

**Transcript of Board of Education Meeting  
June 9, 2021**

Mr. Buono:

I want to call the meeting to order at 7:03. Attendance this evening, I have Mr. Dunn, Mr. Mann, Ms. Muth, Ms. Curtin, Ms. Taylor, Mr. Yeboah, and we do anticipate Ms. Massey and Ms. Skumurski will show up a little bit later. They have some work commitments. So with that, 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. So we have a special request from our student council at Columbia High School, Katie and Ryan, to do their update in person. So we want to welcome them to the board meeting. We haven't seen them here in a long time, so great you could join us. So the camera is behind you, and you have the mic. You have the floor.

Ryan Seely:

Thank you for having us. To get started, the junior class game night on the turf is 6:00 to 8:00PM next Thursday the 17th. All juniors are invited to register through the SignUpGenius link that was emailed earlier this week. Also, the NHS induction for the senior class will be June 22 at 7:00. It will be live streamed on the website for any family and friends and staff that would like to watch.

Katie Asenbauer:

First off, it's so nice to see everyone in person. Thank you for having us. This is also the first week we have a lot of updates, so that's exciting. So the Columbian Awards Ceremony is completely filmed now, and it's going to be on the website, and I think there's going to be a link sent out next Wednesday, the 16th. So, that's very exciting. Everyone's looking forward to that.

Katie Asenbauer:

NHS tapping started earlier this week. So for anyone that doesn't know what that is, basically all of the students that were inducted, the senior class gets to tap the junior class, and we dress them up in funny outfits. I had the honor of tapping Bryan. He was all decked out. So if anyone sees people running around in weird outfits this week, that's why.

Katie Asenbauer:

Then we also had elections this week. They end tonight at midnight, which we have a lot of people running, so that's exciting, and it'll be a good start to the next school year. All the other positions are going to be announced tomorrow morning at 8:00. But now I can officially introduce your next student council president, Ryan Seely.

Katie Asenbauer:

And then just last but not least, we'd like to thank all of you for always giving us support and a platform to share what's going on, and that's all from us tonight. Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. I just want to say we appreciate the time and effort that you've put into coming to the board meetings. It's a big commitment. Student council is a big commitment. Want to congratulate you, Ryan, and Katie thank you did a wonderful job this year.

Katie Asenbauer:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Wishing you much success in your next endeavors, if you're going to college. We'll see you at graduation. All right.

Katie Asenbauer:

Thank you.

Ryan Seely:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. Next topic on our agenda is the approval of the draft minutes for May 26th. At that meeting, Kathleen and Deanna, you were not present, but we still have a quorum of five of us. Is there any revisions, or changes in the minutes? Say none motion to approve the minutes for May 26th? JoAnn. Second? John. All those in favor? All those abstaining? Approved.

Mr. Buono:

Next, we move to our first Board forum of the night. As we have indicated in all our meetings, we have both a board forum and a public forum at the beginning of the meeting, and then you also have the board forum and public forum at the end of the meeting. I will start on my right with Frank, do you have anything Frank?

Frank Yeboah:

No.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. good.

Frank Yeboah:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

JoAnn?

Ms. Taylor:

I'd just like to congratulate Audra Di Bacco on her EGTA Teacher of the Year. I worked with her personally with the Food For Families program, and she is just so dedicated to our students and families. Very well-deserved award. And thank you and congratulations to our student council advisors.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, JoAnn. Kathleen? Deanna? Mark, good? And John, as I am. So we're moving to a public forum. As we have and during the whole pandemic, we have an email system set up for the public to provide comments. I will read the public content that we have for us.

Mr. Buono:

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

Mr. Buono:

So as we have in the past, we have the email, like I said, set up for comments. Additionally, we have comments on the draft plan for the federal monies that was put out there as well. And our director of business and finance, Linda Wager will be the one to read off those emails. So just make sure please Linda, that they identify themselves in the beginning of who they are, and then you can continue reading.

Ms. Wager:

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Buono. We have several comments tonight. The first is from Susan Alviene .

Ms. Wager:

She says, "Dear Board of Ed and district administrators. Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment for how American Rescue Plan funds should be allocated at the district level. I believe that school districts are going to continue to face challenges for how to address the academic, social, and emotional fallout from the pandemic. Because ARP funds can be used for students' social, emotional, and health, and academic needs, efforts that address these areas for all staff and students is essential if schools are going to be fully reopened.

Ms. Wager:

Behavior scientists recognize the impact of a pandemic as an "adverse childhood experience" or ACEs that that can and does cause trauma in children. Couple that with effects a pandemic has had on families, such as food insecurity, unemployment, compromised health, loss and lack of family support structures to name a few, and a child's ACEs score is compounded further impacting our students.

Ms. Wager:

The result seen on students has been unprecedented levels of social and emotional issues, anxiety, oppositional defiance, learning loss, grief, depression, inappropriate social skills, lack of self-esteem, are just some of the concerns teachers are witnessing. While state legislation is proposed for more mental health professionals in schools, districts can't count on this immediate funding source. Measures that build a district's capacity by all stakeholders, administrators, building principals, teachers, students, and the community become the necessary means to address need.

Ms. Wager:

With that being said, and since ARP money is non-recurring, initiatives that foster school-wide conditions that promote social and emotional practices and equity for all should be considered. According to CASEL, the national SEL organization. SEL is a strategy for systemic improvement, not just an intervention for at risk students. To this end, initiatives that promote collaborative problem solving and shared best practices for addressing need can be transformative. Release time to allow teachers and stakeholders to meet and develop intervention plans to decrease overburdened schools' based social workers, and psychologists is a solution when addressing maladaptive behavior students are exhibiting. Funds allocated to allow schools to develop sustainable professional learning communities, vision, and planning statements that are reflective of best practices around social and emotional development can decrease stress and support all stakeholders across the board with successfully educating our school students." Excuse me.

Ms. Wager:

"These are numerous resources, such as the CASEL guide to school-wide SEL to coordinate and build upon SEL practices and programs for re-imagining to happen and long-term solutions developed. I implore the Board of Ed to consider such tools for the overall wellbeing of staff and students to overcome what still lies ahead."

Mr. Buono:

That was from Susan?

Ms. Wager:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

And Susan has done some work in the District , correct Jeff?

Mr. Simons:

Correct.

Mr. Buono:

In that same area so thank you for those comments. I know we do have some funding for that.

Ms. Wager:

Our next comment is from Natalie Mulligan.

Ms. Wager:

"Good afternoon, I do not support D2 of having a district-wide nurse. The amount of money they will be paid would be better spent giving the current nurses within the buildings an assistant, or offering them training for COVID. Our nursing staff know our children, love our children, and our children have a love and trust for the nurses and assistants already within the district. These are the people that have patched wounds, helped a nervous belly, and knew when a child wasn't feeling well. These are our people. As the mother of a child with multiple health issues, I have relied on a specific nurse over the last four years for my child's health and safety while away from me, and she has done a phenomenal job of knowing my child and looking out for his best interest. A district-wide nurse will not and cannot do that.

Ms. Wager:

I know every nurse and the assistants within the district are just as wonderful as the Bell Top School nurse, and there's no need to pay a nurse three times what the current nurses make. Another nurse is unnecessary. The COVID cases amongst our youngest students is a very small number. The transition rate is low, and their symptoms are mild based on nationwide data collected over the last 15 months. With staff being immunized at a high rate, I don't see a need to pay a COVID nurse, and I think this money would be better spent supporting our dedicated staff nurses that already work for East Greenbush School District. Quite frankly, I find it a slap in the face to the nurses that work for the district."

Mr. Buono:

So, thank you for comments. I think when we get to the discussion phase on the federal monies around staffing and the needs for the staffing, we'll be able to address some of the questions that were posed in that email, thank you.

Ms. Wager:

The next comment is from Amanda Peace.

Ms. Wager:

"In response to the email about the COVID-19 funds, I would like to add some input. As we still deal with the ongoing pandemic, I think we should have the nurses be able to implement rapid tests. It is a huge burden on parents to have to leave work, or take time to get their child, or children, tested for something as minor as a headache. I think the district should invest in rapid kits, or machines, for nurses to do that at schools. This would be a huge relief to parents as we still are uncertain if this will still be the protocol in the fall. It would certainly help if it is."

Mr. Buono:

I think as we get the reopening guidance, or we should say, the opening of the fall guidance from the CDC and Department of Health, we will be able to make a determination about going in that path.

Mr. Simons:

Just to add to what Mr. Buono was saying, we have been having that discussion within the superintendents group with Questar and Craig Hansen, talking about potential to have a point of care testing program. We don't know whether that would be required or not, but we also, in addition to our

district funds, the county has funds. And so we're talking about how that program might work. You have a situation where a student comes to the nurse's office symptomatic. It could be their fall allergies, or their spring allergies. Instead of having them have to go get a COVID test, miss instruction, and/or have to phone the doctor to get a different diagnosis, we might be able to do a point of care rapid test right there, isolate the child, and if it comes back negative send them back to class. We are discussing that very issue within the rest of the county schools actually amongst all the Questar districts as a potential program for them for the fall.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. The next comment is from M. Delano. "Air conditioning, air quality control for all schools."

Mr. Simons:

This is an item that we're going to talk about later under discussion items. And it is an item that we've identified as a recommendation within our use of the federal funds.

Ms. Wager:

Next comment is from Steve Mormando. "I'd suggest considering an improved air filtration system, including AC. The air filtration will help on several fronts, allergens, viral transmission, et cetera. I know it's a relatively small percentage of the school year that it's hot for the students and teachers, but why should that matter?"

Mr. Buono:

I think you just addressed that Jeff.

Ms. Wager:

The next comment is from Jennifer Beyor West and she suggests giving a credit on school taxes rather than using the funds to buy anything.

Mr. Buono:

So, Linda is the business person?

Mr. Simons:

I don't believe that that is a permissible use of the funds. The funds are to provide for the full return of students to provide the academic emotional support for the air quality, the other issues that need to be addressed as the kids return. So we're not permitted by use of those funds to decrease the proposed tax levy. I would also remind everyone that we did the fourth quadrant to the community that was, overwhelmingly passed and included a 0% tax increase.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. The next comment is from Brittany Knudsen regarding COVID relief funds. "Good. Our schools deserve it, and there is no better investment than our children's education. The district needs every dime of that money. I say, propose that plan and best of luck."

Mr. Buono:

Thanks for the comment.

Ms. Wager:

Next comment is from Victoria Mitchell. "I've included in this message an email I sent a while back after the summer enrichment program emails was sent. Given that there is a discussion now, the appropriation of funds for COVID relief to benefit students within the district, I would like to present the issue of limited access to summer enrichment and resources for children of working parents, and to have this issue looked into as possible use of just a small amount of the funds. My children, as with many others, have fallen behind and are suffering academically and mentally as a result. I strongly feel the district will be doing a disservice to children of working parents who rely on summer programs to provide care for our children on a daily basis if they are not provided the resources, or assistance, to access summer care, regardless if we fall within a category of financial need.

Ms. Wager:

We work extremely hard in order not to fall within such category by both parents working 50+ hours a week to provide financial stability for our family, and it seems that by not extending a bus route to allow those children that are at local camps during the day to provide them with the same opportunity for summer school enrichment is negligible by the district. Upon reviewing the proposed plan that was sent, I am in full support of the extended hours around the school day during the school year for kids that are academically struggling. This will be an invaluable and much needed service. My children attend GCC daily for before and after school and historically do not receive much assistance, or encouragement, with their work. So extra time with actual educators would be incredible.

