the state to offer those activities under a different schedule, a shortened season that will begin in March and end in May. And, we also have developed a updated plan for implementing those sports and supervising those sport activities that Mr. Leonard is going to speak about and then we can have some questions and answer and discussion about it.

Mr. Simons:

We also had Dr. Albert, our school physician look at the plan. He provided feedback and we incorporated his feedback into the plan. So, I'm going to ask Mr. Leonard to speak to this and then we'll take any questions or concerns that you may have regarding fall sports.

Mr. Leonard:

Good evening. Can everybody hear me okay?

Mr. Buono:

Yep.

Mr. Leonard:

Great. Really the framework for this whole plan is the same plan we used in the fall and the winter. We're going to continue to use in Fall II. It's truly the core principles of all of our student athletes and coaches and everybody wearing masks, trying to maintain social distance and then also another real key to this is all of our teams work in small pods, small little groups. So, if there's a team of 15, we try to break them down into groups of five or two or three spread out in the basketball court. In this example for Fall II would be volleyball. So, say we have 15 to 16 girls on varsity volleyball. Those girls instead of working all together, they would try to break down into smaller groups. Small little pods.

Mr. Leonard:

Obviously when we get to games, they're together. So, this way it's easy for contact tracing. And then, also with games similar to what we have going on tonight. We have basketball, and we stagger the benches going back. We'll do the same thing for volleyball. We rotate the volleyballs out in games and practices and clean them. I can't believe the amount of spray disinfectant we're going through. A lot basketball go through about two bottles a game in basketball, but it's working out really well.

Mr. Leonard:

Same thing with football. I think football we always have a high number of kids that participate about 100 plus. We'd have to be really creative breaking down those small pods, small groups in efforts to do that for example might be the defensive linemen and offensive linemen and wide receivers and defensive backs are all to do [inaudible 00:04:44] in breaking those pods down even more. There might be only 20 kids in the weight room, 20 kids watching film. Concentrations of smaller groups, smaller pods, we call them. That has worked out really well for us.

Mr. Leonard:

We've had a lot of success in the last two seasons. We're going to continue to use the same core principles every day. We're going to do a daily health screening with temperature checks. That has been very positive. It's worked out extremely well. The majority of all the coaches have been involved. And that's been a very positive thing.

Mr. Leonard:

So, I'm very excited we're going to have opportunities for varsity and JV football, varsity and JV boys and girls volleyball and varsity and JV cheerleading. And, cheerleading will almost kind of do exactly what they're doing now and just roll over to Fall II. And, they've done a great job. And, it's just utilizing our space, our fields, spreading kids out.

Mr. Leonard:

I'm not sure. We've had a lot of success right now. In the winter season right now, the kids have been great. Everybody's worn their mask. The only incident we've had it wasn't our team. It was another team where actually I stopped the game and talked to their coach about it and all those student athletes from the other school put up their masks. So, all of our coaches do a great job monitoring that and make sure everybody has their mask. If they're out on campus, they're socially distanced trying to run and trying to use the campus best they can. But, I'm very excited about the Fall II season. It's all these seasons are very small condensed seasons. They're pretty intense. We're playing like an NBA schedule three to four games a week in basketball, but I can tell you the kids very, very much enjoy it.

Mr. Leonard:

We just had senior night tonight for cheerleading as well as boys' basketball. The parents couldn't be any more happier getting their kids involved and grateful that they were able to come here for senior night. So, that's very positive. So, I'm looking forward to it. And, plus as the season goes on, we'll be outside more with football. We're going to start outside and try to maintain it. They started clearing our turf field plowing it and with the sun today, the warm weather, it melted everything, so I'm very excited for that. So, I'm not sure if anybody has any questions.

Mr. Buono:

Mike, this is Mike Buono. So, for football, is your sense that there's going to be enough teams to have a schedule?

Mr. Leonard:

Yeah. The schedule for both volleyball and football, especially football, we have until March 3rd to do our declaration. Mr. Simons has that. Where we'll create a play varsity and JV. We'll submit that to Section II. Once that submission is in, the football committee will develop schedules. I'm pretty confident at least with ours we'll be probably playing AA level teams. And, we'll have enough games. There's some schools that may not play, but we're only talking maybe six games anyway, so we'll at least be able to find those six games. It's not a full season of course. Just [inaudible 00:11:13] condensed seasons. I'm pretty confident. I know at least the double A schools in our league, everybody plans on playing varsity, JV and some of the other A schools as well. So, I feel pretty confident that we'll be able to get our five or six games in, in the football season.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. And, with the spring sports coming up, will there be any overlap or are they going to end?

Mr. Leonard:

No. We're going to end. There's only really a one week overlap right now from winter going into the Fall II season. The Fall II season will end May 1st. And then, we start back up on the third of May. So, it's a pretty intense six, seven days a week we're going to go. But, there's no overlap for that season. And, we really want to effect this spring season, because they lost those student athletes and those programs, they lost out a lot last spring. So, we're really trying to avoid any conflict with the spring, and like I said, the spring will go from May 3rd all the way to almost the end of June.

Mr. Buono:

And, with football with the amount of gear involved, you talked quickly about the amount of sanitizer you're going through and spray just with basketball. Do you have what you need to stay-

Mr. Leonard:

Yeah. I'm pretty confident. We've been meeting and talking about that. One thing we'll do is at the very beginning when the kids will get assigned their equipment, they start out with uppers or just start out with the helmet and then they progress to their shirt and their pads. In the beginning we'll have the kids take all their equipment home. They can take it home and wipe it down. And then, when wrestling is over, we're going to utilize the wrestling room. And in the wrestling room, I have a grid of 50 squares at least in there where kids can leave their helmets and shoulder pads and on a nightly basis, they can be sprayed down with the spraying mister. So, I'm pretty confident that we'll be able to handle that and do that pretty easily.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Good to hear. And, when does registration open up?

Mr. Leonard:

We started sign ups this past Monday the 22nd. So, it's very strong. A lot of good sign ups. A lot of kids are excited. So, I'm looking forward to it. It's very positive. Like I said it's great for the kids to get out moving and like I said, we had senior night today, tonight right now that's going on. And, parents couldn't be happier and very grateful that we're able to give them an opportunity for the kids, especially the seniors. You know, their last opportunity to play basketball, whatever sport it may be. So, it's been very positive.

