

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 28, 2020

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM meeting pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Mrs. Minneci called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Sherry Higgins, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Dr. Kalisha Morgan, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Kim Ruiz, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Linda Richardson

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mrs. Annie Moses, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mr. Manuel Vieira, Mr. Barry Loessel, Mrs. Sandra Paul, Mrs. Anne Hart, Mrs. Maureen Guilfoyle, Mr. Craig Wojcik

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci led the Board and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Minneci asked for a moment of silence for the lives lost by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Vieira read the statement required under the “Open Public Meetings Act”, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Mrs. Williams read the District’s mission statement.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

Mr. Monge stated F-11 and F-10 – F-10 is an approval for Phoenix Advisors with a start date of July 1, 2019 and terminating at the end of this June. Is that supposed to be the case? The services include the review or a comparison of a cross benefits analysis for bond issuance. I want to know if that is part of their services? I know you were talking about potentially issuing bonds. F-11 seems like it is for the refi of the bonds which they would be in charge of. I want to see if that is the case and if so why wasn’t there an RFP for those services.

Mr. Vieira stated F-10 – Phoenix Advisors – what they do for us they do our financial disclosures with the SEC and also they will be working on the refinancing of the bonds. The

reason there are two annual agreements being approved at this Board meeting was the 2019-20 was never approved last year. We are approving the 2019-20 year and the 2020-21 year tonight.

F-11 is the resolution to approve the refunding of the bonds – there are two bond issues that are up for refunding. Wilentz is the law firm that will be working on that.

Mr. Monge stated approving an agreement that wasn't approved before but once you approve it, it is going to expire in two months. Why wasn't it an RFP?

Mr. Taylor stated Mr. Vieira indicated in his initial response that it is a resolution to ratify an appointment of a vendor that has been service in the district for the 19-20 school year. I don't know if an RFP was done but if it wasn't – we would look at the option to see if there was an option to renew for the 20-21 and if there was there is no need to do an RFP. It would qualify typically as a professional service where by the law does not require an RFP for said service. That should respond to the questions.

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Mr. McDowell, that the following minutes be adopted:

1. December 10, 2019 – worksession
2. December 10, 2019 – executive session #1
3. December 10, 2019 – executive session #2
4. December 17, 2019 – regular meeting
5. December 17, 2019 – executive session

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins (12/17/19), Dr. Morgan (12/10/19)

Mr. Nufrio (12/17/19), Mrs. Minneci (12/10/19-Exec. Session #1)

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

REQUEST TO USE UNION HIGH SCHOOL - UNION'S GOT TALENT

Letter from Union's Got Talent/Douglas Michael Krueger Scholarship Fund Inc. requesting the use of space at Union High School for auditions (September 25, 2020), rehearsal and performance (November 14, 2020).

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – TIEMANN

Letter of resignation, for purpose of retirement, from Suzanne N. Tiemann, part-time bus aide-Transportation Department, effective June 24, 2020.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – MEYERHOFF

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Nora Meyerhoff, special education teacher-Washington Elementary School, effective June 30, 2020.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – COURTNEY

Letter of resignation, for purpose of retirement, from Donna Courtney, teacher-Washington Elementary School, effective June 30, 2020.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – WEBER

Letter of resignation, for purpose of retirement, from Ann Weber, special education teacher-Jefferson School, effective June 30, 2020.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – VIEIRA

Letter of resignation, for purpose of retirement, from Manuel E. Vieira, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, effective October 1, 2020.

REQUEST TO RETRACT LEAVE – COHEN

Request to retract previous request for paid medical and unpaid FMLA from Amanda Cohen, science teacher-Kawameeh Middle School.

REQUEST TO RETURN EARLY – CORTES

Request to return early from unpaid child rearing leave under FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Tatiana Cortes, special education teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, new return date May 1, 2020.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF LEAVE – GUNTHER

Request for extension of unpaid non-FMLA/non-NJFLA child rearing leave from Kayla Gunter, teacher-Franklin Elementary School, new return date September 1, 2020.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF LEAVE – KATZ

Request for extension of unpaid non-FMLA/non-NJFLA child rearing leave from Julie Katz, special education teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, new return date September 1, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – LEAMY

Request for paid child rearing leave from Kristin Leamy, science teacher-Burnet Middle School, May 22, 2020-June 24, 2020.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MYERS

Request for unpaid intermittent paternity leave under FMLA/NJFL (concurrently) from Stephen Myers, music teacher-Burnet Middle School, April 26, 2020-April 29, 2021.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – PLACCA

Request for update to previous leave type to paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA only from Nicole Placca, Spanish teacher-Union High School, May 11, 2020-November 27, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – WEST

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA only from Heather West, science teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, May 29, 2020-December 3, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – WISIAK

Request for update to previous request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Tara Wisiak, school psychologist-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, April 22, 2020-May 21, 2020.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF INTERMITTENT LEAVE – ZURKA

Request for extension of intermittent FMLA leave from Christine Zurka, instructional paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, extension through November 14, 2020.

REQUEST TO RETRACT LEAVE – DOMINGUEZ

Request to retract previous request for unpaid paternity leave under FMLA from Jose Dominguez, Spanish teacher-Union High School.

REQUEST TO RETURN EARLY – ASHRAF

Request to return early from unpaid child rearing leave under NJFLA from Lisa Ashraf, school counselor-Kawameeh Middle School, new return date May 1, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – LOPEZ

Request to update leave type from NJFLA/FMLA to medical leave from Ovidio Lopez, custodian-Washington Elementary School, February 26, 2020-April 30, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – MACK-RAMOS

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Ebony Mack-Ramos, teacher-Livingston Elementary School, April 24, 2020-January 3, 2021.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF LEAVE – HAVYAR

Request for extension of unpaid child bearing leave, non-FMLA from Amanda Havyar, teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, new return date September 1, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – PLACCA

Request to update leave of paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA only from Nicole Placca, Spanish teacher-Union High School, May 29,2020-November 27, 2020.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – STERLING

Request to update leave of paid child rearing leave from Tara Sterling, teacher of television production-Union High School, June 1, 2020-June 24, 2020.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Tatum stated student/staff attendance for March 2020: Students: 96.4%; Staff: 94.9 %. Mrs. Hart has monitored attendance – students and staff have to log in every day.

Coronavirus Update:

- Week 6 since schools closed
- On April 16th, Governor Murphy announced the further closing of schools to at least May 15th
- As you already know, we have enabled the Google Meets module so teachers may once again provide a virtual classroom experience for students.
- Also provides an opportunity to meet with school counselors
- I have been meeting and discussing with our administrative staff and board of education members the options for end of year activities, both in the event schools remain closed or reopen for a short period of time.
- On March 24th, the governor announced the State of New Jersey Department of Education has cancelled all statewide student standardized assessments. This includes the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA), ACCESS for ELLs, and the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment. This cancellation will not prevent any student from meeting their graduation requirements.
- We continue to serve our student lunch program throughout the district – Union High School, Franklin, Washington and Jefferson Schools. Our numbers have gone up considerably since we first started. Thanks to Meg Berry and others that are monitoring the lunch program. Additional surveys and information are being conducted to ensure that we reach as many families as possible.
- I have been in contact with Mr. Hoyt about end of year activities and he does have a plan that he is working on. We talked recently about other possible activities which may include the Township in the event that we are not able to have a graduation.
- The district will begin New Student Registration on Monday, May 18th. In the event schools do not reopen we will provide details on how to register students on our district webpage.

Mr. Tatum presented the following reports (1) NJ School Performance Summary Report (2018-2019) and (2) NJSLA Science Results (Spring 2019) and same are appended to the minutes and will be posted on the district website

Mr. Nufrio stated with regards to testing, do we have any kind of directive or recommendations from the State with regards to SATs, ACTs, all other possible testing for the children that they have not been able to take in terms of any preparatory classes or any of that nature. Until we open completely, we can't offer those services.

Mr. Tatum stated there is a lot of preparation getting under way about going back and reopening. There is a great deal of discussion going on – on all levels. It seems to me the way the State is going is nothing that hasn't been administered will be held against students; however, in terms of other courses for preparation, that goes on anyway but the key thing is that we need to be concerned about moving forward is how to distance and what class size and courses and

how it affects our budget and those are all the things we will be looking into but the main thing moving forward from the State right now is how is it all going to look when this quarantine is lifted.