Ms. Wager:

I also feel strongly that increasing mental health counseling throughout the school would be pivotal. I have struggled for the last several months trying to get my daughter in for mental health services and still have not been able to secure a position for her anywhere. It would be wonderful to have increased services in school so she could have someone she could meet with at school on a regular basis. When I was growing up, I had those services available at my school and it was a game changer for me. Unfortunately it seems the counselors at the school have the time to present issues teachers are seeing to parents, but haven't been able to take enough time to actually spend with my child to determine what could be going on, and try to work through things. I appreciate the opportunity to voice my beliefs, opinions, and suggestions. If there's any further input I can provide as a parent, please let me know."

Mr. Buono:

Thanks for your comment. Jeff, do you have anything to add?

Mr. Simons:

I want to respond to that comment, because many of the recommendations and suggestions that were made are included within our ideas right now. The first issue was making sure that students had full programming over the summer. While our current proposal for a summer school in Richmond at the K-8 level includes a five day a week program. The students are going to be released around 11:30. This week, we started the process of communicating with GCC, the town of East Greenbush, and I have not yet, we've talked about reaching out to the YMCA so that those programs might be coordinated with the district.

Mr. Simons:

We already provide busing to town park program. We will continue to do that. To those programs. So the transportation is being arranged so kids could go right from the summer enrichment program to any one of those three sites. We haven't finalized all the details of that yet, or had enough of a conversation with those agencies, but we're planning it, and designing it so that the kids would have a full day, and the parents would be able to go to work.

Mr. Simons:

The other point I want to make, is we learned a lot about the need for childcare during the course of the last 15 or 16 months. And we have identified an area where we want to have conversations with childcare providers about how we might be able to facilitate a connection between childcare programs and our programs that we're running, and potentially provide some funding, because childcare is identified in these federal legislations, as it is an area that we can address. So we're working on that. We don't have all the details, but those are areas that we want to recognize that people are going to have to work full days in the summer, and we want to have our students enriched with activities, and well supervised.

Mr. Simons:

The third point was the mental health, which is critical. We have been having conversations with Rensselaer county commissioner of mental health, Kathy Coons. We have formally requested the placement of a school-based mental health clinic within the district. At this point, it's being planned for Goff Middle School. School-based mental health clinics have been proven to be successful, because students and parents can have access to those services right at the school. Our counselors of the district, and our social workers in the district do address individual and group needs of students. However, generally that focus is on academic counseling issues that may be interfering in a child's academic progress. In some cases, as we identify children who need more than what the school can provide, school-based mental health clinic can prevent some of the delays in referrals and the cancellations of appointments and those kinds of things, because it can be offered right there within the school.

Mr. Simons:

And while we are planning to locate it at Goff, we also recognized that there may be children in other schools that need to be served by that, or arrange the busing with parent permission. So we're working on a model of school-based mental health clinics. That will generally be funded through the county, because those services are Medicaid reimbursable in many instances.

Ms. Wager:

Okay. Thank you. Our next comment is from Jeremy Bollam, who is the parent of a sixth grader and second grader. "Dear members of the board. Thank you for the ability to comment on the use of federal funds. I would like to suggest some of the funding be used to help move forward with the school start time initiative, that lost momentum prior to COVID. I feel personally, and hear from many others, that something needs to change with the East Greenbush Schools having their early start times for middle school and high school in the capital region. It seems so much healthier for those students to be starting later. I'm not sure how additional funds could have, or would help, but I think it should be given some thought and priority. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment."

Mr. Buono:

Thank you.

Ms. Wager:

Next comment is from, Anne Umlauf. "Regarding the district's request for public comment on the additional use of federal funds, after reviewing the proposed three year plan for strategic use of federal monies, I noticed there was minimal focus on the kids' physical mental health. I would propose that we figure out how to extend the hours of a few support staff like lunch or playground aides, so that we can get a second recess scheduled for kids. Children should have more than 20 minute recess a day as stated and supported by a multitude of research, which has been corroborated over years.

Ms. Wager:

I emailed all of this research to the board of education months ago for consideration for the upcoming school year. At a minimum one additional recess per day could easily be added. Growing up we all had morning and afternoon recess. It's time to bring that back. It's a low cost option with a highly beneficial impact for our children. The American Academy of Pediatrics has repeatedly stated the need for kids to reconnect socially and have unstructured time with peers to help recover from the stress and emotional impact of the COVID pandemic. Could we please add that in for consideration?" The next-

Mr. Simons:

That's an issue that Mr. Buono and I have talked about it as a policy issue, given all the different programs that have been going on this year, it is something that we plan to get some feedback from our building principals on, to see whether or not there are some options and study it. Likely bring it to the policy committee, or the education committee.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. The next comment is from Elise Yelle. "I think East Greenbush schools should implement a summer program with these funds, similar to what the district is doing this summer. It should be for all summers going forward, and it should be enrichment as well as remedial classes. It would be nice to have it in both July and August. It could be half days for the week, or full days half of the week.

Ms. Wager:

This would lessen the burden on parents for childcare during the summer. And it would give students an opportunity to get extra help to advance. High school students could take some extracurricular classes during the summer to get them out of the way for the school year. I think this would be a positive addition to East Greenbush Schools and would attract young families to the district. It would have to be marketed correctly as enrichment and remedial to get rid of the stereotypical summer school connotations."

Mr. Buono:

So one of the things I think we have to remember when we look at the federal funding is the sustainability of problematic decisions that we make regarding those funds. For example, pre-K, and then making sure that if we can sustain those and we can support those from a budgetary standpoint, that's really the big consideration, because that has a huge impact on our budget. And it's something we have to consider, but we appreciate the fact that it is a need, and we're trying to do some things in the next couple of years with the funding we have, and we'll have to look at sustainability.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. The next comment is from Sarah Howard. "Hello. Here are some additional ideas for the use of the funds. Put solar panels on the roofs of the schools. This will decrease energy expenditures in the future. Invest in electric school buses, which reduces air pollution and gas cost. Bethlehem is in the process of doing this." And she included a link. "And also invest in ways that we can start the high school later in the day. For example, with more buses or whatever is needed."

Ms. Wager:

Our final comment at this time is from James Wilson. "Spending is already way too high. School should have been open full-time long ago, as well as the parents given choice to send children, or do remote. No need for additional spending. Put the kids first, not politics and self-interest." That is it.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you, Linda. Thank you to the committee for responding to the comments, and made some notes and responded in kind to some of those comments we'll be hearing and discussing the issue with federal funding shortly. With that I want to turn over to Mr. Simons for Reports and Presentations from the Superintendent of Schools.

Mr. Simons:

Yes, at this time I'd like to talk a little bit about... Just lost my place....

Mr. Buono:

Jim, you're on!

Mr. Simons:

I wanted to mention that the Board had received presentation from Mr. McHugh, and information regarding the professional development plan. We are going to invite Mr. McHugh to give an overview of that, and then have him ask the Board to adopt that

Mr. McHugh:

Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

Did you have anything else besides-

PART 1 OF 5 ENDS [00:29:04]

Mr. Simons:

No, I was on the wrong meeting today and I got logged out. I apologize for that.

Mr. McHugh:

This is a report on professional development for the 2020-21 school year. Just to walk people through, this is an annual requirement that needs to be accomplished each year. So requirements, assurances and consideration, collaboration, meaning that your PD, you have to have a standing professional development committee. It has to have stakeholders from all of our bargaining units and representative

of all of our buildings. We had 33 members participate in our professional development committee this year. We had four meetings during the year.

Mr. McHugh:

The focus on improving student performance and teacher practice, our professional development should be continuous and sustained. And I point that out because what you will see in the professional development plan is that there are things that have been in that plan for several years. For example, curriculum mapping. Curriculum mapping is ongoing, it's never finished, and it's part of that professional development. So some things appear in there each year.

Mr. McHugh:

What happened to my right-hand man here?

Mr. Goodwin:

Sorry, I got some kind of warning on the screen, trying to get that off for you.

Mr. McHugh:

PD plan has to be annually updated and adopted at a public meeting by the Board of Education. The professional development should be differentiated, varied and embedded. And that's another important point and we'll talk about that a little bit more. But differentiated meaning that some folks have had professional development and they needed a little deeper, and some people need that additional presentation of some of that professional development.

Mr. McHugh:

So the activities planned by the district should complement additional trainings that faculty and staff can pursue on their own. And there's some positive data that I'm going to share in a second. Sharing. Our district-wide professional development days are September 2nd, it's a full day.

Mr. Goodwin:

Sorry.

Mr. McHugh:

Remember who does your evaluation Mr. Goodwin.

Mr. McHugh:

October 1st is a half a day, November 2nd is a full day, March 25th is half a day. So the half days are problematic because we have five different bell schedules. So it's hard to organize anything district-wide. If you bring in some sort of presenter, district-wide it's really difficult to do that. You have contractual start time, contractual end time.

Mr. McHugh:

There are a lot of needs and it's hard to hit all of those needs when you have two days of professional development in two half days. So you must address the onboarding of new hires, mentoring program, repeated trainings and updates. For example, we use [inaudible 00:32:13] the elementary schools and we benchmark our students and it had been years since we had any training. So we started this current

school year out with an updated BAS kit so that we could assess things. And one day our K2 faculty, all teachers could train, and the next day our three through five teachers were trained.

Mr. McHugh:

Additional considerations, Principal wanted a blueprint of English language learners. So if your population is 5% or greater in your district, you need 15% of your professional development to be really earmarked and targeted for English language learners. We do that, our English language learners population is 1.8%, so we're exempt from that. But our teachers have the responsibility to accrue 100 hours of professional development every five years. That percentage is going up rapidly, so teachers need to be cognizant of that fact. But there's a lot of building initiatives, outstanding building initiatives, where teachers are trained.

Mr. McHugh:

For example, Genet elementary school is our ENL cluster school. Mr. Grignon used Arburn to bring presenters in for faculty meetings into that building. So it's not one of the professional development days, but yet we are accruing those hours.

Mr. McHugh:

Many components listed included within our plan, we talked about that, you're going to see all the time, so they're already in place. When we talk about data teams, they're in place. But representatives within those data teams change annually, so that professional development is ongoing. Character education, curriculum mapping are just a couple of examples. So they need to be maintained in order for faculty and staff to get approved CTLE hours. So if it's not in that plan that's attached, then teachers can't get CTLE approved credit.

Mr. McHugh:

I can always file an addendum. So if we brought in a presenter based on a need for service during the school year, I can file an addendum and change that professional development plan. But in order to get CTLE credit, it's got to be in that plan.

Mr. McHugh:

Faculty and staff shall maintain a record of obtained CTLE which shall include the title of the program, number of hours completed, our ENL subjects are retained for at least three years. They control that, teachers keep track of that. MLP does it for our employees, but teachers have to upload that to be recertified.

Mr. McHugh:

Modern school teacher, this year, I just threw that up there because I've got some real positive data. So crazy school year when you think about the challenges that we've all faced and what a teacher's daily work looks like, our support staff or teaching assistants. Yet, from July 1st, 2020 to May 25th, there were 3,851 requests to attend professional development sessions. So just think about that.

Mr. McHugh:

2,784 professional development sessions were completed as of May 25th, 700 professional development sessions are still in progress, being that they're scheduled for some time in June, or teachers just didn't submit their final verification that they completed that professional development.

Mr. McHugh:

On September 2nd and September 3rd, just to give you an example, those were two days that were used for professional development to start out the school year. There were 50 different sessions offered to staff and faculty. So that's a tremendous amount of planning, tremendous addition by all professional learning communities. These have really become popular and I didn't know how they would go, but the participation was unbelievable.