Mr. Buono:

And, that testing protocols remain the same?

Mr. Leonard:

Yeah. It's been very positive. I didn't get any results today, but so far so good. There's been no positive results. It's just been all negative tests. And, it's just been working out with Marissa, Molly and Linda. We're getting some principals to help out. So, it's been pretty smooth. You know, there's a few bumps with timing and rolling it out, but it's been pretty positive.

Mr. Buono:

Good. Excellent. Good to hear. Any other questions for board members? For Mike? No? Very good. Thanks Michael. And, later on in the agenda we have a resolution to move forward with the Fall II sports.

Mr. Simons:

Couple items I just wanted to add. When we were preparing the information for the board's review, I noted that the county authorization post from Steve McLaughlin was missing volleyball was not listed. So, I contacted the county department of Health and it was an oversight and their director Mary Fran Wachunas agreed to send me an email to confirm that volleyball was approved. It was just an oversight on the part of the county. And so, I attached that as well. So, we have that documentation as well.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. I saw that. Thank you, Jeff. Moving on to the next discussion item. We're going to talk about the school budget preliminary tax cap calculation, and Jeff or Linda, I'm not sure?

Mr. Simons:

I'm going to turn this over to Linda in just a second.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Mr. Simons:

One of the factors that will factor our proposed budget for next school year is the amount that we are allowed by New York State formula to raise the tax levy. It is a complicated formula. The tax cap is commonly referred to as a two percent tax cap, but it is not a two percent tax cap because every district has different factors within their budget, within their property growth, within their districts and other aspects including categories of the budget related to capital expenses and pilots. With that general explanation, we'll go with a more technical explanation from Linda Wager, our director of business and finance.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you Mr. Simons. Mr. Goodwin, could you pull up the document under 6B? I'm providing for the board tonight a preliminary tax cap calculation. As Mr. Simon said, this is a multi-step calculation that arrives at a percentage that we can increase our tax levy by. The bottom line is that right now, we can increase our current year tax levy by 1.28% for next year. And, the way we come to that calculation is we start with the prior year tax levy. So, this current year tax levy is 58,374,546. The tax base growth factor is a factor that is provided to us by the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. It accounts for the changes in full value of taxable property within the school district the factor is 1.34%.

Ms. Wager:

Then, we add in the pilots that we are expecting this year which is 4,872,373. The reason we add that back in, we will be adjusting for our pilots next year. We'll be subtracting those out. We also then have to subtract out our prior year capital exclusion. The capital exclusion calculation comes from looking at our debt service, our capital expenditures and debt service. And, it nets it against our aid, our building aid and transportation aid on our buses. So, that amount that we need to subtract out is 3,409,999. The allowable levy growth factor. This is where the two percent comes in, because the allowable levy growth factor is the lesser of either two percent or the consumer price index from the preceding calendar year which in this case is 1.23%. Then, we add in our pilots that we're expecting next year.

Ms. Wager:

Our pilots that we're expecting next year has significantly increased to \$6,640,755, and that increase... There's a normal increase in the pilots, however there is one pilot with Regeneron on Tempel Avenue that significantly increases from a payment of 427,000 that we're expecting this year to over 1.9 million next year. So, we have to subtract that out because we can't levy taxes on that since we're receiving it in pilot revenue.

Ms. Wager:

Then, we add in our capital levy exclusion for this year. And again, that is the expenses for our capital and our debt service expenses. The amount that exceeds the aid that's associated with it. And that comes down to a taxable levy limit including our exclusions of 59,126,575 which equates to 1.28% over the last year. So, that in dollars is we can increase the levy by \$752,029 for next year.

Ms. Wager:

So, as I said, this is preliminary. This may change based on I am reviewing with Rensselaer County the pilots again, especially since there's such a significant increase. And, we'll also have to look at our levy exclusion, our capital exclusion, and we may need to adjust some debt service there as well. Are there any questions on this?

Mr. Buono:

Comments or questions for Linda? If you look at page two you can see the components the tax cap B shows some of the history and where we were '17, '18 to today and you can see how it's typically been in the four percent range or higher and then it's dropped quite a bit 2021 and now even lower than this year. So, shows the increase to the pilots and things like that that are happening for the district. And, just that margin is very small for us as we plan for the budget for next year.

Ms. Wager:

It is.

Mr. Buono:

All right. Now that everyone's back on the screen, board members any questions, comments? No. Good. All right. And later on in the agenda we have a resolution to approve the preliminary tax cap?

Ms. Wager:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. And, that has to be submitted, Linda? Is that what it is?

Ms. Wager:

It has been submitted already. Yeah. It was due this week.

Mr. Buono:

All right. Next item on the discussion is the statement of continued eligibility agreement which is around certification.

Mr. Simons:

That will be Ms. Cannon, our director of Human Resources.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you. So, the statement of continued eligibility affects certain special education teachers who teach a special class in grades seven through 12. The state department of education is going to be changing the certification requirements effective July one of 2021. Right now, there are approximately 11 special education teachers at our secondary level that will be effected by this certification change. The teachers now need to be either certified in the subject areas that they teach in math, social studies, English or science, or meet certain experience requirements for the statement of continued eligibility. As of today, myself and the director of people personnel services have met with all of the teachers affected, and their union leadership and we've discussed exactly what they need in terms of requirements to fulfill the statement of eligibility application process.

Ms. Cannon:

We would like to enter into an agreement with the EGTA to help with the financial aspects in terms of the costs of the application of our special education teachers. The workshops such as DASA, SAVE, Child Abuse and Autism, and also the finger printing component if it's needed. And, the SOCE, this will help us ensure that these teachers can be retained to teach the classes that they're currently teaching. Any questions?

Mr. Buono:

Any questions for Marissa? I'm pretty familiar with the process. It's happening across the districts. And, just in our colleagues the same way in districts in my role at Questar and across the BOCES, a lot of school districts have chosen to support the teachers with some form of reimbursement for those costs, because it really was something that the state had put on them to get that certification. And, we had a lot of longstanding teachers who may have been here before finger printing came online, things like that. And, they did waive the fee for any multiple certifications that have to be applied for just the one time. It's the right thing to do for our staff. And it's about 10 teachers you said?