Mr. Nufrio stated I have been following as much as I can follow – the news and stations that talk about the Governors are discussing. I just had a thought, if they say we can open school on May 15th or June 1st which I think is a target date for reassessing the whole possibility of opening the entire economy, would it be possible to even think about being that the seniors are the ones going to be most affected, if in fact we are given the green light perhaps we can think about returning the seniors so they can get their share of the experience of being a senior and exiting the district with acknowledgements. It may be a complicated issue as well. My concern is returning all students at any point before we have all the proper medical pieces in place could be possible problems.

Mr. Tatum stated the seniors are on all of our minds because it is one of the most important milestones in a child's life is graduation. We would hold to any possibilities that are out there. I know with my discussions with Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Benaquista who has been attending a number of meetings regarding emergency management and there are a lot of precautionary measures out there. They were talking about this idea about a driving graduation and I hear that is something they are putting the brakes on right now for various reasons. I think what we have to look at is whatever guidance the State gives us, if possible, to do something for seniors.

Mrs. Ruiz stated yes I agree high school graduation is huge but I don't want to discount the 8th graders and not forget about them because they have been looking forward to that moment and so have the parents. I heard you say Mr. Hoyt is working on a plan but are our middle school principals working on a plan for our 8th graders.

Mr. Tatum stated that has not been a discussion right now but it is worthy of having a conversation about. We are looking at May 15th which is getting really late in the school year. For anything we can do for our children to enhance their experience, I would be willing to do it. Even if in the summer months, whatever the case may be, to provide those memorable experiences. We focus on seniors because that is what is going on right now when I'm in discussion with other superintendents in the County. I'm glad you brought that to the table because you are absolutely right. It is a very big milestone for the 8th grade. Certainly something worthy to make a note on.

Mr. Benaquista stated that is on our agenda for Thursday – all grade level promotion ceremonies.

Mrs. Higgins stated say Governor Murphy says o.k. school can go back on May 15th. How do you treat the parents that don't want their kids to go back that soon? Mr. Tatum stated that is an excellent question – there is something that came out on that right now. Attendance has been relaxed this year and in this regard, and I would look for guidance from the State on this, but the fact that the regulations read right now, it is very clear that if a student turns in their work, they are present in school. My issue would be if a parent didn't want to send their child

back and they were still able to turn in work, I can't see why you would hold it against them considering the conditions. We do have a compulsory attendance law that we have to follow. I'm speaking of my own decision – that is the direction I would certainly go on – not to penalize anyone. One of the first things we heard when this all came about was one word “flexibility” and I think when we look at our schools and our enrollment with some of the guidance that came out right now regarding social distances, without a real well thought out plan, will be very difficult to do. The public needs to understand that as well. Again we continue to get guidance and one of the things that they are talking about now is even going back to school is getting community input from committee structures in different areas and even including facilities maintenance – Mr. Loessel is in charge of building and grounds. There is a lot of issues that are going on right now so whatever guidance we get, I can say this to you, if on the 15th the Governor comes out and says we are clear to go back to school, I would wait for the following Monday because there is still preparation that needs to be made. Even if it is just cafeteria service, there are so many areas that have to be considered in terms of us going back. As we are getting information, we are getting little bits at a time, I will have more information on that and as we roll around to our next meeting, we will be able to provide a lot more information in those areas.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Ruiz, seconded by Mrs. Williams, for adoption:

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent’s Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period March 18, 2020 to April 28, 2020, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-1A. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S DETERMINATION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent’s determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period March 11 to March 17, 2020, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-2. APPROVE NJSIAA MEMBERSHIP

Approve the membership and dues for the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association for Union High School Athletic Department for the 2020-2021 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-3. APPROVE CURRICULUM GUIDE

Approve the following curriculum guide: (a) EN801 – 8th Grade English, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-4. APPROVE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM AND BUDGET

Approve the 2020-2021 revised preschool program and budget, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-5. APPROVE USE OF BATTLE HILL AND HAMILTON BUILDING

Approve Battle Hill Elementary School (June 29, 2020-July 30, 2020) and the Hamilton Building (June 25, 2020-August 31, 2020) for Extended School Year (ESY) Program, ESY services, CST testing and/or home instruction.

E-6. APPROVE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDARS

Approve 2020-2021 school year calendars, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Nufrio stated E-6 – flexibility (inaudible) at some point. Mr. Tatum stated there is always a possibility that we have to make amendments to the calendar and that will be with the approval of the Board of Education through my recommendations.

Dr. Francis stepped out of meeting prior to vote (7:52 p.m.) .

Mr. McDowell stated E-4 – budget for the pre-school – on page 2 it says for “private providers”. It says the district will contract with one private provider and no head start providers. Have we identified that one private provider? Mr. Tatum stated I believe we have. Mrs. Moses stated we met with the State and we went over the budget and we approved visitations, footage, etc. – the YMCA, located in Union. They will be our provider having two classes where 30 of our students will attend.

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Nufrio, for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated March 31, 2020 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary’s Report dated March 31, 2020 be accepted.

F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER’S AND SECRETARY’S REPORT

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of March 31, 2020 no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments (contractual orders) which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18:22-8.1.

/s/ Manuel E. Vieira
Manuel E. Vieira, Board Secretary

Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of March 31, 2020 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.2(d)3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. This certification is solely based on the information provided by the School Business Administrator and Board Secretary and is assumed by the Board to be correct.

F-4. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS

Approve appropriation transfers in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-5. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 (bid exceptions to requirement for advertising) and 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-6. APPROVE LIST OF 2019-2020 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2019-2020 State Contract Vendors pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure) to facilitate schools’ purchasing, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-7. APPROVE 2019-2020 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2019-2020 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-8. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS

Approve the following fundraisers, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

| Event Name | Date | Purpose |
|----------------------------|----------------|--|
| Clothing Drive - YWCA | May 1-31, 2020 | UHS/National Honor Society – to gather clothing for children and women who were victims of domestic violence |
| UHS Juneteenth Celebration | May 18, 2020 | UHS/Roots: Black Excellence Club – to raise funds for upcoming heritage event |

F-9. APPROVE PETTY CASH FUND FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Approve the Board Secretary petty cash fund for the 2020-2021 school year: Fund-Board Secretary, Amount: \$500; Responsible Party: Board Secretary.

F-10. APPROVE PHOENIX ADVISORS

Approve agreement with Phoenix Advisors to manage secondary market disclosure obligations for continued compliance with disclosure requirements for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. APPROVE RESOLUTION APPROVING REFUNDING BOND ORDINANCE

Approve, on first reading, a refunding school bond ordinance providing for the refunding of (a) all or a portion of its outstanding Refunding School Bonds, Series 2010 dated November 10, 2010 and (b) all or a portion of its outstanding School Bonds, Series 2011 dated September 8, 2011, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-12. APPROVE APPLICATION OF 2020 NJSIG SAFETY GRANT

Approve application of 2020 NJSIG Safety Grant in the amount of \$32,945.98.

F-13. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services for the 2019-2020 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

Dr. Francis returned to meeting (7:54 p.m.)

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Nufrio stated I presented this question when we did the test run last week. I asked Mr. Vieira whether or not what plans were in place for preparing RFP's for professional services that we should be putting out there for the public for potential individuals, entities to present their proposals. I will speak with Mr. Vieira tomorrow when we have our fiscal meeting. We have to give notices and we need to abide by the process and I want to make sure you are aware of that as well.

Mrs. Ruiz stated F-10 – Mr. Vieira mentioned at the beginning of the meeting that we were voting on the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 contracts – is that right? Mr. Vieira stated correct. Mrs. Ruiz stated you said we are voting 2019-2020 contract because it was not approved last year. My question is was Phoenix Advisors working for the district last without the Board having approved the contract and if so why? Mr. Vieira stated they do annual compliance with the SEC for us and it slipped through the cracks and Phoenix kept doing the work. Phoenix annual fee for the SEC reporting is \$800-\$1,000 a year. They continued doing the work and it came to my attention that the agreement wasn't approved. Mrs. Ruiz stated the amount sounds de minimis. My concern is we should be more careful to make sure that doesn't happen with any other contracts. You can imagine the trouble we can get ourselves into. Mr. Vieira stated agreed.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Minneci (F-6-vendor #85992 only)

MOTION CARRIED

J. Operations Committee Resolutions

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Nufrio for adoption:

O-1. APPROVE SECURITY DRILL/BUS EVACUATION REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill and bus evacuation reports for the 2019-2020 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-2. AWARD OF LEASE PURCHASE BID – US BANCORP GOVERNMENT LEASING

Approve award of lease purchase bid to US Bancorp Government Leasing at the rate of 1.414% for the purchase of Chromebooks – Union High School.