Mr. McHugh:

Our teachers soaked that time and they were reading some sort of professional literature, they were meeting on a regular basis to talk about that. Even if we had to meet virtually, participation was often in that format. So there are some things that were really evident in professional development that we should leverage in the future moving forward. Those Google Meets and those Zooms increased participation.

Mr. McHugh:

Technology takeaways, the virtual zones, we just talked about that. The asynchronous training that Mr. Goodwin facilitated, very well received. And teachers could take advantage of that professional development at a time that worked for them, whether they had young children, they needed it to get them fed and needed to get them in bed and then engaged in that professional development. That was a really popular thing that we will continue and we'll work to enhance. Overall, it was an increase of 142 professional development sessions that our staff and faculty participated in.

Mr. McHugh:

This is just a sampling, I'm not going to read through it, you have time to look at it. But this is just a sampling of some of the sessions that were attended during the school year. You see a lot of technology, right? And Peter does a really good job of monitoring usage to see what folks are using. We know which ones should stay or out. They were beneficial to teachers. They were beneficial to students.

Mr. McHugh:

Through our participation in Rensselaer, Columbia Greene BOCES, they have OTIS, a platform that will be free to our district next year. That'll be a professional development tool for our families. So our families, if their child's using Seesaw app and they're not really familiar with it, that platform would be provided to us from BOCES, parents could access it and actually take professional development and learn how to use that app. That's another thing that will help next year.

Mr. McHugh:

A couple other things I do want to mention. Power teacher training, when we went to standards-based reporting in K-1, same thing with 2, 3 for next year, there were teacher training that was provided by [Riki Aiko 00:38:21] one of our teachers and Todd Witherell from our data department. So we had that training through Power School. Power School pro training, teachers using an upgraded newer platform for their grade books, state assessments.

Mr. McHugh:

I talked about the interactive strategies approach, early literacy, 11 sessions, we talked about that. 33 hours of professional development, 32 teachers participated in that. That's going to be sustained again for next year. We're working on a plan to keep that initiative going. And then you see a lot of standard-based stuff, so critical concepts in math and ELA, and you see the mental health ones as well.

Mr. McHugh:

We had a virtual session on self-care towards the end of March. It was optional and we had almost 100 participants in it. It just shows that there is a need and an interest. 2020-21 identified priorities, we don't have any. They should be on there. There we go, no more priorities, it's been a busy year.

Mr. McHugh:

We want to leverage the increased understanding of the value of technology to support teaching and learning. We want to maximize the tasks that can be accomplished through the use of technology. So what a great opportunity. I know it was a challenging and exhausting school year, but we really see how technology helped to support that. Some of those things should definitely stick around in the years ahead.

Mr. McHugh:

Rethinking assessment, this became even more apparent this year. When you have students in a hybrid format, some students are home, remote, we have students that are full remote, where do you keep that academic integrity? And how do you assess students fairly when somebody is sitting home, possibly with another device with them while they're taking that assessment. So we have to move away from traditional kinds of assessment, more portfolio type things, more product oriented, that students are demonstrating that they have acquired that knowledge and they can actually apply that knowledge.

Mr. McHugh:

That's going to be something that we really need to focus on next year. Again, we're going to continue with that partnership with the university, all of these literacy teaching and learning department. I'm sorry, those were our priorities this current year.

Mr. McHugh:

Going on to next year, again, that ongoing curriculum work, the K-12 technology integration, that's really going to be important. And then a big emphasis on meeting the social/emotional and cultural needs of all students. So we talked about really understanding, having and developing cultural competencies and talking about cultural bias. But also on the other hand, we are very aware of the increased need for social/emotional supports as well.

Mr. McHugh:

So attending to the whole child and the students we serve, kind of like the airplane thing about put your oxygen mask on yourself before you try to help other people, we need to make sure we're taking care of our stakeholders as well. So they're energized and they're excited to engage in teaching and learning. That's it. Any questions?

Mr. Buono:

Questions, or comments for Jim?

Mr. Dunn:

I just had a comment. Jim, thank you.

Mr. McHugh:

You're welcome.

Mr. Dunn:

You navigated through the technology on that.

Mr. McHugh:

Thanks.

Mr. Dunn:

You navigated through the technology on that. I liked what you said about how we're basically taking this experience and trying to learn from it because I think this is what we've said all along, it's a great opportunity for us as we move forward. One of the things, we've maximized the use of technology through this time period. But not that we need any more tasks, but I think it would be really interesting to see what does the technology show us as far as the data at the end of the year. What did we do well, what could we have done better and where we failed, so that we can shape the next school year.

Mr. Dunn:

We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I think by using and embracing the technology and what it's telling us, and I'm not talking about the standards and all that stuff, but just the overall health of the district, I think would be a good barometer for that being that we have that. And I was really happy to see the resiliency training.

Mr. Dunn:

I think one of the things that has happened in this experience, as a group we've become less resilient to what's going on around us. I think the children, there's a lot of anxiety, the mask, the not the mask, do we do this, do we don't do that. The conflicting messaging that has been coming from our government has created a lot of these types of scenarios.

Mr. Dunn:

So I really thank you for really digging in the weeds. Because it's going to be a lot of work, but I think that the resiliency and working together with our stakeholders is going to be a key component to getting these kids back on track. So again, thank you for the hard work.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, John. Any more comments? Like I said, a quick comment, I want to thank Jim and the team for working on the plan. We learned quite a bit. There's a lot of resources. I think number two, in terms of the K-12 technology, it's really about there are so many things offered during this period of time. It's about consistency, implementation, and making sure that across the different grade levels, we see that

every teacher and every student has the opportunity to engage in the same kind of technology and access to resources. And that's a really good plan.

Mr. Buono:

Also, a lot of these things too, the PD plan is focused more on educators, administrators, but really it applies, you know, paraprofessional support, everyone can benefit from the priorities and identified professional opportunities that are being put in place next year. I think the self-directed learning, excellent for people on their own time, if they can. And then just the number of sheer offerings is tremendous to see that there is something for everyone.

Mr. Buono:

If you hear comments about, well, it doesn't apply to me, looking at the numbers, there's got to be something that applies to everybody. And I think anyone can benefit from taking advantage of the amount of resources put into professional development in this district, I think it's tremendous to see. So thank the team for the work.

Mr. Simons:

I just want to reiterate, Mr. McHugh and the professional development committee, they've done an excellent job over the last few years, not only identifying workshops and activities and professional development, but really doing a comprehensive job of needs assessment. And I want to thank Mr. McHugh and all the teachers and staff that are involved in that process because it's really been very effective at supporting the success of the students. We've come a long way in our PD approach and I appreciate the gentlemen.

Mr. Buono:

Any final comments before we move on the agenda? So the next discussion item is a big one for us about the district plan for the use of the CRRSS Act and American Rescue Plan funds. And what I'd like to do is now there's two documents posted on board docs [inaudible 00:46:09] intro today and we ask the board and also get questions/comments from public [inaudible 00:46:14].

Mr. Simons:

There are a few documents. One is a template that we use as part of our strategic planning process that aligns the goals of the board with major initiatives and ensures that we have ways to measure how we spend money on programs and initiatives that are intended to improve student achievement, make sure that our community is engaged in our district, ensure health and safety, and make sure that we continue to involve community partnerships.

Mr. Simons:

So what we did in that document is we took some of the categories that were permissible under both the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan funds and align those. The other template is easier to utilize so I'll utilize that to speak from, because it's been put together in a more succinct manner. I want to thank my central office team for putting this information together.

Mr. Simons:

Before I go too far in explaining some of the rationale for the specific initiatives, I just want to publicly state some information that I've shared with the board and our administrators regarding some of the parameters for this money. These monies are available to the district, in one case until 2023 and another case until 2024. Honestly, I don't remember which one is which. If you do Linda, chime in.

Ms. Wager:

I believe it's the Corona, the CRRSSA funds are valid through 2023 and the American Rescue is 2024.

Mr. Simons:

Very good. However, based on consultation with state organizations, as well as with Questar state aid planning, which is a statewide service, we can present one unified plan and that's what we're hoping to do, so that we prevent overlap, we prevent redundancy, and we create one plan and we make that plan available for our stakeholders to see.

Mr. Simons:

When we submit the budget documents that are required by the state for their review, we submit those budgets separately. However, I'll use a very simple example, if we have a \$100,000 expenditure that fits within both grants, you could hypothetically divide that up into \$50,000 coming from one of the sources and \$50,000 from another source. So we see an advantage of doing one plan and making sure that we certainly comply with all of the filing requirements.

Mr. Simons:

In the case of one of the grants, we have applied for an extension today, Linda, if you want to speak to that, because we want to have sufficient time for the board to review and to have our stakeholders' input into this process. In fact, I'm very encouraged by the number of other comments that we received tonight regarding this. So we did apply for an extension today. We haven't received an answer on that. But other districts have told me that it's an easy process and they've got an email back right away.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you, Mr. Simons, the Corona Virus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act is the CRRSAA act. That is the application that is due on June 15th. Our allocation it totals \$3,959,472. So I did apply today for an extension and that will give us an extension through July 15th. I have not received confirmation on that yet though.

Mr. Simons:

The other, American Rescue Act, we have not been informed of any deadline as of the meeting I had Monday.

Ms. Wager:

We do not have a deadline and there is no current application for it.

Mr. Simons:

So the state has got to enable us to apply for those funds. So we have some time on this is my point.

Mr. Mann:

Linda, can you just repeat the amount again?

Ms. Wager:

The total amount is \$3,959,472.

Mr. Mann:

That's just one rate?

Ms. Wager:

Yes. That's just the CRRSAA.

Mr. Simons:

And the American Rescue Plan monies, do you have that handy? It's around .....

Ms. Wager:

It's another \$3 million, I'll look for it here.

Mr. Simons:

So these monies are available to spend on programs, initiatives that will address the impact of COVID-19 on our students. They are available to our academic support improvements to services for social/emotional wellness, which has been spoken about on public comment, mental health, student engagement, air quality, facilities issues that will improve the overall health of the building climates, and a number of other permissible categories.

Mr. Simons:

We have heard this year from many of our parents at the elementary school level, that they are worried about the academic progress of their students, particularly in reading and math. We've created a summer program, which will enable us to address some of that need, but as students are coming back in September, and again, we hope for full in-person learning and I would expect that that will happen. We want to be able to support student success in making accelerated growth in reading and mathematics.

Mr. Simons:

Other districts along with our district are looking at a model that would phase in additional teaching positions at the kindergarten through third grade level to provide, in addition to the classroom instruction that they're receiving, targeted interventions in reading and math measured by district adopted screening tools and utilizing some of the practices that [UAlbany is training our teachers in, among others. So we don't know at this point, whether it would be ten positions as identified in the document and we're still having conversations. Other districts are considering this as well.

Mr. Simons:

We do same student/teacher ratio, identifying the reading and math levels as the kids are coming back in September, providing targeted instructions to those kids, which is in addition to the reading and math instruction that they receive in the classroom. The number that we use \$82,000 is reflective of a salary along with benefits and the step that you used for that, Linda, was?

Ms. Wager:

Step three.

Mr. Simons:

Assuming step three, a teacher with three years experience plus their benefits. I believe we used the cost of family benefits, is that correct?

Ms. Wager:

Yes, that is correct. The estimate of \$82,000 is the 2122 step three salary for a teacher, \$51,068, plus FICA plus TRS, plus health insurance estimated at \$21,000, that comes out to the \$82,000.

Mr. Simons:

It doesn't necessarily mean that everyone that we hire will be paid \$82,000. It doesn't mean that will necessarily have 10 positions. It's a budgeted item and when we budget, we estimate high so that you know what the potential of that spending might be.