Ms. Cannon:

Yeah. It's about approximately 11 teachers.

Mr. Buono:

11 teachers okay. Any questions? Molly, anything to add? No? Good. Okay.

Molly:

I think you just covered it really well.

Mr. Buono:

It's good to be in the HR business. How about that stuff? All right. If there's no other comments or discussion, I'll go to individual board members for our board forum. I'll start in person. I'll start with Frank, since he's closest to me. Anything? Good. And, Kathleen, good to see you in person.

Ms. Curtin:

Nothing.

Mr. Buono:

All right. And, on the screen, I'll start with it looks like at the top, JoAnn Taylor. Good all right. And, John Dunn. Good. Michele Skumurski. Good. Jennifer Massey. Good. All right. I think that's it. Right? One, two, three, yep and Mr. Mann is in. Oh, do we have Deanna. Is Deanna here? Oh. I'm sorry, you're in the dark I couldn't see you there. I didn't know who that was. Deanna, you're good? Okay. Sorry about that. I didn't see you. All right. We're good. Okay. We'll move on to the committee reports, and Marissa you're on again.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you Mr. Buono. I just want to talk briefly about the recruitment process for the two temporary teaching assistants that we are going to be hiring in order to support the return of our kindergarten students. The positions were posted in early February. They were posted for two weeks. The posting close date was February 16th. We had eight candidates apply. Upon review of the candidate credentials, we had selected seven to interview. We had an interview committee that consisted of our principal Mr. Mahar at Bell Top, two of our kindergarten teachers and one of the teaching assistants in the kindergarten classroom, as well as myself. We conducted the interviews via Google Meets on February 17th. Each candidate was given about 30 minutes to answer eight questions. And, the committee is going to be recommending two candidates for hire effective Monday February 22nd. Each of those candidates holds the appropriate New York State certification.

Mr. Buono:

So, major faux pas on my part. I think I missed the K-5 update.

Mr. Simons:

That's okay. We can come back to that. If anybody has any questions.

Mr. Buono:

I apologize for that.

Mr. Simons:

I thought that was intentional, so I thought [inaudible 00:14:29] more people on the stream before I talked about it.

Mr. Buono:

It wasn't. It was I didn't have my glasses on. I think I missed that.

Mr. Simons:

So, it thought it was strategic.

Mr. Buono:

Well, thank you for giving me so much credit. It was strategic.

Mr. Simons:

Are there any questions about the hiring of the teaching assistants?

Mr. Buono:

Well, what we'll do if the board is okay. Do you want to continue with the reports and then go back to that item?

Mr. Simons:

That would be fine.

Mr. Buono:

So, I apologize for skipping over that.

Mr. Simons:

No worries.

Mr. Buono:

Linda, we'll go to you.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you Mr. Buono. We had two BRAC meetings so far on Monday, January 25th and then again on Monday, February 22nd. On Monday, January 25th, we asked Mr. Bickel, our facilities director and Mr. Lynn Ellsworth from Sano-Rubin and our construction manager to review for the committee the work that has been done so far in phase one and two of our current capital project.

Ms. Wager:

Just basically on phase one, we had control access systems, security camera, PA system and telephone system. And then, in phase two, Mr. Bickel reviewed work that was done at Green Meadow, Red Mill, Goff and the transportation center. He then went into work that we are expecting to complete in the summer of 2021 for phase two. And then, Mr. Ellsworth reviewed the work that we expect to do in phase three of summer 2021. In phase two, work this summer will be done at Green Meadow, Red Mill, and Goff. And, next summer, work will be done at Bell Top and DPS. Genet and some work at the high school. And then, Mr. Simons turned the meeting over to Mr. Leonard who reviewed for us the new athletic field, which is expected to be completed in the summer of 2022.

Ms. Wager:

And, we also reviewed the building condition's survey which is a requirement for us next year in 2021, '22. And, Mr. Croluis from March Associates. He explained that the building condition's survey was developed by SED. It looks at the brick and mortar, the site work pavement, structure, drainage, electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems. And then, they've put together a five year cost estimate for those items that come up. And. That's how we determine our future capital projects.

Ms. Wager:

Then, on February 22nd, I don't have minutes attached here, but I did want to inform you that we had several guests at our BRAC committee meeting. Philomena Prinzo is a realtor from Howard Hanna. Christina Hennesy is a realtor from Keller William realty, and Joshua Tocci is a planner from Capital District Regional Planning Commission and the realtors provided for us just some information as to the trends in the district, why people find this district appealing, and how people are looking to continually more young families are moving into the district.

Ms. Wager:

Josh Tocci from CDRPC, he reviewed the enrollment projection report which I won't go into because we're reviewing that a little bit later in detail.

Mr. Buono:

Very good.

Ms. Wager:

Any questions?

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Linda. Any questions for Linda from the board members? No? Okay. Very good.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Jeff? No reports? Very good. Thanks, Jim. Do you want to roll into back to the K-5.

Mr. Simons:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Very good. I'm excited to hear about the report in changes. I know there's been a lot of progress made and very pleased to listen to this report from the superintendent. So, Jeff?

Mr. Simons:

So, as the board is aware and the community is aware, we have been as a district studying some changes that we could make to increase the number of days of in person instruction. Starting with our youngest children at the K-5 level. At our prior board meeting, we announced that we are able to accommodate all of our kindergarten students who want to come for in person instruction five days a week. And, we are all set to go with a March 1st start date. We held a meeting last evening virtually with any kindergarten parents that were interested. We were joined by each of the five elementary principals, Mr. McHugh as our assistant superintendent for curriculum instruction and three of our kindergarten teachers from Genet to answer any questions and to talk about the overall transition and the model.

Mr. Simons:

I think the parents are very excited. So, we indicated last evening with our kindergarten parents that we were hoping to do this earlier, but the COVID-19 infection rate started increasing in October and lasted until really the end of January. Now that infection rate is down to one and a half percent on a seven day rolling average in Rensselaer County. Albany county is also down under two. So, the region is experiencing good news regarding COVID-19 and community spread.