O-3. APPROVE RESOLUTION OPPOSING DELAY IN TRANSMISSION OF QUARTERLY PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

Approve resolution opposing delay in transmission of quarterly property tax revenue to school districts, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-4. APPROVE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AGREEMENT – ESSEX REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Approve the Transportation Services Agreement with the Essex Regional Services Commission for the 2020-2021 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-5. APPROVE LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING – POMPTONIAN

Approve Letter of Understanding for emergency procurement and contract modifications due to COVID-19 with Pomptonian Food Services, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

Letter from Union's Got Talent/Douglas Michael Krueger Scholarship Fund Inc. requesting the use of space at Union High School for auditions (September 25, 2020), rehearsal and performance (November 14, 2020), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (contingent upon COVID-19).

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Minneci stated the discussion item is on our agenda every year and I know Mr. Tatum, Mrs. Moses and I spoke about this the other day. This is all contingent upon the situation with COVID-19 come the fall. I know they are anxious to have it on our agenda and approved so God willing everything goes back to whatever the new normal is that it will be in place if everything is in place.

Mr. Tatum stated the fact that this is a discussion item, will this be carried over to next month or approved tonight? Mr. Taylor stated the request is for September and it is the will of the Board if you want to vote on this evening or alternatively I don't see why it can't wait for next month. Mrs. Minneci stated I'm sure it is fine to pull it over to next month. Does anyone feel any different? Mr. Nufrio stated I would suggest the same thing. I'm sure they have plenty of time to do preparation for advertising. Mr. Tatum stated Mr. Vieira please ensure that this item goes on next month as an agenda item.

Mr. Nufrio stated O-3 – proposing the delay of funding. Can you explain that? Mr. Vieira stated the NJSBO asked our Board to prepare a resolution and have it approved objecting to the Township delaying their payment of property taxes to us. It is going up for a vote in the New Jersey Legislation. Mr. Taylor stated the Governor issued today an Executive Order allowing a delay or extension of municipalities from collecting taxes until June 1st.

Mr. Nufrio asked will this pose a problem Mr. Vieira? Mr. Vieira stated yes. We the Board of Education – I projected our cashflow through July and we have to be made whole by the Township and the State of New Jersey as far as cashflows. Anything less than that we won't have the cash to pay our bills.

Mr. McDowell stated we get \$90,000 from the Township so would that be one-quarter of that that is due? Mr. Vieira stated there is a monthly payment plan. The next payment is due May 12th and it is \$9.4 million. Our monthly payroll is about \$7 million.

Mr. Nufrio stated O-5 – I didn't understand the Pomptonian letter. Mr. Vieira stated we pay Pomptonian approximately \$1,000 a month management fee based on the meals served every month. Since we haven't been serving many meals, March, April – Pomptonian is asking that we pay 75% of the management fee based on what the management fee would have been so they can cover their operating costs.

Mr. Nufrio asked have they been involved in the servicing of lunches to the children during this crisis? Mr. Vieira stated yes. They are preparing and distributing the meals at four schools in Union. Mr. Nufrio asked in your opinion are they deserving of the 75%? Mr. Vieira stated yes.

Mrs. Higgins asked how many days a week are they doing that? Mr. Vieira stated five days a week.

Ann Hart stated every school day from 10-12:30 at the different locations and it is on the website. The students are able to pick up their lunch. Mrs. Higgins stated I think that is excellent.

Ann Hart stated we just increased the ability to pick up, upon request, multiple meals at one time. They can say can I have three days or five days and pick it up once a week at the distribution centers – schools are open five days a week. All they have to do is apply. If their circumstances have changed, they can apply online and you don't have to wait for the application process to be fully done. Once you apply, you can pick up free and reduced meals. Mr. Nufrio asked where are they preparing the meals? Mr. Vieira stated Union High School.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio,

Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. McDowell, seconded by Mrs. Higgins for adoption:

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

Personnel Actions-New Hires be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-1B PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY

Personnel Actions-Extra Pay be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-1C PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS

Personnel Actions- Transfers be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2019-2020 school year in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board.

P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

| Name | Position | Location | Eff. Date | Reason | Notes |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------|
| Tiemann, Suzanne N. | Part-time bus aide | Transportation Department | June 24, 2020 | Retirement | |
| Meyerhoff, Nora | Special education teacher | Washington | June 30, 2020 | Retirement | |
| Courtney, Donna | Teacher | Washington | June 30, 2020 | Retirement | |
| Weber, Ann | Special education teacher | Jefferson | June 30, 2020 | Retirement | |
| Vieira, Manuel E. | School Business Administrator/Board Secretary | Central Office | October 1, 2020 | Retirement | |

P-4. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

| Name | Position | Location | Leave Dates | Leave Type Regarding updated info only. | Notes/ Corrections: All tentative approvals are pending required documentation. |
|------|----------|----------|-------------|--|---|
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|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|
| Ashraf, Lisa | School Counselor | KMS | Request to Return Early 5/1/2020 | Request to return early from Unpaid Child Rearing leave under NJFLA | Original Return was 6/1/2020. |
| Cohen, Amanda | Teacher of Science | KMS | *Retracting previous leave request 4/2/2020-6/15/2020 | Retracting previous leave request | Retracting Org. leave requested from 4/2/2020-6/15/2020 |
| Cortes, Tatiana | Teacher of Special Education | Connecticut Farms | Request to Return Early 5/1/2020 | Request to return early from Unpaid Child Rearing leave under FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently) | Original Return was 5/11/2020. |
| Dominguez, Jose | Teacher of Spanish | UHS | *Retracting previous leave request 4/20/2020-5/29/2020 | Retracting previous leave request | Retracting Org. leave requested from 4/20/2020-5/29/2020 |
| Gunther, Kayla | Elementary Teacher | Franklin | Extension Return 9/1/2020 | Extension of Unpaid Non FMLA/Non NJFLA Child Rearing Leave | FMLA/NJFLA entitlement exhausted 4/16/2020. Original leave began 11/18/2019. |
| Katz, Julie | Teacher of Special Education | Connecticut Farms | Extension Return 9/1/2020 | Extension of Unpaid Non FMLA/Non NJFLA Child Rearing Leave | FMLA/NJFLA entitlement exhausted 4/8/2020. Original leave began 11/4/2019. |
| Leamy, Kristin | Teacher of Science | BMS | 5/22/2020-6/24/2020 Return 9/1/2020 | Paid Child Rearing Leave | Use of sick days only at this time. |
| Lopez, Ovidio | Custodian | Washington | 2/26/2020-4/30/2020 | Update to Leave Type from NJFLA/FMLA to Medical Leave | Org. Leave under FMLA/NJFLA began 1/2/2020. Updates to type of leave effective 2/26/2020. |

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|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Mack-Ramos, Ebony | Elementary Teacher | Livingston | 4/24/20-1/3/2021 Return 1/4/2021 | Paid Child Rearing Leave followed by Unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently) | FMLA/NJFLA Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. |
| Myers, Stephen | Teacher of Music | BMS | Intermittent 4/26/2020-4/29/2021 | Unpaid Intermittent Paternity Leave under FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently) | FMLA/NJFLA Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. |
| Placca, Nicole | Teacher of Spanish | UHS | 5/11/2020- 11/27-2020 Return: 11/30/2020 | Update to Previous Leave type: Paid Child Rearing Leave followed by Unpaid FMLA only | FMLA entitlement only. Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. *Does not meet NJFLA requirements. |
| West, Heather | Teacher of Science | KMS | 5/29/20-12/3/2020 Return: 12/4/2020 | Paid Child Rearing Leave followed by Unpaid FMLA only | FMLA entitlement only Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. *Does not meet NJFLA requirements. |
| Wisiak, Tara | School Psychologist | Connecticut Farms | 4/22/20-5/21/20 Return 5/22/2020 followed by leave from 9/1/2020-11/30/2020 Return 12/1/2020 | Paid Child Rearing Leave followed by Unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently) | FMLA/NJFLA Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. |
| Zurka, Christine | Instructional Para-professional | Battle Hill | Intermittent Extension through 11/14/2020 | Extension of Intermittent FMLA Leave | FMLA Entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks. Original intermittent FMLA taken 11/14/19 |
| Havyar, Amanda | Teacher | Hannah Caldwell | Extension Return 9/1/20 | Extension of unpaid child rearing leave non-FMLA | |
| Placca, Nicole | Spanish teacher | UHS | Updated 5/29/20-11/27/20 Return date: 11/30/2020 | Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA only | FMLA not exceed 12 weeks/60 working days |

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|----------------|----------------------------------|-----|------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Sterling, Tara | Teacher of television production | UHS | Updated 6/1/20-6/24/20 | Paid child rearing leave | |
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P-5. APPROVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICERS – 2020-2021

Approve Affirmative Action Officers for the 2020-2021 school year, at no cost to the district, as follows: Gerry Benaquista as Affirmative Action Officer; Akua Boakye as Assistant Affirmative Action Officer and Benjamin Kloc as Affirmative Action Officer for classroom practices.