Mr. Simons:

The district currently has screening tools as part of our Response to Intervention Program, Response to Intervention Program is a required program by the state to make sure that we are doing everything possible to help students make academic progress before we refer them to special education. They're required to go through various tiers of intervention and provide support.

Mr. Simons:

We don't currently have a screening tool for mathematics and the current reading screening tools that we utilize are time intensive. They're individual, you have to pull individual kids out of class. It can take as much as two to three weeks to assess a full class. We want to provide something that is quicker, still gives us the kind of data, the whole class can take the assessment at the same time. And Mr. McHugh has had plans in the works with this Renaissance screening tool. That is a permissible expense because it gives us the ability to be able to identify the children, their reading progress and their math progress and do it in a consistent uniform matter. Jim, do you have anything to add on that?

Mr. McHugh:

Probably the most important thing to add to that is that with our current screening tool, we spend 10 weeks out of a 40 week school year assessing students, and that's unacceptable. We want to spend more time teaching students and less time assessing students. This tool in all reality, we could assess our students in the area of reading in one day, the next day we could do math, the third day, we could catch the kids that maybe we didn't catch on one of those days. And the data is instant and it's available to our teachers. So it's going to allow us to actually get our faculty in the classrooms, working with kids.

Mr. Simons:

Mr. McHugh and some others had been participating in some sessions to learn about Renaissance this year.

Mr. Simons:

I'm trying to be as thorough as I can, as efficient as I can. The Extending Learning Resource Center, we have a program at the high school right now where kids can go for extra support is problematic that they can't go every period. The learning resource lab is not open every period for students to get help. In some cases, kids can go at lunch. But because of staffing, it's not open every period. With the additional teaching assistant that's being recommended for ELA and the one for math, would enable that room to be open for kids to get academic support during a study hall, for example, or during their lunch, or during a period in which there could have been [inaudible 00:56:45]. That's embedded support within the school schedule.

Mr. Simons:

Additionally, we want to let you know that the district has been monitoring a number of students that are failing two or more subjects. Historically, global history is one of the most difficult courses for our students. And looking at that data, we see that the numbers indicate that in order to provide a targeted program over the next few years to deal with the number of students that are struggling in ninth grade, it's a two-year course, moving into 10th grade, we need a .2 Social Studies teacher to schedule that in. That is the area where we're finding the higher numbers of kids right now in our freshmen class that are performing low in global.

Mr. Simons:

Jim, do you have any more information on that?

Mr. McHugh:

That's the other value of the data, right? We know which regents exam our students are struggling with and we're being responsive to that.

Mr. Simons:

The AIS position that we've identified should look very similar to you. They were the positions that we included in the general fund budget.

PART 2 OF 5 ENDS [00:58:04]

Mr. Simons:

They were the positions that we included in the general fund budget. We're going to recommend utilizing the money that we have available in federal resources to support those positions. That will save general fund money that can be either reallocated next year, it will fall into fund balance, and that will be part of our sustainability in this area. Not spend the general fund money, utilize it, save it, spend it for next year as part of the sustainability so we get at least two years where there's resources that have been identified for AIS.

Mr. Simons:

Extended day program. Currently, we don't have a formal after-school program for kids at the elementary and middle school level, although many teachers do stay after to provide support. We have childcare after school, but we don't necessarily have academic support for homework help, English/Language Arts, mathematics. Many districts that are higher needs than us have qualified for after-school grants, which is the 21st Century Grant. We have not.

Mr. Simons:

So we want to have conversations with our teachers' union about how we staff that program. Kids stay after school. They get help in reading, they get help in math. Maybe they do an interest club. Maybe they learn about a craft for example, or something that they want to do that's fun. Maybe there's a wellness component. There's some exercise, some fitness, and some nutrition. We currently have rates within our contract that we believe apply, but we're having discussions with the teacher's union on Tuesday about this. So we based our budget on that. We also want to make sure that the program is uniform across the five elementary schools that we're collecting data on participation. So we may recommend a stipend for somebody to coordinate that after-school.

Mr. Simons:

Project Adventure: Items number 7, 8, 9, and 10 are really about student engagement. We know that through this experience with the pandemic, many of our students, particularly those students that are economically disadvantaged, may have experienced significant socio-emotional issues during this time, are demonstrating chronic absenteeism because they're not necessarily attending remotely or in-person. We want to have opportunities for those kids to re-engage in school and find ways to want to come to school, right? In some cases, the child would come to school because there's that one program, there's that one teacher, there's that one activity, and they can't wait to get there because they liked doing that project.

Mr. Simons:

Project Adventure is a program that many of our PE teachers are familiar with. It's ropes courses, it's outdoor activities, it's team building and trust-building activities that can either be incorporated in a PE class or an after-school program. It's out of SUNY Cortland, I believe. It's been around for a long time and we have it as an idea. We haven't necessarily costed out expenditures related to it.

Mr. Simons:

Three years ago, one of our teachers invited me to go to the Nassau Sportsman Club, and I tried trap shooting. It's going to be one of the teachers that's retiring this year, but we're going to try to see what we can do about giving that out. I actually did hit the skeet, that's what it's called. John, is that what it's called? What's that thing called that goes into the area?

Mr. Dunn:

Clay pigeon.

Mr. Simons:

Clay pigeon. After five tries. However, they wanted to start a program, and they felt that this type of a program, we can draw students who may not be participating in some of our other activities. There is a statewide organization that provides guidance on how to do this. It is a safe activity that requires kids to be trained.

Mr. Simons:

Supervised research has shown that it does not promote violence or use of guns. It is a sportsman activity that engages some of our kids. So we'd like to explore that. We talked about Rainbows Childcare

and looking at what we might be able to do to work with them to provide full day programming, usually before- and after-school childcare and maybe provide some resources to that.

Mr. Simons:

Junior ROTC. I had a lot of experience with watching Junior ROTC impact kids in my prior testimony from city schools because of an affiliation with an Air Force base. Officers of the Air Force brought to the districts the idea of an ROTC program. It was a program that started small, but eventually engaged 150 children who participated. Some students who needed a sense of purpose, some students who needed to feel like they belong to a part of a group, teaching leadership skills, aerospace science, other types of field trips, cyber security, was a part of it. There's a cyber competition that happens every year. And again, it'll be another way to have a different type of a program to engage kids.

Mr. Simons:

This particular program involves instruction in courses that are credit-bearing and also afterschool activities and community service. I asked Mark if he had any contacts, and he's going to arrange something for us to talk with somebody who he knows who does this at Schenectady High School, and I think it's worth exploring.

Mr. Simons:

I've seen students that were in my elementary school when I was a principal who I never believed who they were when they graduated. I went on to college, went on to careers. You don't necessarily have to go into the military if you're part of the Junior ROTC program, but it does teach you life skills.

Mr. Simons:

Mental health. This is an area that everyone is concerned about. I talked about the clinic that the county placed at Goff Middle School. He sent a formal letter requesting it. There is some coordination of work that would need to be done to arrange the schedule for kids, and we are looking at a stipend for one of our social workers to help with that process, like when looking at the student's schedule, for example, when can they have an appointment, making sure that they get to the appointment, and helping with that process.

Mr. Simons:

We also are trying to identify a universal screening tool, not only for reading and math, but for socio-emotional wellness and mental health. And Jim and Molly McGrath have identified four or five different options that we're looking at. Additionally, we recognize employee mental health and wellness is a key priority. After all, we've gone through our EAP program, is something that we have in place. We can support that with these funds. Marissa, you had shared some information with me today about next year and honestly I can't remember what you told me.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you, Mr. Simon. For next year, it's actually a rollover contract so we will see no price increase. So it would be the same costs as it is in this current school year.

Mr. Simons:

A while back, it's my understanding that we did have an equine program taking the students out learning positive relationships and the benefits of working with animals. There is research that's been done that these types of programs really help kids manage their mental health as well as build self-esteem. I believe that Andrea Neiman among other teachers have been involved in that. In years past, we have not been able to do that, and we want to support that program with at least four sessions per year, three times over the next three years for the work to be done on that.

Mr. Simons:

We talked about the need for looking at our alternative programs. One of the things that Mr. McHugh said a couple of weeks ago was our high graduation rate of 97% is in large part due to the support programs that we have for alternative education and the quality of our special education programs. CTAP is a program that is intended to provide programs for kids that may have a school-related phobia or anxiety regarding coming to school or other issues where they're academically successful but coming to school in the large school environment is intimidating for them.

Mr. Simons:

We want to explore moving that down to the eighth grade. We're still having discussions about how to do that. We may have to hire an additional teacher, and there'll be some technology associated with that. Additionally, we may impact space at Genet, and we are talking about how that may or may not occur. In order to support it, again, there are students in that program in grades nine through 12, depending on a number of students that we identified, we want to make sure that we have certified teachers providing the core curriculum, science, ELA, math, and we are estimating, we might need an additional teacher in those areas, at least in science or the eighth grade. And we also wanted to increase school psychologist support too, if we can.

Mr. Simons:

One of the things I have said within our administrative team regarding alternative programs as well, I fully support their success. We want to make sure that we have within each of our alternative programs the opportunity for kids to transition back into the regular environment. I don't want to see us moving down to eighth grade, moving kids into an alternative program, such as CTAEP and not giving them opportunities to demonstrate resiliency to be in a normal setting so we're still talking about how that might work. We do transition students back into the high school from CTAEP. So we just want to make sure that we're not just putting kids in that program and not giving them the exposure that they need to be resilient and to be successful. Even if they are anxious, there's an emphasis on coping skills.

Mr. Simons:

Food for Families. Our athletic department, along with Audra Di Bacco was our teacher of the year among many other volunteers, including JoAnn Taylor who is here with us right now, has been very successful. One of the concerns that was brought to my attention by Joann was that while we know that the need is there, but we're not sure that the coordination and the word is getting out. We're worried that we're not serving certain families. In fact, Jennifer brought that up too, in a recent phone conversation. So we want to support this idea of providing for both the community-based program and the backpack program by giving someone a stipend to help facilitate, make sure they're doing the outreach. The folks that we have doing this right now already have more than full-time responsibilities.

Mr. Simons:

MAP has been talked about for grade six since I've been here. MAP is the middle school alternative program. In order to support that, kids are receiving instruction. Teachers generally move to the kids. We need 0.6 elementary teacher to teach ELA and social studies and informational literacy. We need a 0.4 FTE for math and science. We want to add a guidance counselor. Just want to remind folks that an additional guidance counselor and an additional social worker has shown up the last four years on the requests that have come from the administrators. We haven't been able to provide both the social worker and the counselor. We added a social worker, but we have not added the counseling piece here and there's a significant coordination involved on the part of the counselor. And we're also looking at a stipend for the additional counselor that is not on this list. It was a request from the principal and a teaching assistant for grade six math.

Mr. Simons:

Response to intervention. One of the things that we want to ensure can happen is that we're coordinating our RTI program. Right now, Mr. McHugh does that among a thousand other things. I'm not able to get to the level of data analysis that is essential for the fact we are evaluating the program. We are going to propose a teacher on assignment, help him with that process and interconnect with reading teachers, their RTI committee, and our special education teachers as well.

Mr. Simons:

This is not something that we have done, teacher on special assignment, here in the district. We're going to discuss it with the union. We don't want to incur the full-time costs of an administrator. So one of the reasons we came to the conclusion of a teacher on assignment, the teacher would come out of the classroom if they were interested, they would do this work. And then they would have rights to return to the classroom once the program was either in good shape, or we didn't need the money anymore, or we didn't have the money anymore. And again, that's just part of identifying the kids and the interventions that they need, coordinating it, under the district wide banner.