Mr. Simons:

So, over the course of the last couple of weeks, our administrative team has had discussions with our principals. We have had discussions with the teachers' union. We have talked with other districts about what they're seeing and we made a determination based on some parent feedback.

Mr. Simons:

We surveyed the parents about the possibility of eliminating virtual Wednesdays starting at the first grade through fifth grade level because the kindergartners would now be coming in everyday anyways. And, overwhelmingly the parents saw that as a favorable change, and overwhelmingly did not see it as a problem in terms of changing their childcare arrangements. It was 85% of our families surveyed said that this would be an important improvement for their children.

Mr. Simons:

So, we shared that information with the administrative team. We shared that information to the teachers' union. We discussed some of the impact of that change on classroom instruction and we are very, very pleased tonight to announce that effective March, 10th, which is two weeks from this evening, that will be our first day, should the board support this, of bringing in one cohort of our first graders through fifth graders on one Wednesday and then on the following Wednesday the following cohort would come into the building.

Mr. Simons:

So, it's an additional day of in person instruction every other week for our first graders through fifth graders. And, it is an additional day of remote instruction on the alternate week. We have a communication ready to go to our families tomorrow. We have informed all of our staff that we were recommending this change this evening. We feel really good about it. And, we want to continue to look for ways this year to see what else can be done to increase in person learning, but we want to get these two changes implemented first as we continue to study what might be done at other grade levels.

Mr. Simons:

The transportation arrangements will not be significantly impacted by this. Mr. Noah is confident that the number of students bused will still be within appropriate parameters for social distancing. I've been in communication with Kim Berben who operates the Greenbush Childcare Caring Program. And, this change will facilitate fewer families needing the full day program on Wednesdays, because remember now it's half the kids that aren't in school.

Mr. Simons:

So, there will be a shift of the GCC program that currently operating in Genet. Any of those families that still need it will go to St. Mary's and we're working with GCC to adjust whatever they need to transition that successfully.

Mr. Simons:

So, this is a really good hopeful sign that we might be able to do more of this as we continue to progress through the rest of the year. And, we are working on exploring every option possible for the fall as we advocate for changes that may permit our district to offer in person learning for every child,

kindergarten through 12th grade. There are a lot of discussions occurring about this among our parents, among our elected officials, among superintendents.

Mr. Simons:

Today I was in a thread of an email because I'm on the state superintendents' group legislative committee where I advocated for the New York State Department of Health guidelines to be adjusted to accommodate the fact that we now have a vaccine. More people will be vaccinated by the time we get to the summer. Approximately, we have about 60% we believe of our teachers who have had two doses of the vaccine based on some of the data that we are collecting.

Mr. Simons:

It's simply an issue of space right now. If we could get some flexibility regarding space and possibly other provisions that might work to be able to ensure the health and safety of the children. I'd like to see all of the kids coming back in September.

Mr. Simons:

I can't guarantee that. I can't promise that. The regulations are created by the state. Sometimes New York State has guidance, documents and regulations that are more restrictive than the CDC guidelines, but we are working on this every day. And, we hope that this time period between now and the spring will yield a lot of discussions about where we're going to go in September, but we are also looking at things that we might be able to do for the next four months including bringing some additional kids in who need more support.

Mr. Simons:

Today we talked about the ENL students for example at Genet coming in four days a week. We're looking at other grade levels to see how the enrollment might affect our ability to bring more children in. We've had conversations with our administrators this morning about thinking about space utilization both for now and next year, and we're working on this. But, we do need some help from the state in terms of those guidelines, but we're very pleased about the virtual Wednesday change. It's moving us in the right direction. We hope the board will support it.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent news. I'm very supportive of the direction and want to thank everyone who worked very diligently and our parents for their patience as we move forward with the kindergarten and then the virtual Wednesdays. So, any questions for Mr. Simons from the board about... Kathleen?

Ms. Curtin:

Oh. I got the mic. [inaudible 00:37:56].

Mr. Buono:

She's getting the microphone.

Ms. Curtin:

Mr. Simons you mentioned that 60% of our teachers have gotten the vaccine so far. Do we know about staff? Because, we can't run the school without the staff.

Mr. Simons:

We have the survey ready to go. A little bit of background that maybe the public isn't aware of. On Friday of last week, this past Friday, Governor announced at one of his press briefings, it was late in the afternoon that schools are going to be required to collect vaccination data on a number of teachers who teachers specifically who had been vaccinated and have it in by today. We got the official executive order yesterday. We did a Google Form. We sent it out to our teachers. Marissa and Mark Adam worked on it. And, but we have other forms ready to go for the other staff. We had it ready to report today. We've had a great response rate from our teachers where I cited the 60% number.

Mr. Simons:

But then, at six o'clock this evening, the guidance we'd received was that the state portal that we used to report our COVID data every day, the questions were going to be modified in the fields to report the vaccination data. We checked it multiple times today. Superintendents and Questar met today and there were no changes so we didn't have a mechanism to report it. Then, at six o'clock this evening we got an email from the department of health that although it is mandated by the executive order, we don't have to do it today. So, I think they're still working on it.

Mr. Simons:

Short answer to your question is we do plan to survey all of our staff regarding vaccinations and we were very encouraged by the number of people who've already they've either got their two shots, they've gotten one shot, or they've got an appointment and there was very, very small number of folks that I think were simply waiting to see when the line got a little shorter.

Ms. Curtin:

Thank you.

Mr. Simons:

Yep. But, we are going to have that data.

Mr. Buono:

Great question. Anyone else, board members? Michele?

Ms. Skumurski:

Jeff, thank you so much for putting all the effort into really responding to what our parents need and want. I really truly appreciate your effort, all of the faculty and all of the supporting staff. The question that I think well maybe the area that surprised me the most is there has been a lot of controversy in how successful they felt the remote days were. So, did you get a sense from the survey that our parents felt that the remote days provided more value than the virtual days? And, I'm just wondering if it's different for the elementary school versus what we think we might see in middle school or the high school.