P-6. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2019-2020 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Nufrio (employee #10897)

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

No policies to report on at this time.

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Nothing to report on at this time.

Technology Committee:

Nothing to report on at this time.

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Dr. Francis, that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to the minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Ruiz stated potential alternative graduation plans; issues with ZOOM classes and I believe we now use Google Meet classes – what is the criteria for that? Is there mandatory participation? I know there are a lot of students that would appreciate that. They miss their teachers, friends, classmates – is this mandatory? If so, how often? How many times a week?

Mr. Tatum stated I'll defer if I'm going in the wrong direction to counsel – we have had this discussion. We are not mandating. It is a tool that is available to all teachers and at their discretion. Mrs. Ruiz stated I think that is part of the issue. Some parents feel like how come other teachers are doing, how come certain students get it and not other students. I don't know how necessarily you fix that. People are stuck in the house and they are going to complain about almost everything. I get it to a certain extent because people start to feel like how come my kid's class doesn't do it. I think it is something you need to look into.

The other issue is IEP compliance – what is the oversight on that? I'm getting some feedback that students are not necessarily getting all of their IEP services and obviously that could be not only potentially an issue for the district but detrimental to the student. How are we monitoring that and how are we ensuring that students with IEPs are getting all of the services that they should be getting. Truthfully I understand that some services are more challenging to deliver virtually.

Mr. Taylor stated (a) good question, (b) we are in obviously unprecedented times right now. As I'm sure you can all imagine, the general proposition that the district's position is, it intends to and is complying with federal and State law as it pertains to individual education plans – that's one. Number two, it is obvious that there are certain provisions of IEPs that are physically impossible to provide/comply with if the student isn't in the physical location of the building and due to the social distancing and other restrictions on interpersonal interaction, that certain therapists, aides, etc. don't have physical access or contact to other students. This is an issue that is being addressed and discussed at the federal level, at the State, County and local level, in order to put in place controls and mechanisms to provide a free and appropriate publication in a least restrictive environment to students who are identified and eligible for special services. In many respects the only option statewide, if and when a student cannot or is not receiving services under their IEP is for better or worse compensatory education. That is in many respects the other option that can be made available. However, I will submit that my office has been in constant contact with your special services department, Mrs. Conti, through the leadership of Mr. Tatum and the entire administrative team. We have conducted various seminars and sessions with the teams to provide guidance on some of the changing dynamics and we are making every effort to comply. Beyond that, I would really suggest that there be not much further discussion. As your question intimated, there may be people with claims and we don't want to say anything that maybe used against the district in defending those matters but again the intent here is to comply where and when possible and to the extent that it is impossible to comply, then the district is open to considering compensatory services for those students.

Mrs. Ruiz stated if a parent feels that their child's IEP is not being followed to the "T" – who Mr. Tatum should they contact. The school principal, you, Mrs. Conti – who should they be directed to? Mr. Tatum stated I would suggest that they contact special services. If there is any issue with an IEP, certainly a procedure that is in place that IEPs can be discussed. Anyone who contacts me I would direct them to the Department of Special Services. As Mr. Taylor said, we are trying to comply with all the regulations and things are changing. If there are things that need to be addressed, the IEP team really is the creators of that IEP. Mrs. Ruiz stated so Mrs. Conti. Mr. Tatum stated yes and to her department and case manager – all that are concerned and involved in the development of the IEP.

Mrs. Conti stated first start with the case manager and if anyone needs to reach out to our administrative team, we are available.

Mrs. Ruiz stated paras – it is my understanding that teachers and paras are working remotely and collecting a salary. My question is (a) do we know that all paras are working because I'm getting again feedback from parents that are reaching out and saying my child's para has not had any contact at all. How are we overseeing that? And what if anything should a parent do? We are in week six. I know things are ever changing but we should be in a flow so where do parents go? To you, the teacher? Who should they be addressing this with? There is a lot of frustration. I don't have answers is what I'm hearing. A lot of times it is either the little kids or the special needs students so there is a disconnect somewhere. If a parent has a problem with a para, are they coming to you Mr. Tatum or Mrs. Conti?

Mr. Taylor stated without admitting or denying whether a para is or isn't working, to stay out of personnel issues but also not to expose the district to any legal exposure from a legal standpoint, I think in general the response is similar to the prior question which a parent can and should call the case manager, if it is a special ed situation, Director of Special Services and/or Superintendent. Recognizing again we are in unprecedented times, this is an issue that a lot of districts are facing throughout the State. In some districts their paras are hourly employees and those districts have opted not to pay the paras since they can't come back to work because it is permissible under the law; others have opted to pay the paras even if they are hourly employees but because of the nature of their job, one-on-one direct physical interaction with students – there are little to no services that a para can provide. In some of those instances those districts are providing professional development and other resources for the paras to stay current and/or caught up on certain job related functions. But because of the intertwined in nature of the paras role in many respects with compliance with an IEP, I think it is important to be empathetic and mindful of the parents needs because these are legitimate issues. Direct them to the appropriate staff members to try to implement some kind of measure in the immediate term and to the extent that there are situations where accommodations can't be made to ensure 100% compliance – there are legal procedures that are in a non-confrontational way that are currently being explored to be fair and reasonable and give the students what they are legally entitled to.

Mrs. Ruiz stated some districts have hourly paras that they opted to not continue paying so my question is are ESS paras still working while we are in this remote learning? Mr. Tatum stated it depends on the role that they are playing. As far as I know we are still paying ESS and

those paras that are replacements for the paras that they were substituting for, should still be performing those roles depending on what the IEPs happen to be. As far as I know, the company is still being paid for the services they rendered to us.

Mr. Taylor stated this goes into the guidance from the Department of Community Affairs. The State level has recommended that public entities in particular, continue paying their employees, even hourly employees, under the effaces of it is in the budget. Mrs. Ruiz stated if we are paying ESS, we should know if they are working or not. Mr. Tatum stated my response to that is anyone who has a role with working with a student and are being paid should be performing whatever duties that are consistent with the IEP. Whether through ESS or through the board of education. The assumption on my part comes in is not hearing that services are not being provided, I'm going to make the assumption that people are working and performing their roles. In other words, you are bringing this to our attention that you are hearing different people that they may not physically have their aides in what they are playing and if indeed there is a child that is in need of a para and you are telling me they are not working now, my question is if that had come to our attention, it would have been investigated. If you think in terms of the number of employees that we do have, those issues that have come to our attention, we addressed them whether individual or whether the student is not signing in and every issue that comes our way, we are addressing. Because we have so many paras, some are now working with ESS, because they work with ESS doesn't absolve them from the responsibilities that they have taken on as an ESS para. My point I'm making is unless I'm hearing either from special services or parents or Board members or whomever, that these roles are not being performed, I have no reason to get on the phone and say where is so and so because my assumption is they are working and fulfilling their roles.

Mrs. Conti stated it is the guidance to fulfill the IEP to the greatest extent appropriate. That is still being managed between the case manager, in collaboration with the parents and the teachers. If anyone feels that anything is not being fulfilled, they can contact their case manager, any department administration and as our board counsel has said, we have done a lot of training on this. We have done a lot of contact with the case managers and trying to be very innovative with fulfilling our IEPs to the greatest extent appropriate. We have actually been reached out to on how we are utilizing our paraprofessionals since our district came to the attention of another district through some of our parents that we were being very creative on how we were utilizing the paraprofessionals to fulfill the IEPs. If anyone has any concerns, please reach out to your case manager and to us.