Mr. Simons:

Additional teaching assistance has been mentioned by members of our staff and community. Recent public meeting we had regarding reopening the idea of teaching assistants being not only key to help kids with academics but with emotional support. There are shifts that occur in teaching assistant assignments as kids age up and graduate. In some ways, we were able to shift teaching assistants in special education to meet those needs. As kids are coming back and getting more individual and group support, we would like to employ additional teaching assistants primarily at the elementary level.

Mr. Simons:

Item number two. Staffing has been a subject of discussion of the comments tonight, and I also received feedback from staff. This is a position that I think is misunderstood and miscommunicated right now, and I'll own the miscommunication because it is evolving, and it is still evolving. Over the course of this year, our nurses have done an extraordinary job of absorbing some of the additional work associated with screening for health symptoms and managing that whole process related to COVID-19.

Mr. Simons:

Additionally, we hired a full-time COVID coordinator to meet all the obligations for contact tracing as well as to advise the district, and work as a liaison with the county Department of Health Administration

and our nurses. That preserved our nurses, to be able to focus on kids in regular work that needed to be done in each of the schools with support from the COVID coordinator.

Mr. Simons:

We don't know exactly what the regulations are going to be in September so we started discussions about whether or not we would need a full-time COVID coordinator. The answer is we don't necessarily have to have a full-time COVID coordinator, but we believe that some level of support will still be needed for buy-in by an RN for COVID-related work.

Mr. Simons:

Our COVID coordinator also provides me and Marissa with the data that we report every day. Currently the COVID coordinator works evenings and weekends, and that is part of her position. So the COVID coordination piece will likely be less but still be there. Additionally, last month we received an email from our house services coordinator, our nurse at the high school, who also handles health services coordination, indicating that she had reviewed the grant and that it was a permissible expense to hire additional nurse support for schools, and would we consider hiring an additional nurse position and deploying that nurse in such a way that that nurse could rotate on a daily basis to be assigned to each of the schools to help and in the event that we didn't have coverage because of the lack of substitute. So that would be a piece of the position as well, and that came from the nurses.

Mr. Simons:

So we added that to our discussion of what this position was going to entail. Additionally, Dr. Albert, who has been working more closely with the district this year because of COVID-19 and all of the other issues that we face regarding student health has indicated that he feels that he is not able to do as good of a job as could be done to address the primary health care needs of our children who rely on the school physician to do physicals. These are students that may not have, in some cases, a primary care provider. So he reached out to Molly McGrath. I asked her to forward the information to me. He feels that there is a role for a nurse to assist him, not just in giving the physical, but in promoting the idea with families, with our social workers, that students ought to have a primary care provider, those follow-ups to the physicals could be done to make sure that it's being done in a more comprehensive way.

Mr. Simons:

So all of these pieces we're trying to piece together into what this position would be, and we haven't completed that process yet. And we want to talk to the SRP regarding this and the nurses directly.

Mr. Simons:

When we put out this document, we caused concern because we put a budgeted amount in there that doesn't necessarily reflect what we're thinking about right now. It doesn't necessarily deal with the actual salary. So Linda, if you could help me with this. It's not a nurse being paid \$59,714. And we want to explain this better because this document caused some concern.

Ms. Wager:

Sure. Thank you, Mr. Simon. So what is currently in the plan? The way that \$59,714 is calculated is, in the SRP contract the 20-21, 21-22 step six for a nurse, a registered nurse is \$31.74 cents an hour. They work seven hours a day, 190 days a year. That comes out to \$42,215. We also added in there a COVID and wellness coordinator for the additional responsibilities that is \$6,000. So that comes to \$48,215.

Ms. Wager:

Then when we add FICA on there at 7.65% plus ERS at 16.2%, that comes out to \$59,714. And as Mr. Simon said, we were talking about this position being a 12 month position. So keep that in mind that the \$59,714 altogether. If I were to take that same step six in the contract, that \$42,215 divided by 10 months, and then multiply it by 12 months to come out with an annual salary, that annual salary would be \$50,658.

Ms. Wager:

Okay, thank you. Thank you. So if I'm just going to start on the 12 month position again. If I were to take that current step six, 10 month nursing position of \$42,215 divided by 10 months, that comes out to \$4,221.50 a month, multiply that by 12 months, it comes out to \$50,658, FICA of 7.65%. On top of that is \$3,875 and ERS of 16.2% on that is \$8,207. So that comes out to a total salary, FICA, and ERS of \$62,740. So that compared to the \$59,714 is a current savings of \$3,026 under this current proposal as I calculated it.

Mr. Simons:

Okay, so over time, this is bad trying to look at really three sets of needs. The COVID situation, the fact that we want to support increased health services for the children on a daily basis, and we want to lend some enhanced health care services for those students and provide the district for physicals as a liaison to promote primary care.

Mr. Simons:

Additionally, districts are struggling to hire nurses, and we feel like we need additional nurses. We want to make it clear that this position would involve daily work with students on an assignment basis to help the nurses that we have. In addition to some of these other areas, because it would be a 12 month position, we have trouble finding nurses for summer school. In fact, our current COVID coordinator is fulfilling one of those slots for summer school. In the following summer, we would envision that the 12 month position would also be, as part of their duties, they would be working in summer school, not for extra pay. That would be part of the 12 month salary.

Mr. Simons:

Now all of this has kind of been under discussion. The last couple of weeks, I asked Marissa to give me some data on what it's been like to try to find nursing substitutes. We really feel there's a need. We want to iron out how that position would be employed, bring it back to the board. Anyone who's currently employed by the district would be eligible to apply for that position. And we have got to iron it out with the SRP and the nurses, but districts are not able to pay nurses what they make in other settings. We've struggled with that, and we've lost people as well.

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you, Mr. Simon. So we have posted for substitute nurses a number of times this fiscal year. So just to give you an idea: we posted from August 3rd to August 17th, 2020. That resulted in no candidates applying for our sub nurse posting. We posted again October 27th through November 9th, 2020, resulting in no applicants applying. January 20th, 2021 through February 2nd, 2021, no candidates have applied. We most recently posted April 29th, 2021 through May 12th, 2021, no candidates applied.

Ms. Cannon:

We most recently were recognized as a topper place, and we included the need for substitute nurses in that ad that ran in the Times Union on May 23rd, 2021. At this time, no substitute nurses have applied. Three times during the school year, we had individuals reach out to us for potential interest and due to the substitute nature of the assignments that we could provide, those individuals were not willing to follow through with the substitute appointment or were looking for really full-time work. So we continue our efforts for recruiting. We're just not seeing that the candidate pool is there, but we continue to try our best.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you, Marissa. So there'll be further discussions of this position and certainly want the board to weigh in. We expect that we'll have more discussion about all of this next week.

Mr. Simons:

The other items just real quickly. The attendance intervention specialist, and this focuses on someone to address chronic absenteeism with students particularly at the middle school and high school. We don't want to necessarily support what some would consider to be the old truant officer model, where you [inaudible 01:25:39] yourself to school and knock on the door kind of approach that maybe some of us were familiar with when we were in high school. I mean, maybe some people that I knew. We feel that it's more of an issue for a social worker to find out what the barriers to school attendance are, work with the children, and work with the families. Mr. McHugh has shared at board meetings chronic absenteeism data with the education committee. So we were looking for an additional social worker position to focus on this and work with the administrative team.

Mr. Simons:

Fitness and nutrition coordinator. Mr. Leonard has requested this as a way to focus on emotional, physical, and social health of our children. I have indicated in my communications that I want to take a little bit more time to think about this. I want to make sure that this position is targeted to those kids that need it the most. I don't necessarily want just the student athletes working with this person in the weight room, for example. I want those kids that may be failing physical education to have an alternative, and we do have a number of kids that are failing at physical education. I want to see kids maybe walking trails, doing things outdoors, things they like to do to promote physical, lifelong physical activities. So I'm still thinking about this.

PART 3 OF 5 ENDS [01:27:04]

Mr. Simons:

...Lifelong physical activities. So I'm still thinking about this one. I agree that there's a need. I just want to make sure that it's tailored to all kids and particularly those kids that might not like gym, not like sports, and the reason that they don't pass or graduate is because they fail physical education believe it or not. Jim, could you talk a little bit about our phys-ed data?

Mr. McHugh:

I believe Mr. Harkin is also on if I get this incorrect, but we do monitor our quarter failures and we have about 120 to 140 students that are failing physical education. Even in a COVID pandemic year where we weren't requiring students to change for phys-ed, and we're doing things like taking them outside, and kids were allowed to play can jam, listen to music, and walk the track. We still aren't getting that

participation. This position really has to be a well thought out to provide an alternative for those students to engage in some sort of wellness activity that would qualify for that P.E. credit as well.

Mr. Simons:

The high school start time was brought up earlier. While this next item isn't necessarily directly related, it is a software web-based program and hardware that enables us to instantaneously know who is on the bus and who is currently riding the bus. There is a parent piece too, where you can see where your child is. If bus 37 is late, there's an app. Parent can go on the app [and see that the bus was just running late, Johnny is still on the bus. Additionally, there's better routing capabilities associated with this program, as I understand it. Those routing capabilities might give us a different tool other than the current Transfinder to use, to plot out different bus models that might be utilized for addressing the start time. Who's riding the bus, when they ride the bus, when they don't ride the bus, whether our buses are at full occupancy or not. Those have been issues that existed before COVID. It became important this year, even more so, because we wanted to make sure that we had appropriate distancing on the bus. One of the areas that we looked at was who's actually riding every day and who's not.

Mr. Simons:

Could we be more efficient? More kids are coming back to school... Mark Noeth, are you out there? If Mark is out there, I'm going to put him on the spot. If you are and you feel like commenting, go right ahead. Linda, did you have anything to add on this one?

Ms. Wager:

No, I'm sorry. I don't.

Mr. Simons:

Air quality, better filtering, air conditioning. These are all topics that come up during COVID and air conditioning always comes up every spring. Since I've been here five years, the teacher's union has discussed with me whether or not we could conceive of air conditioning in a capital project. We verified with our architect and our instructional manager. I know from experience that when you replace heating and ventilation systems with newer systems, air conditioning or climate control is aid able under a capital project.

Mr. Simons:

Paul has done some preliminary work with terrain, looking at the per unit ventilator costs. To get new ventilators themselves, we started looking at because we wanted to replace them with unit ventilators that could utilize higher MERV rating filters. Today, we had a construction meeting and we talked about, if you go and you replace the unit ventilators, can you equip those unit ventilators so that in a future capital project, they could be connected with other components of the system to provide air conditioning. The cost, the \$25,000 cost per unit ventilator, includes appropriate coils as they understand it. I don't know much about HVAC, that you'd be able to do that.

Mr. Simons:

If you did all the elementary school unit ventilators right now, I think there are more than 230 unit ventilators. That would eat up the majority of these federal funds. However, in talking with Linda, and Linda talking with Azmo and Questar, the state aid planning. We believe that it is permissible to utilize these federal monies for either lowering the local share costs of a free future capital project for

upgrading heating and ventilation systems in all of your buildings or going about the capital project traditionally, which is typically bonding, borrowing, going off Republic vote. Rather than budgeting the principal and interest costs of the project in your annual budget, utilizing monies that have been set aside in a capital project reserve, capital reserve. We're exploring some different options to address this. It did make sense to me right now to do 10 unit ventilators.