Mr. Simons:

We didn't specifically ask about the remote days. So, we didn't ask that question. So, we didn't get the data back. We gave them in the survey narrative a sample of how the schedule would change on AB days with every other week being an additional day. We asked them whether or not they felt the change... To what degree did they feel the change to virtual Wednesday would provide a favorable

change for their child's instruction? And, that's where the 85% came in. We asked whether they agreed or disagreed on a scale with whether or not the change would be disruptive to their current work schedules or arrangements. And again, there was a high percentage of strongly disagree with that and that it was not disruptive. We asked them about whether or not their child care arrangement would need to be changed. A high percentage said, "No."

Mr. Simons:

So, the survey was really about the impact of the change on their current arrangements and whether or not they saw the change as favorable. And, in all of the different four or five questions that we asked it was highly favorable. And so, we feel in doing this that our community would be positively impacted, not negatively impacted, and are appreciative of the additional day every other week.

Mr. Simons:

One thing I forgot to talk about is how we're going to start this on March 10th. It may become a little confusing. In my discussions with the principals, we talked about the fact that East Greenbush School District at the elementary level has historically had a specials schedule, art, music, physical education A week, B week. Okay? So, principals can explain this better than I can, but it is a methodology of scheduling that ensures that kids can get more PE on an every other week basis, and get the number of specials courses in.

Mr. Simons:

We're going to start March 10th with an additional day for the B group just to be consistent. If it's B week, it's B group. That is not to suggest that we are not aware of the fact that based on holidays and snow days our A group right now is about two and a half days behind in terms of in person instruction compared to the B group. So, we don't want anybody to interpret that decision as moving the Bs ahead of the As where the As are behind. It's really just to avoid confusion. The lunch menus are set up as A and B week, the special schedules.

Mr. Simons:

We do have a plan that Mr. McHugh is working on that once the weather, thinking around here it could be May 1st, but once the weather settles down, and we have better predictability that we're not going to have to cancel school in person because of snow, sleet, rain or ice, we will work with our teachers' union and our principals on the best way to make a few changes in the schedule so that hopefully by the end of the year, A group and B group in terms of in person learning will be even. That's our goal. We can't promise that either, simply because we don't control the weather, but that is our intent.

Mr. Buono:

Very good.

Mr. Simons:

But, the survey was really based on is this going to be a good benefit for your child and is it going to cause any hardships for your family's current childcare or work schedule. And overwhelmingly it doesn't seem to.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. And, that was one of the [crosstalk 00:14:26].

Ms. Skumurski:

And [crosstalk 00:14:26] they get another in school instruction day which is a big bonus for them, versus what we have right now. So, that makes sense.

Mr. Buono:

Yep.

Mr. Simons:

We've got some other discussions we haven't had yet or just started today. So, we need a little time to get these two changes into place, and then we're going to see what else we can do.

Ms. Skumurski:

And then, I guess the last question I had is how are teachers adjusting their scheduling for teaching based on that? Are they picking up additional I guess work? Because they're splitting their components?

Mr. Simons:

That's a great question. In talking with the teachers' union, one of the concerns expressed to us was, I think overwhelmingly teachers are happy that the kids are coming in for in person instruction, but one of the concerns was because the teachers are really teaching in three different modalities so to speak, remote learning, synchronous assignments, virtual instruction, live and in person. Even though that virtual instruction piece is going away, there was time dedicated because of the change in the schedule on virtual Wednesdays that the teachers really dedicated either to planning together or working individually to do whatever they could to have those remote assignments be the best that they could be.

Mr. Simons:

So, there was a concern that they were losing that time. We discussed that with our principals. We discussed that with the union. And, the district has a plan and while it doesn't provide the same level of time to work on those remote projects, once a month similar to what we do with reading assessments. We have a calendar of subs planned so that in March, April, May and maybe June, the teachers and the principals in the building will know that's the day you have some dedicated subs. They've been arranged ahead of time, and if teachers want to use that time to enhance the planning that they need to have in place they can do that. So, that is a change of instruction. And, to offset the impact of that change, we agreed to provide what we could.

Ms. Skumurski:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Yeah. Thank you, Michele. Any other questions, board members? Excellent. Just again, want to thank the team and looking forward to having those opportunities for our younger learners to get more in person days. So, thank you very much.

Mr. Simons:

One thing that's nice about the two changes that we're making is no child will have to be reassigned to a different teacher, and no teacher will have to be reassigned to a different grade level. I will mention, there are some buildings in which the class sizes are close to the amount of space that we have to accommodate. So, anyone who is interested in coming having their child move off the full remote program into our classes now, should contact the building principal to see what arrangements can be made.

Mr. Simons:

We have had a practice in the district when enrollment caps have been met, but there's space in other buildings to try to facilitate having in those situations the family really wants the child to come back, they may have to for the rest of the year come to a different school rather than their neighborhood school. A small number of situations right now that we're aware of. I think it's second grade at Red Mill. Overall our district's second grade is very high. And, fifth grade at Green Meadow. And, the principals are aware of this. We've been talking about it. We're going to try to do our best to accommodate them, but there may be a situation that we can't resolve for the child to go to their home school, so they might have to go to a school other than their home school.

Mr. Simons:

We've done that in the past and what we've found is particularly with kindergarten we find that kids and the families like the schools so much they don't want to go back to the one they were assigned to, because they're all great.

Mr. Buono:

Exactly.

Mr. Simons:

They're all great.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent. Good question. So again, reminding our parents that if that is a circumstance that you're involved with they're going to contact the building principals and start that process. So, excellent. Very good. All right. Any other comments? Anyone else? Good. Thank you. Did you have any committee reports Mr. Simons at all?

Mr. Simons:

Only one announcement regarding a committee. Mrs. Curtin and I had a conversation this afternoon. Mrs. Curtin has been serving involved in the New York State School Board's Association advocacy work. We've talked about some important issues and themes. We're going to have our next advocacy meeting of the district on Monday at 3:30 which is March 1st, already. And, based on my discussion with Mrs. Curtin, I'm inviting some folks from Questar to come because one of the things we want to talk about is all the efforts that we're making to have not only college bound students but kids that are pursuing career in technical education and maybe wanting to go into those types of fields. We're going to try to recruit some students to get involved in our advocacy committee.

Mr. Buono:

Great. Thanks a lot.

Mr. Simons:

I thought that was an excellent idea. We also want to talk about how we might advocate at both the federal and the state level.