Mrs. Ruiz stated my concern now is more who is managing ESS? Who is overseeing ESS? They are not our employees. We need to make sure. We have seen this happen in the past with vendors like ARAMARK, nobody was keeping a close eye on them and things started to go downhill. This set up lends itself to things going a rye because there is no real contact. That is my concern – is anyone overseeing it? I know we are paying them. I understand that you may not have received any complaints. I'm sure you will get some after today's meeting.

Mr. Tatum stated my concerns are about the students. At the end of the day they provide a service to our district and if they are not getting what they need from us, they certainly don't have a problem calling us up and letting us know they didn't get "A, B, C and D". It is

unfortunate that we get to an issue such as this when it sounds to me if there is a concern, it is blossoming into something far larger than it has to because both Mr. Benaquista and I and Mr. Vieira, we have immediate contact to the person that runs the ESS program. What I'm not understanding that no door has ever been shut to any parent if they have any issue – either email or phone call. It may be harder to reach me over the phone since we are not in the office as much as normally but anytime something comes up, once I read, people may not receive a written response but it immediately goes to the appropriate department. If there is a situation for something that is not in place, once it comes to my attention we try to make sure it gets sent in the right direction for a response and some type of resolution for the concern. There were a couple at the beginning of this remote learning that came to our attention, I believe from Battle Hill, but we immediately took care of it. We have to be aware of the fact that there is a concern that needs to be addressed and we will address it.

Mr. Benaquista stated if the parent feels that the para is not getting involved enough, email the case manager, so it can be brought to our attention and to Mrs. Conti's attention, then deal with it if it is the company or our employee because we have quite a few paras working for us. We have to have that information so an email to the case manager would be great.

Mr. Nufrio stated we spoke a few weeks ago and I just want to say thank you – I read your letter today that you sent and you indicated that counselors are also available if parents needed to request someone to talk to. Have you heard of any type of situations that there have been serious concerns? My conversation with you was my concern about reaching out to counselors, psychologists, case workers – are these students utilizing the services? Mr. Tatum stated I do know that there have been a few issues and the counselors have been available to students. One thing I tried to emphasize in the letter was now with the video conferencing, that enhances the opportunities for students if they do have an issue. The fact that in some cases students may have been faulty with school assignments, a lot of times they feel comfortable with the support of their guidance counselor. Now they can do a one-on-one video conference if need be. I know we mentioned the real crisis that may occur with mental health, certainly the child study team stands ready to support any issues that parents may have. In an emergency right now, we are following the procedures that are set up in the district. A phone call to the case manager or if the child is experiencing some issue, to the guidance counselor – certainly it is always welcomed and they will be so directed appropriately. Mrs. Ahern has done a great job in terms of preparing the counselors to work with the parents and students and she does have a plan to follow.

Mr. Nufrio stated for the benefit of the public I wanted to bring that out because you did respond to that and the letter does indicate that the services are available and the public tuning in or hear about it – that we do have the services available. Mr. Tatum stated what you have to keep in mind, things continue to change and a lot of times we get information and sometimes things go out prematurely because saying that we are working on it, it is nice to send something out when we now have it. Like the video platform, we were working on that along with our attorneys trying to make sure that we have something that is in compliance that everyone could use it without there being any fallout from it and respecting their privacy. I put things out as an update what we talked about in our meetings so that they have an idea that it is available and how it is going to work.

Mr. Benaquista stated I do know our counselors, CST, for the counseling side of it our SACs and nurses have been involved in many distance cases when parents or students have concerns. The biggest thing in the success here is the communication across the Board and when they feel like whether it is an attendance issue or a counseling issue, if they are not getting a response from that individual, I think they need to reach out to the administrator, with counseling - Ms. Ahern, CST – it needs to go to one of the supervisors or Ms. Conti and if it is at a building level – to reach out to the building administrator. We have the services available and if something is not being taken care of, there may be a staff member out sick and the parent doesn't realize this and we need to take it to that next level and that is an administrator or supervisor. Mr. Tatum stated I agree. With respect to the comment by Mrs. Ruiz, maybe a follow up with ESS and get an assessment of where we are in the district. At the end of the day we are not looking to not give students what they need. It is just the opposite, we want to ensure they have everything they need during this time because this is a very difficult time. We imagine ourselves as adults how difficult it is to adjusting to some of the changes that have occurred, imagine a 12-year old that is used to fly by whatever is moving on that particular day but now have the level of restrictions that we have. That in and of itself is something we want to keep on top of.

Mr. Benaquista stated the approval process for the paras through ESS is the same where the principals are approving it and it is getting sent to the business office. I will follow up. The ones that have been hired with us, not the day-to-day subs, but everybody else, they are being paid. Again, the administrators are signing off that the work is being done so we really do need that information. Mrs. Ruiz if you could pass it on that anyone who feels that the paras are not involved to please and it is very important that we get that information so we can deal with that. I will put a call to the gentleman you are referring to from ESS to have a conversation with him.

Mr. Nufrio stated including that in your letter and continuity of any services including emotional and mental health is a strong component of any service. Mr. Tatum stated and the more information we get, the more services we get, the information will be passed along. Sometimes there is a break because things are being worked on. I'm starting to get information on what it is going to look like moving back. Right now a question will come up about that and in generally terms we will give an answer; however, more specifically as we work through these areas we will be able to give more specific information. I think this were to happen again, the answer would come a lot more quickly than they are right now. Mr. Nufrio stated it is a work in progress.

Comments from the Public:

Ann Margaret Shannon stated good evening and I hope you and yours are doing well. I'm very proud to say that the UTEA provided a thank you lunch to the Union Police, Fire, Department of Public Works and the Kean COVID testing site. They loved the food from Cozy Corner and Cioffi's. Even more they loved what I call dessert; we gave each person a personal bottle of hand sanitizer. Kean loved it so much they asked for more so the next day the UTEA delivered 100 more bottles.

As for the school year I am so glad that with so many unknowns, remote learning is doing well. I would like to give a shout out to all of the UTEA members that are making this venture a

success. However, among all the unknowns are the evaluations of non-tenured teachers with less than two observations. Honestly, except for teachers hired after late fall, I don't understand how this happened at all. Administrators are supposed to observe non-tenured teachers three times a year. By March we are two-thirds through the year so I'm not sure why there is a problem. We should have had 2 of the 3 observations. Having said that I think in the future we should consider that all three are done by March because if there is any issue, then teachers could use April to June to improve.

I have two requests that I would like to address to President Minneci. First going forward in the future, I ask that you form a task force including UTEA members to be convened to develop a plan for future school years that ensures that all of our administrators complete all three observations of non-tenured teachers by March 31st of each school year. I'm happy to say that I had a tiny conversation with Mr. Benaquista and I think he is working on something n scheduling observations so UTEA would love to be part of that.

Pertaining to this school year, because of non-tenured teachers with less than two observations, have to have something else and now have an additional burden on them in addition to the remote learning. They have to produce a portfolio that would replace the missing second observation that the administrators didn't do which does give more stress.

I do appreciate that the date has been extended to May 8th but I don't even know if that is enough time because we don't know what the portfolio is at this time. I spoke with NJEA for guidance and they do say the Board has the ability to change the date so I would ask the Board to ask the Commissioner for an extension to at least May 30th and then Mrs. Minneci I would love for you to form a second task force, including UTEA members, to determine what exactly a portfolio entails because I got some details from NJEA and I would love to share that and have a task force look at that. So President Minneci I would appreciate any answers, obviously not now, but regarding these two requests for tasks force in the future and one for the immediate concern that the non-tenured teachers are feeling very stressed about and thank you for your work and I expect to hopefully here from you and I wish everyone continued good health.

Mr. Benaquista stated Mr. Tatum do you want me to talk about the portfolio. Mr. Tatum stated I think at this stage of the game be set forth as guidance from the State about observation statewide. It is not just union. I think that needs to be understood. Mr. Benaquista stated there was a first meeting today, and I'm in the meeting tomorrow, and then there is a meeting on Thursday where the State is rolling out the requirements for the portfolio. Our teachers will get that hopefully after I sit in that webinar from the State. I just wanted to let Ms. Shannon know that. Mr. Tatum stated in terms of any task force. Observations just need to be scheduled and there needs to be an observation schedule that speaks to benchmarks of times throughout the course of the year when observations are completed. In previous years and my years of experience, what Ms. Shannon said moments ago was in fact, fact and that was observations completed by March because the deadline use to be for a non-tenured teacher had to be notified by April. I think those things need to be scheduled and principals and supervisors need to adhere to it. Mr. Benaquista stated there is a schedule that was set up for the year and we are dealing with those now. I don't disagree with the schedule – specifically set up right after QSAC because the biggest conversation with the County Superintendent was involving observations

was professional development time in between the observations. If people are not getting the observations and the time to improve with professional development, that is what the State is looking for. I will be dealing with that moving forward.