Mr. Simons:

Where do you choose to put them? I think it would be better off doing this as a part of a complete capital project. As long as we are able to get those funds budgeted for federal funds and I've asked the architects to start working on it and estimate of what it would take to upgrade the unit, the unit ventilators, and provide air conditioning, the chillers, everything that would be needed in the elementary schools to bring back to you. We would use the federal money to have no impact on the taxpayers this component of the project. We have a five year plan. [inaudible 01:33:49]

Mr. Simons:

Anything to add on the capital reserve?

Ms. Wager:

No, I don't think so. I think you covered it all and basically it would be putting these monies aside to make up our local district portion of the expense.

Mr. Simons:

Put it in the federal monies aside?

Ms. Wager:

By establishing a capital reserve.

Mr. Simons:

Which they have told us is permissible because you're improving your infrastructure, your health and safety, your infrastructure, and you're doing a good long range planning management. You get upgraded heating and ventilation, better filtering, better air quality and air conditioning, and the portion that is not reimbursable from the state is paid for out of the capital reserve. The monies that are set aside in the capital reserve are the federal monies. How we actually go about doing that, we're still exploring, and this was a brainstorming.

Mr. Simons:

There are some newer types of point of sale software that Phyllis Sanford crew has requested to manage free, reduced lunch electronically. There are some needs for, as you recall, we bought a lot of tables. We bought a lot of 3x3 tables. If social distancing is still required in cafeterias, there are some buildings that will need more of those because of all the kids will be there. We want to put those tables into the budget, the federal programs. We've talked about the idea that many kids might be interested in doing some type of apprenticeship program, right within our own schools and learn about culinary food service, particularly at the middle school level. Maybe before they're eligible to go to BOCES because they're not allowed to go to BOCES until their junior or senior year. Phyllis was interested in

putting together some kind of program like that with our staff. We know that the smart schools monies are approved and we've submitted our plan, but there's no timeline to spend the SmartSchools money.

Mr. Simons:

What we'd like to do is utilize the federal monies to replace the Chromebooks, new side boards, and provide some other technology for live streaming of events. For example, we've had live stream sporting events, graduations, other types of ceremonies. Use this money now, get the approval for the smart schools' money, and then that gives us sustainability with more years to replace other equipment. Did I explain it right?

Mr. Buono:

That's exactly correct.

Mr. Simons:

That was Linda's brainstorming.

Mr. Buono:

That's very interesting. So the bond monies do not have an expiration date?

Ms. Wager:

The Smart Schools bond money does not have an expiration date on it, while this does. So I thought we could use this money first.

Mr. Buono:

That's interesting.

Mr. Simons:

The thing we want to do, and now I'm done. I think this is worth taking some time on to just explain it. [inaudible 01:37:24] also. Before I came to superintendent, the assistant superintendent at the time of year contacted me and talked to me about students Helpdesk program, where students learn how to staff a call center, help other kids with technology issues. We were unable to do it for various reasons at the time. Peter has asked that we consider putting this together. High school kids being available, Helpdesk, help other kids who might need a monitor or somebody to supervise it. I believe that the kids have the skills already, the background to do this without a lot of technical help. They just need somebody to coordinate and supervise the program. It's not about a huge cost but it might a good way to engage the kids.

Mr. Buono:

Do they get a credit for service time?

Mr. Simons:

If the board could approve credit, you could certainly award credit for that.

Mr. Simons:

That's everything. It's a work in progress. You see this as sort of a first blush. We want to have opportunities for the Board to give comments or questions and concerns right now and we will continue to work on this

Ms. Wager:

Mr. Simons, could I add? There's actually one more proposal that....

Mr. Simons:

Oh, I missed it.

Ms. Wager:

No, you did not miss it. I missed it, putting it on there, and it is called the Mackin VIA eBook. Audio book accounts, the librarians suggested this to us. It is a total cost of \$35,000 and it would specifically provide us with a list of eBooks regarding, if I could just read this, children to experience all types of stressors and books can provide therapeutic support, social, emotional titles, focused on the five principles of social, emotional learning, social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. We would have a list of books, eBooks that are available. They are all about different costs. So we estimate that there's 35,000 amongst the five elementary schools would provide approximately 83 books a year. So I will add that to the list.

Mr. Simons:

We did talk about that.

Ms. Wager:

We did, and I...

Mr. Simons:

It's a good idea.

Mr. Buono:

So that comprehensive review of initial draft plan. I appreciate the feedback to a lot of work, obviously, to get suggestions, put a lot of the figures needed together for the board's review. Initial thoughts, anyone want to start?

Mr. Buono:

Whatever you want to comment on.

Mr. Mann:

I got three pages.

Mr. Buono:

What's that?

Mr. Mann:

I said I have three pages.

Mr. Buono:

You have three pages?

Mr. Mann:

Yeah, I mean, how do we want to do this? We'll be here until midnight.

Mr. Buono:

Right. We want to read each piece. If you want to add some general comments now and then provide a feedback to the Superintendent, the team will do that. Okay. Since we're going to get the extension, there's not a rush on this. Like the June 15th issue was something we were worried about. So you hear back?...

Ms. Wager:

That extension, I have not received confirmation on that, but they... I filed for that it today, so the extension should bring us through July 15th.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. So why don't the people who have notes, what you want to do is pull those together, send them to Mr. Simons, but general comments now, anyone?

Ms. Taylor:

I just have a question...

Mr. Buono:

Okay, what's your question?

Ms. Taylor:

I just want to confirm for the teachers. You've got the salary plus benefits. Does that also include TA's and other positions? Are benefits included?

Mr. Buono:

The 52K was listed there? Is that benefits, too? I'm assuming it is.

Ms. Wager:

Yes. For both the teachers and the TAs I've included salaries and benefits, and I've used step three for those positions for next year.

Ms. Taylor:

And nursing staff, what step do you have of them?

Ms. Wager:

The district wide nursing position is at step six.

Ms. Taylor:

Okay, and do we have step six currently? The nursing step?

Ms. Wager:

I'm not sure....

Ms. Cannon:

I'm not sure if they're currently, I do know there will be for the 2021-22 school year where we can examine that.

Ms. Wager:

I can certainly provide you with the information of where each nurse step is currently for 21-22.

Mr. Buono:

Okay.

Ms. Taylor:

Thank you for this. I think there's a lot of great ideas, a lot of necessary things that we haven't been able to do anything with and I think this is a great time to put a lot of these things into motion.

Mr. Buono:

Anyone else?

Mr. Mann:

I have a general comment.

Mr. Buono:

Mr. Mann, do you have a General comment?

Mr. Mann:

On sustainability.

Mr. Buono:

Sustainability, number one.

Mr. Mann:

Just roughly looking over this?

Mr. Buono:

Absolutely.

Mr. Mann:

We were about \$2.5 million to bring on 35 employees. And that's just roughly. 35 employees that maybe we can employ one year or maybe two. And then what happens? If we build a program up, and then all of a sudden now we can't sustain it because we can't sustain roughly \$2.4 million in our budget. I just want to be mindful that sustainability, hiring people with the possibility that they can only be working here one year. But so this \$82,000 times 10 equals \$820,000. Is that for three years or is that for one year?

Ms. Wager:

The \$82,000 is a teacher salary estimated for one year.

Mr. Mann:

It's times 10, so \$820,000. If you did that over a three year period, that's two points of the million dollars, but we only got 3.9 million.

Mr. Simons:

I want to talk about that, if you don't mind me addressing that sustainability. One of the things that is done every year by the district, is we do a staffing report and we post it online and provide it to the board. It lists all the teachers by category. Our intent would be to hire staff into these positions, the specific purpose of providing the academic support/mental health support and as people retire, let's take the elementary temp position. We've talked about phase in phase out, which is a sustainability. Let's say you hire those 10 teachers right now. They may become nine the following year, eight the following year, seven the following year, so at the end of... this money intended to be seed money or boost money to boost the kids back up.

Mr. Simons:

At the end of that process, when the grant runs out, we wind up with the same number of positions based on enrollment. It might not be exactly the same, but the understanding is that these positions are brought into the district for the years in which we have the grant, and as people retire, as we have retirements every year, you hire 10 elementary positions in these roles. A teacher retires next year, it becomes nine. The position is sliding back in to replace the retirement position. It's phased in to give the kids the support they need, and then you phase it out.

Mr. Simons:

The other thing that we're doing is some of the things that have been identified in here are also in our general fund logic, such as the AIS positions. We will now have that money next year to sustain those AIS positions. When we sit down and propose the general fund budget next year, we will give the board report of here are the positions that we've brought in this year. What is it going to look like next year? To make sure and monitor that it isn't ballooning or escalating our general fund budget. The funding source that we utilize for these positions has nothing to do with tenure. It has nothing to do with their probationary period. They would still be regular teachers hired no differently, but it will be our obligation as a district to have a sustainability plan that phases them out.

Mr. Simons:

Part of that metric will be the reading, the math scores, the chronic attendance data, the number of kids participating. We recognize that this money isn't intended to balloon the budget. It's intended to be a boost for the kids, and we've talked about it. There's, there's really no way, and it's really somewhat of a

challenge for districts to spend \$7 million to address all of these issues with no guarantee that money's going to be here. Our plan would be phase it in and phase it out based on the needs of the district. So at the end of the process, you're not shifting \$7 million worth of expense out of your general fund.

Mr. Mann:

So the intent would be when you hire 10, I'm just looking at this first one, you didn't have 10 teachers retire this year. You're saying you are hiring 10 elementary teachers district Y and then you're going to slop them into positions. I mean, we didn't have 10 elementary teachers...

Mr. Simons:

There was a time or two at a time based on a number of retirees. So we have the money until 2023 and 2024. So that would be more than a one year...

Mr. Mann:

So we get three million in 2022, 3 million in 2023, not three, we have three million...

Mr. Simons:

Yes.

Mr. Mann:

3.9 million, that's it. We can spend it over a three-year period.

Mr. Simons:

That's right.

Mr. Mann:

But if we're hiring 10 elementary school teachers and the total is \$820,000, and we want to sustain that for a three year period, then you're talking.... the 10th, let's take the 10 teachers. The person that retires is already in your general fund budget. It's not in your federal programs. If you need that position for regular classroom position, you take the 10th person, you put them into that regular position and it leaves nine. That money is still in the general fund budget when that person retires.

Ms. Skumurski:

So Jeff, we're not hiring all 10 at once?

Mr. Simons:

We may, we have made a determination that it is 10.

Ms. Skumurski:

I would worry that... [Crosstalk 01:48:52]

Mr. Mann:

You already have the retirees position that leaves the district and the general fund budget. You already need to hire that person to replace the person. Instead of hiring somebody from the outside. If these

folks do a good job, they would be slotted into those positions so that reduces to not. So it's a shifting of the positions out on these federal funds that won't be with us into regular positions that are typically budgeted in the general fund budget anyways.

Ms. Skumurski:

So the risk we have is if we don't have 10 retirees in three years, right? Because then... [Crosstalk 01:49:31].

Mr. Buono:

You're assuming that...

Mr. Simons:

That'd be what, tell me what happened.

Mr. Buono:

The data doesn't show the report for future boards in the budget is that if the data shows, we need more interventions. The board has to decide whether they want to sustain positions beyond the regular staffing replacement schedule that I'm hearing, because that's the critical part. The data getting gather of interventions, how successful they are, if we don't need all those, or we can't support. We're going to have to make some hard decisions about accessing or absorbing the positions to continue the progress that was made. It's going to be decisions that happen over time. Will we get all the retirements, we may not, but then it comes to the board's decision during the budget.

Mr. Buono:

To say, we want to invest in, we'll take two more of those positions out of the grant funds and put them in a general fund.