Mr. Buono:

Excellent.

Mr. Simons:

Mrs. Curtin, I don't know if you want to add anything now?

Ms. Curtin:

Actually for the other school board members, NYSSBA has a couple of kind of form letters that we can send out to our local officials talking about not only the state budget, but also advocacy on the federal end, and one of the things that they point out is how much of our state budget is in our money for the schools is based on federal money right now. And, that could cause a problem further down the road. So, it's really encouraging our federal officials to not just look now, to look further down the road that this is going to be an ongoing problem. So, there are a couple of letters like I said that you can just put your name on or you can tailor it to whatever it is that you want to say.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Okay. And, those are on the NYSSBA website, Kathleen?

Ms. Curtin:

Yeah. Under the advocacy.

Mr. Buono:

Advocacy.

Ms. Curtin:

Yeah.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Ms. Curtin:

I've sent mine in.

Mr. Buono:

All right so, I would encourage board members to go check that link out and send them in. The other thing just to mention for parents and you know that even though the department of health is the one that's driving a lot of the guidelines it is important as we look at the CDC and the department of health and what's been recommended for space utilization and things like that and making changes still don't

be afraid to reach out to your local legislators and let them know and let your voice be heard about letting our kids come back to school.

Mr. Buono:

We can do it if we can get some relief I think in some of those restrictions. Not to jeopardize safety. That's not my point. My point is really that we've proven we can do things from a physical plan I guess view. We need to have some relief in terms of making sure we can have the space. I think a district like this needs that additional space or else we're going to have a hard time with this process. That is always helpful when parents reach out directly. Okay. And, maybe we can have an advocacy event down the road that does a lot of these things that we're talking about this evening.

Mr. Simons:

There you go.

Mr. Buono:

Moving on with the agenda. We have the minutes for February 10th. All board members were present. Any comments, questions, or revisions on the minutes? I don't see any, so I need a motion to approve the minutes. Frank, second Michele. All those in favor? Approved. Moving on to regular business. Approval of program for residential and disabilities. Any questions or comments? And a motion to approve that. I see JoAnn's hand, and Jennifer. All those in favor? Approved.

Mr. Buono:

Moving on, we talked about the Fall II higher risk sports. Any questions or comments. Need a motion to approve that. Kathleen. Second, Deanna. All those in favor? Great. Approved. There you go Michael. Secondly, we have the approval of normal contact wrestling. Do you want to talk about this a little bit Mr. Leonard or Mr. Simons?

Mr. Simons:

Yes. I'm going to ask Mr. Leonard and Mr. McHugh to talk a little bit about this. The board approved non contact practices for wrestling at the last board meeting. We started the registration process for wrestling, and we've learned from the experience from districts that have already started contact practices as well as preparing for competition. So, Mr. Leonard feels that the confidence level regarding allowing wrestlers to compete on a limited schedule is there based on their experiences. And, I'll let Mr. Leonard talk about what's in place should the board approve going forward with this. Mr. Leonard.

Mr. Leonard:

Good evening. Yes. I'm very confident just watching the wrestling team the last three days. Very socially distant, all the kids wore their masks. I could tell you that the coaches are taking the sanitation and cleaning of the restroom very serious. They continue to clean it multiple times throughout the day and throughout practice. Watching the other schools, like Mr. Simon says they've already started some wrestling matches. It's been very successful. Usually it's just a dual match against one other school. That's all we have left, because we need our 10 required practices, and we're only looking at two matches. One away, one home which would serve as a senior night.

Mr. Leonard:

But, I'm very confident. So far, so good. We had multiple excellent first few days of wrestling. The kids understand. The kids listen. So, so far so good. I'm very confident that we'll continue with all of our safety procedures, wearing masks and cleaning and sanitizing. I can tell you after practice my office is across the hallway from the wrestling room, and my office smells like cleaning and disinfecting all the time with the amount of cleaning solution they're using. So, it's definitely getting clean to a high level.

Mr. Leonard:

But, I just think it's another great opportunity for our kids, especially for our wrestling program to finish out. Especially among, we probably have about six or seven seniors and it will give them an opportunity to finish out their career with a couple of matches for their season.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Any questions for Mike? Jim did you want to say anything at all? Good? Okay. He covered it all? Seeing no questions. We need a motion to approve the normal contact wrestling approval. John, second, Kathleen. All those in favor. All those opposed. Seeing none, approved. Very good. Good luck with the team and I'm really pleased to be able to offer this opportunity and the board supports it 100%.

Mr. Leonard:

Great. Thanks so much. I just want to really quickly our just say something real quick about our boys and girls bowling team. They just ended the winter season both undefeated and both on the suburban council championship. So, congratulations to our boys and girls bowling team. And, our girls' cheerleading came in second this past weekend at a competition. Obviously it was a video virtual. So, congratulations to all those. But, thank you so much for your support.

Mr. Simons:

I just wanted to say we really appreciate the board's support for the athletic program and all of the extracurricular programs. And, moving forward on both the winter and the Fall II, including wrestling. We really do appreciate that. And, I will say that in the superintendent's meetings that we've had including one today that was scheduled to be with the county health department but they couldn't come. We have talked about how impressed we are with our coaches and our student athletes about how well they're doing with this. And, it's a credit to the athletic directors including Mr. Leonard and the coaches, the students that this is going as well as it possibly could be imagined.

Mr. Simons:

One thing I will say also is the live streaming that we're offering has been very much appreciated by the community. It is of high quality in our district, and it is a private company doing it, but Ryan Jones is I think operating the camera, but it's all set up in a way that I will share this and hopefully no one from Niskayuna is watching. I was sitting on my couch watching girls' basketball through Sport Scope. The scoreboard in the corner and eating some chips. I shouldn't admit that. On a Saturday. And, I got a text from Ms.... I sent a picture of it to Mr. McHugh. And, I said, "Hey Jim check this out. This is really of high quality." And within a few minutes he sent me a, it was either Instagram or a Facebook, post from somebody from Niskayuna who said, why can't you just call over to Columbia and find out what they're doing. It's like sitting here and watching ESPN. So, it was nice to get that kind of feedback although it was kind of backhanded. But, really good job with the winter programming.