I want Ms. Shannon to also know that was already done and it is something I have to deal with. Mr. Taylor I want to refer to you. I don't have an issue with pushing back the date; however, the non-tenure date the State said of May 15th is not being changed. I don't mind pushing back the date of anything being due to the 30th but if it is a teacher that happens to be non-renewed, we have to have everything done by May 15th.

Mr. Taylor stated the schedule of evaluations, the statute requires a certain number per year, not a certain date or timeframe. Some of what Ms. Shannon indicated could arguably be addressed during negotiations; however, it is also likely be managerial prerogative with respect to that schedule. If you ask me, I would probably recommend against setting up a hard-fast deadline. A lot can happen between March and May 15th when the administration has the ability to issue non-renewal notices for employees that may or not have to do with performance.

The second thing as a point of order Madam President, may I suggest that we follow the same protocol – get all the questions/comments from the public done before we respond so that we can make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

Dr. Francis asked can we stick to the three minutes since that is the new policy. Mr. Vieira stated I'm controlling the three-minute time.

Arlene Rodriguez stated (inaudible). Mrs. Conti stated I believe what she was saying was Effective School Solutions – her student is in high school and they have received great support and things are doing well. Thank you.

Nellis Regis-Darby stated a lot of districts are anticipating a lot of budget cuts for the 2020-2021 school year – what budget cuts are the district anticipating? What will happen to the 2019-2020 unused Title I money? What is the district's grading policy moving forward? What is the district considering a student engagement? Do para professionals have access to all the teachers' Google Classrooms?

Chasity Santana stated I hope everyone is doing well and my condolences to anyone suffering this pandemic – my heart goes out to everyone. First, compromised students – as everyone knows I have a compromised – my 11-year old is a Type I so if there are any talks on May 15th and anybody here at this table – my children will not be going back. I myself have lung disease so please let us know. Us parents that are not sending our children back, how will you go about that? If DYFS wants to come to my door, they are more welcome. You know I always have an open door policy.

ESY – extended school year – if ESY is going to come on are we going to support it online? One of the main reasons we have ESY, at least for my son, is because of regression. If my child is to regress at least having a month of something online with his aide would be helpful.

My para is absolutely wonderful. She has been on with my child from the beginning – with audio and now with Google Meets and I thank God for her. One thing I did do, the first day of remote learning I called an IEP meeting with everyone because I knew change was coming.

Are you going to make me sign some type of waiver? I don't sign anything but my paycheck and not even that because I have direct deposit. So if I have to sign a waiver for my son's services, that is not going to happen.

Thank you to the lunch people. Monday through Friday I pick up breakfast/lunch at Washington. My children are eating because of that. Thank you to Mr. Malanda, Mr. Matthews and Mrs. Moses because they had been on the end of a very hysterical Chasity through this time and they have calmed me down and supported my children throughout this whole entire process.

Think about how we are going to do this moving forward.

Edwardo Lavara stated I have not received any online or anything. I have submitted documents from April 17th about the Notice of Waiver to the case manager. I had another meeting on April 27th – the assertion that the district does not engage in distance learning because it is not mandatory – that is what my case manager told me and the teachers were not yet trained. Lastly, also she said just because other districts endorsed this learning practice that it does not compel our district in any way. The statement that these parents are teachers – they cannot overnight become teacher especially since I am an essential worker – I am a trucker and have to work and teach my son and not getting any help. I spoke to them and requested that we have a class for help for him because we are scared that he may fall behind. I don't have the support of the teachers, the case manager – we don't have any class interactivity and we don't have any para. They told me that the Township is not training the teachers and that is the answer I received and we need help with the kids. We need online classes, we need the paras, we need help and that is why I'm here because I need the Township to get together and get it to the schools if they are not aware. In six weeks my son has class or any mention of IEP contract - not any OT, speech – I try but I can't do OT with my son and that is why I'm here. We need help and we need something done. I don't know if they have not received anything from the Township. Apparently I see some parents saying that they do have it and I heard some of you saying that it has been approved as of my meeting on the April 27th.

Rich D'Avanzo stated I want to get back to the budget – especially not knowing the repercussions from the State and as well as the federal when it comes to additional funding. I heard Senator Menendez talk about an additional billion dollars going directly to the State and local governments. My question is how are we going to present a budget on Thursday when we really don't know the circumstances of what lies ahead financial both from the State and federal. Most of you have seen the plan by State Senator Sweeney for furlough on State workers. That would probably push them receiving unemployment. That obviously cannot work with educators because our contract goes to the end of June technically and ESY is extra and not receiving pay during those months. How are we moving ahead with a possible budget when we don't understand the financial repercussions that are still out there?

ESS parent stated (inaudible).

Elsie Mackey stated I want to get status of when IEPs would be available via Genesis especially since we are remote learning and a lot of us are trying to figure out and navigate this special education process and remote learning?

The other question as it pertains to legal – I would still like some clarification on when lawyers attend IEP meetings – what is the criteria for the lawyer to attend? Where can we find the policy that states if a parent says that they are bringing an advocate, immediately the meeting is placed on hold and they have to wait for scheduling with legal counsel to participate? I think we need to be clear because it does come across as being intimidation. I would figure there is a chain of command – it would go to the Director, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Tatum and it is just lately and this is more than one parent where legal is involved and it is not at the Administrative Law or due process so just some clarification on that. If we can do some weekly updates Mr. Tatum and maybe patch in special education because it is changing and evolving every minute. You are getting information bit by bit and there are a lot of unanswered questions in terms of related services, missed services, instruction. Set a meeting or information to the community to help us navigate this process because right now you are doing the best you can but a lot of families are struggling and kids are missing out. It is hard and the staff is doing the best they can and we are all trying to figure it out but there is a gray area and a fine line between students with disabilities really getting what they need. It is definitely a challenge and I tell people I am not a therapist, I'm a mother, I'm not a teacher and there is this meaning that the parents were the first parents out there but I'm not a speech therapist and I rely on the experts to help us with our children. We really have to figure out a way to work with this but the legal part is what I want clarification on and when will IEPs be available via Genesis.

Mrs. Conti read the statement from ESS parent from the chat - Rea Wallace stated I apologize, my son has ESS, his para reaches out to him every day and even does a video chat via Google meet and plays a game twice a week. They are also starting a group meeting for the students and they continue the parent support group meeting.

Sue Lipstein stated first I will talk as president of the Education Foundation. I am very proud to announce that we are going to be funding grants for the fall. We are working out exactly on how we are going to do it. We might have to defer some. We postponed the reception. Right now the raffle is going to be September 24th. We are hoping to have a reception but with everything going on we are not sure that is going to happen. I am really proud to have two award grants. We will let the public know as soon as we are sure of our financial situation. Hopefully we will be able to get to some kind of normal school schedule.

My other question was about the Chromebooks – what is going to be happening to the old Chromebooks from the high school? How are our kids are using computer access if the elementary grades if they don't all have computers. We never did the one-to-one. Are they able to learn remotely? If we could get Chromebooks into those elementary children as soon as possible; there may not be school in September. This could continue into the fall and getting those one-to-one computers to the elementary grades need to be a priority.

I want to offer my condolences to Dr. Francis on the losses in his family. I know a lot of people are facing losses and it has been a very difficult time for many people in our community

and my heart goes out to him and his family. I wanted to personally convey that to you. Thank you.

Jeffrey Monge stated I too want to offer my condolences to Dr. Francis and his family.

As it pertains to going back to school, I think there should be a make or break date on when you are going to make a decision to try to do something like an alternative graduation or celebration of sort. I don't want a situation where the decision is made last minute and then the best effort is not made to help the kids and their graduation – whether it is high school, Jefferson, middle school, elementary school.

The idea of coming back this year – I think a lot of people would assume it is not a possibility but just looking forward to next year, when we had the last meeting at the Board office, there was a question about a lack of hand sanitizer machines and in general, things of that nature. I know there was an issue with a few messing up the machines but there has to be an answer to that going forward. If you don't have that answer for this year, I don't understand how you could have kids go back with those minimal threshold requirements of materials.