Mr. Buono:

If we can't do that, we excess. And it's just going to come down to that. It's going to be very specific monitoring of the data and the budget to make sure these positions to not get shifted to the general fund that increases taxes.

Mr. Simons:

You also have credible sources. You have your Title 1 monies, people retire within the title grant. So you could potentially add some positions into title one. So at the end of the day, your general fund, that staffing, will only go up through an action of the board that determines that they want to maintain something, right?

Mr. Mann:

So when you do these postings for these positions, is there something you put in there that it's temporary with the possibility of full-time? I mean, I guess I don't understand how you can hire 10 people and how we can sustain that at \$820,000 a year.

Mr. Mann:

If nobody retires, you didn't have any elementary school teachers retire in the next three years.

Mr. Simons:

Based on the data that we have, we always have one or two.

Mr. Mann:

But then the program that they're teaching here, that we want to increase, just saying year one, you had three elementary school teachers that retired and you took three of these folks, put them into those positions. Well, the job that they were doing that we created now goes away because they're going to go into the education. Yes, exactly. So if we're doing a good job called that, bringing the kids up, they should go away. You're shifting them in there. They're still probationary appointed teachers because under the law, the only way you can have a term sock is if somebody is out on a leave of absence.

Mr. Mann:

So they come into the district as probationary teachers, they're still evaluated the same way. The APPR is in place and they're serving in roles. Some of these positions might... existing teachers might want them. A senior teacher may want to move into this role because they want to help with the kids in this way, opening up another slot in their assignment. You may go from 10 to eight to six based on the data of how the kids are doing. It would be our obligation to present that data and say, you know what? These were, these were positions to give the kids the extra support as they're transitioning back. There's no way to give them the extra support and meet this mandate without extra staff. There's just no way. The idea that you're not supposed to spend it on recurring fonts is true, but you can't address the need without the staff. I guess that becomes incumbent on us to phase it in and phase it out.

Ms. Curtin:

Didn't we add a couple of positions this year? I feel like the level based on enrollment also, haven't we done that almost every year? Haven't we added a position or two? So we're looking at retirements. These people could also possibly be moved into positions that become necessary through enrollment increases because we have an understanding that our enrollment is increasing.

Mr. Buono:

Based on the projections, we saw.

Ms. Curtin:

Based on the projections, right. So I don't think we have to look at it just saying, well, 10 people have to retire. We will need, hopefully, we'll be able to slot people into 10 vacancies that may occur through retirement or through growth in our District. So I think that gives us a little bit more room.

Mr. Mann:

It's not just... I use that cause that's the phrase. If you look at it, it's almost hiring 35 additional people.

Ms. Curtin:

Right.

Mr. Mann:

So there's 30. I just said the 10, because that's what in the first item.

Ms. Wager:

Right. That's the first money you're looking at.

Mr. Mann:

If you go through the whole document and you start adding up the number of hiring employees, it's up there into the high twenties, low thirties of new staff. I'm just saying, I'm not against it. I'm just saying we have to be able to... I would hate to have to hire somebody and then tell them in two years, guess what? I can't afford it. And you're gone.

Mr. Simons:

Well, we realize that can happen.

Mr. Mann:

We haven't done that in this district in a lot of years. We've been able to sustain our employees and not have cuts because of the smart budgeting we've done. I would hate to hire 30 some odd teachers or 30 some odd staff members and then in a couple of years say, you know what? We've got to cut 20 people now. All of a sudden you should bring to such a schools cut 20 jobs. So I just want us to be cognizant of the fact that looking at the number of employees that we're bringing on, can we sustain that over future years? Because it may not be this board that's going to have to make cuts or tell people we've got to raise taxes. Right? That's all I'm asking.

Mr. Simons:

I'm in full agreement with that. We've had some conversations about that.

Mr. Mann:

And if we could just get, when you can, Linda, not tonight, but maybe how much we got under the other grant.

Ms. Wager:

Yes, and I'm sorry. I did not bring number with me.

PART 4 OF 5 ENDS [01:56:04]

Mr. Mann:

It's okay.

Ms. Wager:

It's slightly over 3 million, but I'll send it out.

Mr. Mann:

Was there a source document that came from the federal government that outlines what we can and cannot use the funds for?

Ms. Wager:

Yes there is.

Mr. Simons:

In fact, we got another one from the state today, I can get you that.

Mr. Mann:

Thank you. That's all I have. I'll email my questions over to you.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you. JoAnn?

Ms. Taylor:

I just have one other quick question. These 10 teachers are... I'm just saying for teachers could be TAs, anybody. Say we hire these 10 people, when do their tenure tracks start? When they fill in a regular position after somebody retires?

Mr. Simons:

When they're hired, period. Probably a source of their funding has nothing to do with your estate, tender block. So for hire somebody out of a grant, they're giving the same four year probationary period, the same provisional period, if they're a teacher.

Ms. Cannon:

A civil service employee.

Mr. Simons:

A civil service employee. The rules for a probationary place don't change based on the funding source. Question?

Mr. Buono:

Anyone else? Jennifer.

Ms. Massey:

Thanks, so I think what we're really talking about, and what's kind of exciting at the same time, scary, right? Is true succession planning, which most public schools are not really able to do because of the funding, and so what we're attempting to do through some creative thinking is to try to hire some of these positions with the thought of your natural attrition through growth through resignation, because there will be people, maybe somebody moving out of the area or having another opportunity to be able to do some actual succession planning, and I think I really applaud the creativity.

Ms. Massey:

The scary part is asking you to sustain that piece of it, but I really do like that thinking. And again, you're in a completely different space, right? Then we traditionally are, so kudos for that. In addition, like universal screening tool, has anybody thought about reaching out to Dr. Marc Brackett at Yale University? We had met him at the conference. He's the one who does social, emotional learning. He

has the RULER program there, and I'm thinking he might have some kind of screening or assessment tool. If you're not connected with him, I can connect you with him.

Mr. Simons:

That'd be great.

Ms. Massey:

So, because I've been following him since we met at the school boards conference, are you connected with him, Jim?

Mr. McHugh:

No, I would love that.

Ms. Massey:

Okay, then I will connect you. The other piece is kudos on remembering about the Heartland Mosaic POS, not that Phyllis 01:59:00]wouldn't, but that actually was proposed way back when they had the assessment done by that outside consultant that came in and they made the recommendation to purchase that, at that time and I love the idea of the apprenticeship programs and building again in these alternative options for students to start to look at career interests because I think it's critically important. These additional screening tools generally create a few more, Mr. McHugh I should say I'm sorry, about not spending 10 weeks of 40 weeks, assessing. So the faster that we can assess, the faster we can figure out what the issues are and attack that, and I think that that is awesome.

Ms. Massey:

All of these additional, alternative kind of programs, the Equine program, talking about alternative programs with nutritional and wellness, ROTC, Project Adventure, we will then touch other students that maybe our programming has not been able to touch. That's something that is near and dear to my heart. It's the original reason I ran, which is how do we become creative? How can we touch every student in the district in some way? So I'm very excited by that potential. And again, I think we're positioned in a very different way than we ever have been before, pre COVID, because these things wouldn't necessarily be able to happen. Yes, the scary part is the funding and the sustainability going forward. But if there's a way to, again, put the money aside to the general fund and then shift it, right? So trying to continue to push that out, just like with smarter schools, brilliant, brilliant, brilliant, brilliant.

Ms. Massey:

It is, right? Because again, sometimes we can step back from it and you don't have the pressure of that, right?. Where you've got to do it right now in this moment, it's like, "What can we look at to be able to do that?" The library request, excellent. Again, all of our program areas are doing these assessments. We haven't been in a position and some of these things are going to last longer than that, right? That access to those resources? Same thing with the Chromebooks and the one-to-one that technology is out for three years, and then there's going to be whole other creative ways of being able to fund that. Then lastly, and then I'll shut up, the help desk, the work experience and the apprenticeship program. Yes. Technology is the way of the future. And again, I couldn't be more excited as I transition away from the board, because again, I think you're just positioned with some of this federal money. Not that anything really awesome has come out of COVID but this is certainly clearly funding, with this additional federal funding and state funding, that could potentially push us forward. So, thanks.

Mr. Buono:

Michele?

Ms. Skumurski:

Yeah, I'll be real quick. I do love a lot of these programs. I especially like the technology components because it really doesn't put up as much risk on future board budgets. So... And I am concerned about that. We have a challenging rate here and we can't add to that. So we'll have to monitor that and somebody may be the bad person, and I'm not sure that any of us want to know who that's going to be, the person at your down line of that.

Ms. Skumurski:

So I think we need to think hard about that and then the only other item I had is in terms of some of the programs, I love the other options and the other programs that Jim mentioned. That some seem to be a lot focused on high school. I'd like to see where they are in the middle school and in the elementary school. These guys need some attention too, and they may crossover, but you don't want to work towards that. I'm thinking fitness and nutrition. You're not going to be doing a lot in elementary school. Well, what can you do for them? What can we do for the middle schools if we are not doing those?

Mr. Simons:

Project Adventure stuff can apply to middle school. There's a program that is or not, a ROTC program. It's Civil Air Patrol, it's for middle school. That isn't in some schools, it was in my prior district. So there are things like those that we're proposing for high school that we could talk about having it in middle school. So our trouble is learning about rescue, learning about aeronautics, learning about how to... It has a similar climate as ROTC. Kids wear uniforms, some of the same things you learn about in ROTC and go out and do different types of projects.

Ms. Skumurski:

And with this money, they're not getting air conditioning or built-ins yet, right? Is that what we're saying? Because if I hear that one more time....

Mr. Simons:

Not yet.

Ms. Skumurski:

Okay.

Mr. Simons:

It's a lot. It's a whole redo of our HVAC system.

Ms. Taylor:

Are we putting that in the Capital component?

Mr. Simons:

We've asked the architect in the building condition survey to identify the HVAC systems in elementary schools as needing to be replaced, where they need to be replaced and to tie in air conditioning.

Ms. Skumurski:

Okay.

Mr. Simons:

We've been talking about that for a while before meeting came. One of the delays about that, we're still in phase two and phase three of the current project.

Mr. Dunn:

Ready for me?

Mr. Buono:

I see the microphone being passed to Mr. Dunn.

Mr. Simons:

I appreciate all feedback.

Mr. Dunn:

Just a couple of quick comments. I'll be brief. Everyone's covered it. What I liked about the conversation tonight in the proposal, it's about student re-engagement and how can we be creative? I don't think we realize how disconnected a lot of our regular students are and that's my concern as we move forward, that we need creative in a lot of different ways to try and get everyone to re-engage.

Mr. Dunn:

It's going to take a huge effort. It's getting the parents reengaged. It's getting the community reengaged, it's getting our staff reengaged. So this, I think, is a really great opportunity and I go back to Jeff's comment, this is really seed money and you're right. Everyone's concerned about sustainability, but if we're successful within the terms of this grant, then the dire straits that we could face ourselves and hopefully will diminish and we'll be able to plan better. I know in my career and Mark can attest to this, there was always a grand of officers hire 10, 12 at a rep. And they knew when they came on that if we didn't achieve the goals and couldn't do it, I think the mission is much greater than, than worrying about that. This one, it doesn't mean we're not concerned about it, but I do think that we really have to give a hard look and I want to draw out to the CTAEP program.

Mr. Dunn:

I think it's a great idea. The anxiety that's being passed to you on the students in the middle school level right now are just massive. And if we can get these kids to come back to school, through intensive hands-on work is really a great thing. And same thing with the MAP. If you guys remember those, those were here. MAP was intended to be a temporary place for kids to come back from school and we kind of lost that focus, a little bit. And there was also a school counselor that never got funded that was supposed to be in the original proposal. And I think this is great because we talk about early intervention and one of the greatest transitions in middle school that we kind of neglected is between five and six.