Mr. Leonard:

Thank you. Yeah. I've actually gotten about six other companies outside of school districts that are looking to use Sport Scope.

Mr. Buono:

That's great. Great. And, I think the senior recognition for the senior athletes. And, one of the things we talked about earlier in the student council meeting was really not just the opportunities for our student athletes, but also continue to open up other activities and clubs and the arts and try to be able to do things performances hopefully down the road as things allow.

Mr. Simons:

We've started to talk about that among districts. And, within our own team for example drama, science Olympiad at the middle school has submitted a proposal to do some in person practices for their tournaments. I'd like to approve that. In moving forward, we're going to take the state document from the department of health and make sure that similar to what we're doing with the coaches, the club advisors have that document and they can send us a plan of how they plan to address those areas and protocols as a way just to make sure that we're applying the same standards [inaudible 01:01:05].

Mr. Buono:

Yeah. Excellent. Good progress.

Ms. Massey:

Mike?

Mr. Buono:

Yes.

Ms. Massey:

Hi. Can I just say something? I just wanted to thank Superintendent Simons for putting out the information through our [inaudible 00:14:29] down at the Troy Music Hall. John Elbaum shared with me on a networking event that I was participating with him about an event that is free. It's called the Black Violin and it's a virtual student matinee that is open to teachers to register, and it's presented in partnership with the Troy Music Hall, the Proctor's Collaborative and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center for the teachers to register for the concert.

Ms. Massey:

Again, it is free. It is a combination what they are describing as classic boom and to overcome stereotypes and encourage people all ages races and economic backgrounds to join together to break down those cultural barriers. And so it's kind of exciting. It is recommended for grades K through 12. And so, I'm hoping that our music teachers and programs will participate in this event and that they can stream it any time between February 22nd and April 2nd. So, again, thank you Mr. Simons for doing that, because again the arts are hurting.

Ms. Massey:

And, it's a way to be able to bring people together and also for our students to participate in something pretty special and pretty spectacular. They just released a new album the two gentlemen that [inaudible 00:14:29]. So, thank you.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you Mrs. Massey for bringing it to our attention. It was sent to the administrators and Mr. Holiday the chair of our music department was asked to send it to all of the teachers, so hopefully we will participate and it's a great opportunity. So, thank you for bringing it to our attention.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Jennifer. Moving on. Our agenda we have the reports and presentations of the superintendent school enrollment projections.

Mr. Simons:

Just very brief overview. Mrs. Wager mentioned that the Budget Review and Advisory Committee received the annual enrollment projection update which has been prepared by the Capital Region Planning Commission. And, Capital District Regional Planning Commission and it is something that the board has done for a number of years now. Which gives us information on an annual basis regarding trends in enrollment of children at the K5, the six eight and the nine 12 level. Historical trends to date as well as projections of five and 10 years in terms of what we might anticipate.

Mr. Simons:

There's a common methodology utilized for these types of reports. It's called cohort survival method. And it basically takes a look at the number of children that are born within the East Greenbush School District and projects out using a formula how many kindergartners would we expect five years from that birth cohort. The numbers are updated every year. The report was provided by Josh...

Ms. Wager:

Tocci.

Mr. Simons:

Tocci. And, it was very well received. In years past, the most recent years we have seen a stable enrollment after multiple year period of decline. And over the last couple years, we reported that the elementary enrollment was increasing slightly. And, the middle school and the high school was fairly stable and may be declining a little bit as we look at years out.

Mr. Simons:

As the report indicates, there is a slight decline this year at all levels and in discussion with Josh, this could be an anomaly related to COVID. But, it is the numbers are the numbers. We have done some own internal reviews of some factors that may have contributed to that decline this year. For example, we know of some kindergarten parents who chose to have their children wait another year before they start kindergarten. We've had across the region and Questar has collected this information, we've had a spike in the number of families who are able to choose home schooling as an option. And, we are aware that in some of our private schools, they had the space and perhaps did not have to follow as many guidance regulations as the public schools.

Mr. Simons:

And so, we believe that some of this is related to COVID. We believe that many students will be coming back next year hopefully. And, we expect to see either a stabilization or maybe even a modest increase moving forward. There is a big jump in the kindergarten cohort for next year. We're expecting I think approximately 355 students in our kindergarten class next year. Our budget will reflect that in terms of what we are projecting per sections.

Mr. Simons:

The information in this study complements some of the information that we received from the realtors as well from the BRAC committee where we see a very competitive real estate market in East Greenbush where houses there's not a lot inventory of existing homes for sale, because people are moving in buying them up and that is increasing the average price of existing single family home sales. We were told by the realtors that as many as 10 individuals are making offers on homes and in some cases paying cash. So, it is a very much sellers' market. As described and our district remains a very attractive district for people to move into and to start raising a family.

Mr. Simons:

So, that's a summary. The report was provided electronically to the board a few days ago. If the board would like a printed copy, we have those available. We can send them out to you. Enrollment projection's important not only for the planning of our budget. It's also important for facilities as we look to renovate our classrooms in future years. Right now we have capacity in our school district to accommodate more kids. We would not be looking necessarily to additions to our buildings, but we would be looking at making sure that the existing classrooms are modernized and that the systems are replaced on schedules.

Mr. Simons:

It's a very informative document. It's really well done by the capital district regional planning commission and it will be on our website for anybody from the public who wants to read it or may have questions at future board meetings, but we're really, thankful that they do this type of work for us because it really helps with our long range planning.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Linda, any comments?

Ms. Wager:

I would just like to say just to make the relativity of the increased K enrollment that we're expecting through next year. Typically, the enrollment for kindergarten ranges from about 280 to about 300. So, it's significantly higher for next year.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Any questions from Mr. Simons, board members? I think at this time maybe that we're just getting the report. I was able to attend the BRAC meeting on Monday I want to thank Mr. Pratt and Linda for their leadership in that meeting and the committee involvement. And, the projections are really, really valuable. I know this is kind of an anomaly like you said. They're usually been spot on within a few students, and for planning purposes been extremely helpful. And, I think take some time, digest

and we can even bring it back as a discussion item for a next meeting as we get into the budget process. If there's any questions on the enrollment projections, because it has a significant impact for what we're going to be doing for next year.