Speaking to the budget, in the next few days, if the budget is presented and looks exactly like the budget that was discussed and presented in draft form before all this, then I think it is an injustice to us all here. I think there had to be some serious thought process of what needs to be in the budget for next year with all this being considered – this COVID-19 and how it has affected us.

Lastly, it seems like there is only \$661,000 unencumbered in this year's budget which is interesting to me that it would be the case when there has to be some cost savings for this horrendous situation that we are in. I can't imagine that we were spending money at the same clip as if everybody was still in school. If there is some savings, that we try to make sure that those savings somehow get converted to student services. While there is effort there our kids are not receiving 100% of the possible services that they would have obtained if they were in school.

Sienna Bucu stated just thinking forward – if testing in the State is halted we will have to come up with new criteria for the gifted and talented programs because that yearly testing is what it is based off of. Students who might be entering for the first time would be not considered for the next year unless you come up with new criteria. It is something that should be on your radar – forward thinking.

Also, I don't know what the situation is because I am no longer a student at Union. I know that email is questionable at some point. If we are talking about social/emotional services prior to allowing students to be on Facetime or video chatting, how are we ensuring that those conversations are private? Not about the counselors, but the server end of it.

I think everyone is doing such a great job. When you are thinking about reopening, also consider teachers because there are teachers that are compromised and who may not feel comfortable going back to work and asking them to make that choice is something that should weigh heavily on your mind before you choose to reopen.

Mr. Taylor stated I can address at least two of the questions raised. One with respect to the last question about privacy, that is a good question – there is actually recent guidance as well as warnings from the federal and State level regarding public school districts recording meetings – it could be a staff meeting between colleagues via ZOOM – has an option to record the meeting – it could be a board of ed meeting where you are in closed session and the ZOOM option is on record in addition to any other regular minutes being taken or it could be an IEP meeting or meeting between a parent and staff member via electronic communication being recorded. All of those areas raise concerns about privacy, FERPA, student records, OPRA etc. In many respects the school district will be well advised to be cautious, if not to out-and-out record a lot of those meetings. Who knows who has access to that information at the ZOOM company or other platforms you are using. There is no answer to say at this meeting, just be mindful of individual privacy rights of students or staff members. It is our obligation to protect privacy.

One of the other question that was raised about policy or procedure for an attorney to be present on behalf of the school district when a parent has an advocate in attendance at an IEP meeting. There is no policy in place for the district requiring, allowing or disallowing same. However, I will note that the Administrative Code Title 6A does allow a public board of education to have equal representation in an IEP meeting particularly when a parent has an attorney and/or advocate in attendance. There is no intent and it is not intended to be adversarial in any way shape or form. It is not intended to intimidate a parent. In many instances it help further protect the students' rights as well as the District's rights as the majority of IEP meetings are collaborative in nature verses adversarial in nature. It is important to note that advocates do have heightened levels of training, legal and procedural knowledge that does put the district on a more level playing field to have legal representation at those meetings if an advocate is present.

Also IEPs on Genesis – similar to the issue ZOOM meetings and recordings, there are issues and concerns about FERPA with respect to student records, special education nature, being uploaded and downloaded on various platforms where you can't always police who has access to those records.

Maureen Dreyer stated English teacher at the high school and also a UTEA representative. I know we are short on the budget but I want to know what is happening with our paras and our non-tenured teachers – the layoffs on May 15th?

Mrs. Kearny stated in regards to the Google Meets – if teachers do decide to opt out, would there be any other ways for the children to get that? I have 3rd grader that is not getting any interaction online instruction right now but if his teacher isn't going to do it is it possible for another 3rd grade teacher or something like that to have an online initiative with Google Meets since that is allowed now?

Mr. Tatum stated regarding the Chromebooks – the one thing we are trying to do is get out of Chromebooks to those students that have identified that they don't have the materials. With respect to the Chromebooks that will be returned since there is a new set of Chromebooks being offered. I would like Mrs. Paul or Mr. Wojcik to respond to that.

Mrs. Paul stated the Chromebooks after we receive them we will try and repair. We can only use them for one more year. After that year the licensing for the Chromebook will expire. After that we will not have any security measures on it because the operating systems will have expired. Google expanded for one more year so that is all we have.

What we do is while on a suggestion from Mr. Nufrio from last year, we started doing is anything we have in the district, we use an online auctioning system so we actually get back some money for some of the equipment. Whatever does not work, that is what we will be doing. We have had the Chromebooks for four years so that is the reason why we will be doing that.

Regarding the elementary – what we have been doing is distributing Chromebooks where we can. I have been going into school every day ensuring that we try to get devices to the parents/kids so that they will be able to do some online work.

Mrs. Lipstein you are correct – the pre-k through 5th grade, we are not one-to-one but whatever devices are available in a cart and everything else we have been pulling. I would like to give a quick shout out to every building principal of the district who have been more than cooperative and willing and volunteered whatever devices they have available to be able to give it out to the elementary levels and it has been really good for us to try to get it out as much as we can. I would like to say thank you to all the building principals for helping us to be able to pull them from your carts and giving them out every day. I have a list of students that are coming tomorrow morning to pick up Chromebooks.

We also do repairs. If a Chromebook is broken, if the student brings it in we take it in and give them back a loaner Chromebook and that will continue.

Mr. Tatum stated one of the questions that came up before was about the deadline – I think it was Mr. Monge’s question – if and when we are returning to school and the end of year activities; I think the best answer right now is once we hear on the 15th of May what we are doing, I think that is when decisions can be made more readily. We researched areas right now but it is all preliminary because we don’t know what the outcome is going to be. If there is any kind of firm decision in terms of (a) we return to school or (b) that we don’t return to school that gives us preparation time to go ahead and see what we can put in place.

I do recognize that there may be people if we are allowed to return to school that they may not want to send their children back especially in light of family situations – teachers, as well as student issues, and we don’t know all of them. We only know who have reached out to us. I respect those people that may not want to come back to school. The guidance I have received it is up to the district on how they include the attendance. I think it will be a general concern across the United States.

There was a question raised by Rich D’Avanzo and that is about the budget presentation on Thursday night. I think either Mr. Vieira or Mr. Taylor can jump in on this discussion. It is my understanding that we are still required to meet the legal obligations as far as preparing the budget and having it approved by the Board of Education. In light of some of the questions

regarding personnel, which I don't feel comfortable about responding too much about layoffs and stuff like that because again it is contingent upon the budget being approved as is.

The other thing I would caution everyone is that this budget, from what I'm hearing, almost becomes preliminary because there may be a second wave of changes and funding. I have been informed at the County level as well as something I was reading yesterday that there may be a total separate budget message from our Governor regarding the changes in funding and that is something right now like everything else we are dealing with, we have very little control over it. I think we have a legal obligation and deadline to have a budget hearing based upon things that are today and that is the conditions under which we are under today.

I know last month Mr. Vieira did do a preliminary budget in terms of what our finances are at this stage of the game and at the request of the Board so I don't think there will be any surprises and tomorrow there is a finance committee meeting and we will be discussing the budget. In all fairness, the budget is the budget as we have it based upon the funding we have right now. My concern is what happens if funding is further reduced. Everyone who has been connected to Union Public Schools, our funding for the last three years has been very limited compared to other districts. Every opportunity I had to speak with someone in either the State Department and/or the County office, the words I always here is you have a balanced budget and you have enough money to run your district.

With the return to school and with the current budget situation, there are going to be some changes that we will need to make that may require more money not less. I will be interested in seeing what exactly are we going to have in terms of funding because Union received \$331,000 in excess of what we got last year in terms of State funding. The dollar amount is very slim. There have been applications made to the presentation done last month and we will discussing that tomorrow but there may be changes to that and beyond what comes out from the State Department. Maybe we will get a win fall – I hopeful but it doesn't look like they will be giving anybody anything more, I think they are looking at taking it away. Hopefully there will be a magical win fall from the feds to help us out.

Mr. Taylor stated as I referenced earlier, the State has issued permission for municipalities to delay receiving tax payments; however, the Commissioner of Education and/or the Governor – there has been no authorization for school districts to delay the preparation and submission of its budgets. There have been requests from around the State for the last two months around that issue and the specific response from the Commissioner was to reject that request. School districts have a statutory obligation to submit and approve their budget by the deadline that has not been extended.