It's a massive... You go from a small nurturing environment into a massive... Let's face it, our middle school's like a high school and have the same field, the same thing.

Mr. Dunn:

But you have kids who are at so many different maturity levels. So I think that's really important, those two programs, but the key is what we've said is the reintegration and the re-engagement with kids. And that's what I liked about... This is what I see in this proposal is how can we be creative to get the kids back interested in school and even at a greater pace than we were prior to the pandemic. And I think what we recognize is we can offer specialized programs. All we want to get kids in there. Well, we want them to be resilient and be able to come back to the main population too. And I think that's a great thing. And the last thing I'll leave with this presentation, what I like about was in so many ways, it was aligned to our board goals and we really put a lot of energy into that.

Mr. Dunn:

So I really appreciate the depth of work that is only the tip of the iceberg for this problem and I think there's so many unknowns that I think the feedback is great. Community feedback is great. I just want everyone to know that, the season is still going to get rough because they're the most vaccinated and because all this stuff is going away, it is not going away. And we need to be creative as a community to bring it all back around, even to get where we want to be in a couple of years. But that's my two cents.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks, John. We're good? Okay.

Ms. Curtin:

We're the quiet side of the room.

Mr. Buono:

Quiet side?.

Mr. Simons:

Thank you for all the comments and questions.

Mr. Buono:

I just want to echo what John said. I think the important part too, of this is that... Mr. Simons went off the template in the second document, but really everything is tied, like John said, to a three-year plan, who's responsible, how it's going to be sustained, and those kinds of things, how it's going to be measured and that's a critical part of the process. So we're not losing sight of the Board goals and tracking them. So we will move on to the rest of the agenda, regular business. We talked about the... An organization meeting date of July 13th, motion to include that. Frank, second. Kathleen, all in favor.

Mr. Buono:

Next item was the Board meeting schedule, any questions or comments? You all have a chance to look at that. Motion for the schedule for the board... JoAnn, seconded, Mark, all those in favor. Approval of programs for Resident children with disabilities. Questions or comments? Seeing none, I need a motion to approve that. Jennifer, seconded. Michele? All in favor? Approved Okay.

Mr. Buono:

We have some comments about this last time, the Board about the non-resident employees' children to attend the district. So this is the first week, hopefully we provide some feedback. Mr. Simons, is there any comments you want to make in the first reading? It's not a motion improvement, I think. Just more comments, discussion. Knowing he addressed the concerns about numbers, tracking that. He has those expenses.

Mr. Simons:

Nothing's been changed since the discussion we had the last meeting, been hearing recommendations to change anything, so if our Board members want to review it again, if you have a concern or have something to be submitted for inclusion in the policy, we can just work on that between that and the next meeting to consider it.

Mr. Buono:

Please leave your comments to Mr. Simons. Again, that's where the change on that is under the law and the regulations number seven and number eight on the document. Going to item E, resolution to approve the proposed change in policy, second reading that has to do with the bus accident policy. Any questions or comments, if not, I need a motion to approve that? Mark, second, Kathleen, all in favor. So we had a bid for rubbish removal, recycled cardboard, and co-mingles, the low bidder was County Waste. Any questions or comments on the bid process? It was quite a bit lower...

Ms. Wager:

Mr. Buono, it is... I noticed that myself and we believe one of the reasons is County Waste and Recycling owns their own landfill and they currently have the service this year. So we have their units here...

Mr. Buono:

Any questions or comments to Linda about the bid? If not, I need a motion to approve the bid, Jennifer, Michele second, all those in favor?

Mr. Dunn:

I'll be abstaining on that.

Mr. Buono:

Oh, I'm sorry. John Dunn abstained, Jeanne. All right. We'll move on to Item 10, Committee Reports. Marissa, you are first up, commencing...

Ms. Cannon:

Thank you, Mr. Buono. The appendix D committee met on Monday, May 24th. The PTA provided a very fair cost draft matrix. With that, we are only \$4,000 away with being within the budget parameters. We have made some suggested adjustments that could be made in order to bring that \$4,000 down in the budget parameters. And we are meeting tomorrow as a committee and hopefully I can provide feedback on that. We wanted to give some serious consideration to compensating the unpaid clubs. Earlier this week, I sent out an email to our committee members with some history regarding those clubs and we'll have continued conversation regarding that tomorrow. Does anyone have any questions?

Mr. Buono:

JoAnne? Good? All right.

Ms. Cannon:

We're trying.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you for your efforts. Linda, do you have anything?

Ms. Wager:

None at this time, Mr. Buono.

Mr. Buono:

Mr. McHugh?

Mr. McHugh:

The CCS minutes from June 2nd were attached, does anybody have any questions? Thank you.

Mr. Buono:

And Mr. Simons, as the advocacy forum update?

Mr. Simons:

Yes, we held an advocacy forum last week with participation from all the districts in Questar BOCES, we invited all of our elected legislators, assemblymen and senators and the commissioner of education. It was very successful from the standpoint of the commission. Initially, we did not believe that she was going to stay here the whole time, but she did stay for the whole time and did hear from students, board members, administrators, parents about the need for guidance that will provide for us to be able to fully reopen in September. We distributed the video and a follow-up letter to those elected officials that were not able to attend. I would also say that John McDonald represents a portion of East Greenbush did come and attend for the full time, after a very busy legislative session. And I appreciated that very much.

Mr. Simons:

You sent it the letter and the video for those who were not able to attend. One of the encouraging comments that the commissioner made was that there is an effort to work more closely with the Department of Health and the governor's office. We have been frustrated and not really seeing much of that this year. We recently regarded masks, but it was encouraging to hear that as developing plans for September, that there would be more communication and coordination of State agencies.

Mr. Simons:

Additionally, we've been using that tool Thought Exchange this year to engage the community. I put some data together for you to take a look at which kind of captures the key themes, concerns. Mark Adam has been really doing a lot of that, behind the scenes and interfacing with Thought Exchange. So rather than go over it tonight, because we've had rather a long meeting, we had 108 participants on, the

only highlighted, I will make is 93% of those that participated, agreed that the regulations should be full-time in-person learning in September. And there were other key themes that were captured in the data and thought exchange provides for us. So it's been a good investment, but we purchased it through Questar. We're encouraging other districts to join us next year in thought exchange so that the cost for us will go down through Questar. Everybody's been really helpful to us because we can't have large public meetings, 108 people can participate, give us their views. So it was very successful.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks. Kathleen, any comments?

Ms. Curtin:

I just wanted to say that you did a great job, but also Mark did a really good job kind of moderating from the thought exchange and taking those thoughts and putting them into meaningful questions to the different people. I just thought he was doing a really good job on that.

Mr. Simons:

Super job, valuable during this whole period of time.

Mr. Buono:

I do want to thank Alyssa and Joseph for participating as students and Ms. Turner who was a parent in the district, also participated. So we appreciate their comments and being very honest and upfront about how they felt about the impact and the need to reengage and transition back to school, whenever that guidance was possible.

Mr. Simons:

Very good.

Mr. Buono:

Thank you Mr. Simons. Tabled motions. I do not have anything at this time? New Business? Board members? Anything? Wonderful. Moving to item 13 the consent agenda. Questions, comments? JoAnn.

Ms. Taylor:

A quick congratulations to Mr. Evertsen and Mr. Zilgme on 47 and 34 years of service respectively. Just amazing a lot of time and we appreciate everything they have done for our children.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks JoAnn.

Ms. Skumurski:

Mike, I need to abstain from C.

Mr. Buono:

So we'll pull item C for a separate vote. Anyone else? Questions or comments for the consent agenda? All right. Seeing no further comments or questions, I need a motion to approve items A through J with

the exception of item C. Deanna , and the second. JoAnn, all those in favor? Approved. I need a motion on item C. Kathleen, second. John, all those in favor. All those abstaining? One, Michele, thank you. Approved. We have an addendum talking about the retirement setup and we don't know what was proposed there. Jeff, do you want to introduce this topic?

Mr. Simons:

Yes. On consultation with our attorney, from Ferrara firm Mr. Budmen because this incentive was modified, we need to approve another of memorandum of agreement to reflect the actual incentive, so it's a formality to ensure that it's memorialized in agreement.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Any questions or comments on the MOA? Seeing none, I need a motion on the MOA. Jennifer, second. Mark? All in favor?

Mr. Dunn:

I call to abstain.

Mr. Buono:

Are you really abstaining? All right, John Dunn, got it Jeanne? Was there any other business that you want to discuss or bring over to the future? Public forum number two, Linda, any comments? We move quick here.

Ms. Wager:

Sorry, bear with me.

Mr. Buono:

No problem. Take your time.

Ms. Wager:

Thank you. We have one comment which is a copy and pasted email from Natalie Mulligan that we received earlier. This is copied from N. Maddalla and it's just in regard to... She's not supporting the district wide nurse. There are no other comments/.

Mr. Buono:

Who is this?

Ms. Wager:

N. Maddalla.

Mr. Buono:

Okay. No more comments from the public? We didn't get to review the draft plan. So if there are some things, is that time of period still open? Jeff?

Mr. Simons:

Yes.

Mr. Buono:

It stays open?

Mr. Simons:

Anyone in our educational community can offer comments through emails to my office or to the board, I got [inaudible 02:21:07] time as we finalize every word on [inaudible 02:21:09] planning. We would anticipate that that would likely be at the end of July.

Mr. Buono:

Very good.

Mr. Simons:

Or portions of it, depending on what our timelines are for hiring workers or filling certain positions.

Mr. Buono:

Thanks a lot, okay.

Mr. Simons:

We'll definitely be talking about it as a discussion when we get there next.

Mr. Buono:

Very good. Next is our Board forum, I'll start on my left. Michele? No? Jennifer? John? Mark? Okay, Deanne's good. Kathleen's good, JoAnn's good. Frank is good. I just want to make one comment. The Rensselaer Education Center at Questar BOCES had its CTE awards recently, and there were so many East Greenbush students who were recognized. I just wanted to congratulate them on their awards, work innovations, and programs, and also, in a couple of weeks we have graduation, we've talked about some concerns people have.

Mr. Buono:

We're moving forward. We have our committee, we're going to have a great celebration, really excited about being there in a few weeks and it's going to be great for our kids, I think. Katie was here earlier, very excited to finish out of the school year into a month to their additional plans after their high school career. So, looking forward to that in anticipation. Any final comments Mr. Simons?

Mr. Simons:

I just have one. I want to thank all of our representatives from the Rensselaer county legislature. They sent me a commendation certificate in the district, due to our being selected as a Times Union top workplace. Kelly Hoffman, Vice Chairman, Tom Grant, county legislator, Rob Bailey and Leon Fiocco, representing a second district, sent us a nice letter and commendation that we will hang in the central office. I want to thank the county legislature.

Mr. Buono:

Is there anything followed from the top places TU? As far as virtual event...

Ms. Cannon:

There was a virtual event. It was held two weeks ago, I believe. And we were able to take out an ad in the paper. It looked really nice though. We're pleased about that.

Mr. Buono:

We all get a nice little plaque, like... Just again, a wonderful acknowledgement to the staff, especially during very challenging years, thank you to all who responded and make this one of the best districts in the region, if not the country. Very nice. With that we do have need for an executive session for purposes of contract negotiations information. I need a motion to move into executive session. Mark, second, Michele? All those in favor? All right, we will move into the session. We don't anticipate any work, business, into the executive session. Thank you very much, have a great night.

PART 5 OF 5 ENDS [02:24:14]