Mr. Simons:

That's a great idea.

Mr. Buono:

All right. Moving on to the next item. Tabled motions. I have none at this time. And, I want to welcome Mark Mann joined the meeting. Mark. You got that Jeanne? Okay. Old business, board members anything you need to bring up? I don't have anything. Good. All right. Moving on to item 13 the consent agenda. There's a lot of items on the consent agenda tonight. Is there anything we should highlight Mr. Simons before we ask the board?

Mr. Simons:

Several items were included as discussion items so the board could have more information on them. The couple of things I will just kind of briefly touch on. Every year the New York State Comptroller rates school districts regarding their fiscal stability. Our district continues to not be in fiscal stress. That means that we have done a good job with long range planning. It does not mean that we have a lot of revenue coming in for next year. So, we just want to clarify that. It just means that we handle the revenue that we have very, very well.

Mr. Buono:

Personal stress. Yes. Fiscal stress... State says we're zero.

Mr. Simons:

Other new item is Dr. James Wilson is a local physician who has agreed to contract with the district for physician services. We were informed just a few days ago really that our current provider Seton Health was no longer able to do it. So, we worked with our attorneys on a contract with Dr. Wilson to provide those required physicals in accordance with the department of transportation and the state.

Mr. Simons:

The tax cap we've already talked about and I'm thankful to Dr. Albert, Tammy Cosgrove and Molly McGrath for updating our emergency first aid protocols which complement the district safety plans and are required to make sure we are current and that those are accessible and available to our staff in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Simons:

The other item is the calendar. I'll just highlight one significant change in the proposed calendar. The state has determined that there is a new New York State holiday, Juneteenth. That day needed to be added as a day or holiday within the schedule. We have an 182 day, right Marissa? 182 day calendar for employees. It's really 187 when you build in the snow days, so there isn't a lot of room to add a holiday. And, we also observe one of the Jewish holidays in September. So, with discussions with the calendar committee we determined that the last day of school which is a Friday for students that following that in

June on the Monday staff would return for a superintendent's day and that fulfills the 182 employee workday. Did I get it correct, Marissa?

Ms. Cannon:

That's correct.

Mr. Simons:

Okay. Good. It just takes a couple years of practice. So, the committee did a good job on it. The only other option would have been not very popular. About as popular as remote snow days would have been working on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and I don't think anybody even wanted to do that. So, it was a good solution, and I thank the calendar committee for it.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you for the updates on those. Is there any questions, board members on the consent agenda items? No? Is Mary Ridzi on, Linda?

Ms. Wager:

Yes she is.

Mr. Buono:

Any comments Mary about the internal audit report if she's out there?

Ms. Ridzi:

No. I don't have any comments at this time. Thank you, Mike.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Well, thanks for doing the work on that. Appreciate it. All right. Seeing no additional comments or questions, I need a motion to approve the consent agenda. Kathleen. Second, Michele. All those in favor. Approved. Any opposed? I don't see any opposed. All right. We're approved. Thank you. A lot of items there. A lot of good information in planning for the next year. Moving on to new business we have the tax litigation with North Greenbush Associates which is the property Home Depot was on. Comments?

Mr. Simons:

Linda?

Mr. Buono:

Linda? We're putting you on the spot.

Ms. Wager:

That's okay. I was trying to find my paperwork.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. No problem.

Ms. Wager:

So, our attorneys are suggesting a settlement to us. The Home Depot property which is North Greenbush Associates filed a litigation case with us for the 2020 tax year, this current tax year which would have resulted in a \$63,918 refund for this year and going into the future years. Under this settlement, Home Depot has agreed to avoid this litigation for this year, and has... I'm sorry. Has proposed moving forward with their assessment from 1.69 million down to 1.6 million going forward. That will result in approximately \$9,800 less in taxes next year. So, much less than we expected.

Mr. Buono:

Any questions for Linda for the-

Ms. Wager:

Any questions or comments?

Mr. Buono:

Yeah. Anything on that? So, it's pretty interesting North Greenbush Associates is an Agro company and they lease the property to a Home Depot I think that is which is a 30 some billion dollar company but I guess philosophically they have the right to do that, you know for 9800 bucks. So, and I'm a Home Depot shopper. Love Home Depot. Any questions on that? I need a motion to approve the resolution. Hands? Mark. Second? Michelle. All those in favor. All those opposed? None? Approved. Now, moving to the public forum number two. Linda do we have any comments, emails?

Ms. Wager:

Yes. Yes we do. We have an email from Kristen Sikora. She is the parent of the student at Genet and Goff. She is concerned that the survey that went out was phrased a little too vaguely in order to get a real picture of what parent concerns might be if students were to go back every other Wednesday. She's concerned about losing the remote instruction day. And, she now has another day every other week that she has to supplement her children's learning due to the busy work that they tend to be given on those days. And, she mentions that her children are done with their work on those days in two hours and the benefit of additional in person days may be negated by the addition of the remote day every other Wednesday.

Mr. Simons:

We would encourage her to call both principals of her children's respective schools to talk about the remote work and if you forward me that email we'll talk to the principals tomorrow and have her get in contact with her, but overall the parents favored the change.

Ms. Wager:

There are no other comments.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. Well, thank you for that comment and I think yes encourage the parents to reach out to their principal for any questions on that or concerns. Moving to the second board forum. I'll start with our virtual folks. Deanna. Good? JoAnn? Good. John. Done? Good? Michele Skumurski? Comments? Nope? Jennifer Massey? Good. Mr. Mann? Good. Kathleen? She's good. And, Frank. Good. All right just want to

congratulate our retirees who are on our instructional and instructional support. Wish them the best and if they want to come back and substitute they're always welcome to come back and substitute. Just a little plug there. Jeff, do you have anything?

Mr. Simons:

I'm good. Nothing further.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. We do have need for an executive session for purposes of personnel items. We will do as we have in the past, Peter will send a link to the board members. With that I need a motion to go into executive session. We don't anticipate any business afterwards. Frank. Second? Anybody? Jennifer. All those in favor? Approved. So, we will move this to executive session. We don't anticipate any business after executive session and board members look for that link from Peter. So, have a great night everybody. And, I'll see you...