Mr. Nufrio stated regarding Mr. D'Avanzo's comment – Senator Menendez alluding to a possible \$500 billion appropriation. I have been watching the news, hopefully his information is somewhat more correct than what I have been hearing. The Senator nor the House of Representatives are contemplating any kind of assistance to states, municipalities or counties as of yet. Unless he divulged something that is not being talked about on the news; the very next resolution that maybe coming to the floor would not have that included within it. Maybe the one following that but you are absolutely correct, we still need to present a budget for what we have

to do in terms of process and the deadline needs to be met and they are not extending that deadline. We are between a rock and a hard place. We have to do it.

Mr. Benaquista stated as far as the Title I funding, Maureen Guilfoyle sent me a message because she is having issues with her microphone. All the funds will be carried over. Mr. Tatum stated that is correct and that is pretty much standard procedure when we don't use money it is carried over to be used in the following year.

Mr. Benaquista stated Mrs. Conti can you respond to the question on ESY. Mrs. Conti stated I was on a webinar today, it is whether what the Governor decides, whether being in the building or we will be continuing distance learning. We are ready for Plan A or Plan B. For some students it can be a combination of both in helping children transition back to either a building environment, if that is decided, there are a lot of options on the table and again it is to meet the individual needs of the students. First and foremost we have to wait and hear what the decision is – if we are returning back to the building or not. If we return to the building there will be continuing ESY per the IEPs. If the Governor decides that we will not be back in the buildings until September or whenever, then we will be looking at ESY as a remote learning environment. If we return to the building, there could be a combination or transition plan especially for students that are medically fragile. We are ready for whatever the decision is.

Mr. Tatum stated Mrs. Conti and I have had many conversations about a lot of these issues over the past weeks. We were talking about having both plans in place so if you would receive one set of directions there was one plan and if we got another one it would be Plan B. The question was raised once before regarding this issue and I mentioned we have been following through with staffing, use of the building, everything is status quo but at the same token there is an order that we remain with what we are doing right now. Yesterday the Governor announced that the stay at home order is now indefinite with no real date and he was not following the guidance of what the other states were doing. New Jersey is going to be independent and do things as is needed. It is a good chance and a great idea to have the remote planning in place because there is a good chance we may need it but that will also modify the staffing. There are a lot of contingencies that Mrs. Conti and I have talked about regarding the extended school year program as well as other initiatives that are going on around the State. We are getting information little by little.

Mrs. Conti stated the guidance changes on a daily basis and we are trying very hard to stay on the forefront of it. We participate in webinars that are given by the State. We are trying to get all the information to roll out the IEPs to the greatest extent possible. From what I understand from a webinar today that more guidance is coming; we talked about the telepractice and the online classrooms – guidance from the State Department of Ed giving the go ahead on the telepractice on a temporary basis and rolling out different things. I hear people mentioning waivers and I don't recall anybody here asking for a waiver of any type. I think what we were talking about on the webinars is we are in this online virtual world – were asking for is that the parents make an informed consent and decisions and we are keeping them apprised of everything as we go along with all the developments and we are in the process of providing the Google training. We have had several trainings with the staff with certain webinars and the legal counsel as well. We are doing a lot and any conversation on how we are rolling things out in this

unprecedented time. I want to take a moment to thank the tremendous staff that we have and the dedication in rolling out the education in the remote manner. I thank them very much.

Mrs. Moses stated I want to go over the questions that relate to the curriculum. Google classroom – is a classroom that is remote as if we are in the building. If we are in the building the assistants would be involved in the learning – just like being in the classroom. If we are in the building that is the Google Classroom – just like the teacher’s classroom but it is just remotely – every person that is involved in the child’s learning has a part in the classroom. The principal to guidance to parents, everyone – parents can go on and look in and see what their kids are doing. I know that because supervisors have helped parents go into Google Classroom. So then why can’t an assistant have access to the classroom – they should. Why shouldn’t an administrator have access to a classroom – they should. Because if you are in the classroom you can go in the classroom, you are there to support not to criticize but to help the child. The students in the classroom are the priority and everyone is involved. The assistants have access to the classroom, the principals have access to the Google classroom, RTI teachers should have access to the Google Classroom helping students. These students have a tier learning level – 1, 2, 3 – parents know about that. This is a collaboration and it should be implemented – point blank and simple. Parents should have that communication with the teacher.

What does the student contact time look like in remote learning? It is flexible. There is no start time or end time. We are a remote learner because we are in a situation. There are a lot of things going on in the home. From the time the child awakes to the time the child goes to sleep, he or she should be able to complete their work, engage and get the guidance from their parents. I know the parents are very stressed because this is new to them. Somebody said they are not a teacher – no they are not but we appreciate the help and it is a little different because you help us through communication when we are at school, you come in parents and help us with that. Now the kids are home with you and you have to sit with them and you have to have them on task for however long they can stay on task. The day is going to be longer but it should not be stressful. They have all day. There is no time to finish – just finish.

We recognize that parents are guiding their children through their learning. We know that teachers know that they have to communicate with parents as if it was a day in the classroom. On the website under “remote learning” there are expectations. Under those expectations of what we expect students to do, what we expect parents to help us guide them, what we expect teachers to do and what we expect administrators to do. Every step of the way we level up. The first expectation was when we first went out, we leveled it up a couple of weeks later and we will level it up again because we know as serious as we are in a situation like this, education is power and know everyone who is listening here – education is power and we want to make sure our children have that educational power.

It is collaborative effort. I hear a lot of information on what people are saying to parents. I am going to do my best and the team I work with is going to their best to address those issues because we train teachers all year long. We have teams in the buildings for that. It is based upon the needs of the students in the particular building. We have data to back that up. Everything we are doing we have data to back that up. Teachers must work in collaboration with one another, that is not an option. Teachers, administrators and parents – we all must work in collaboration.

That is what the classroom looks like – communication, collaboration, innovative ideas, creative thinking, putting it all together and making something special for Union Township School District. This is something new but this is something we have been working for years in getting ourselves ready for this. I have notes and agendas to prove that we have been talking about this for over three years. It is here, I'm embracing it and I know the teachers are embracing it. I know sometimes people get frustrated – take a deep breath and get back in because we cannot step out and stay out. We have children to educate.

Grading process – that is something we will have to call on our counsel for; I speak to the team and the Board of Education members because we know seniors are leaving and we know a lot of them have a nice GPA and we do not want to down that on the face of what has been put in front of us. We have a lot to talk about and I would say that the grading system has to be in connection to the COVID. It is not the grading system that we see that is in our policy, it will be a different grading system – that is how I see it. But this is up to counsel to guide us through this because we have kids that maybe are an “A” student, I don't know I haven't looked, that could not do a lot of things because of his family situation. Do we penalize that child? Do we penalize a child in a home that only that student can speak English and mom and dad are trying to help? We try our best to make sure that we provide the best that we can provide and make sure that the teachers know their students, we communicate the best that we can, if we can't communicate than we find a colleague that can speak the language – that is why collaboration is important. The grading piece – we have to work on that.

I want to say one thing about reopening – that is going to be a big task. It is not going to be a week or two that you just open up the school and kids run in – that is my opinion. We have students with underlying conditions and staff with underlying conditions. We have parents that are fearful because they have gone through so much. It is a big task that Mr. Tatum, myself and Mr. Benaquista and Craig Wojcik – we are talking about sending out a survey and we are going to take it from there and put all the pieces together to address all the issues and concerns that we have to do when we open up our door because we want everyone to feel safe. We will wait for what the Governor says.

The summer bridge program – I know a lot of parents like the bridge program. I don't know if we will be able to do face-to-face. If we are, I don't know how many per classroom but if we go in the summer and the size of the classroom is less we will just open more classrooms but then I will need the permission from Mr. Tatum and the Board of Education to take over a whole school because I'm sure kids will want to come to school for that and then we will need to put a team in place to put things together, for gathering outside and everything. It is nothing too big to service our children. I leave you with that.

Dr. Morgan asked are we keeping track of any students who may have been impacted by this virus? Are we able to provide support to them? In my district I had a number of students come through my high school and the first person who passed away was a parent – so I just want to know if we are keeping track of any students who have been impacted? And how we can support them? The grading policy is definitely going to impact these students.

Mrs. Moses stated absolutely. Mrs. Ahern is keeping a list. We have a lot of situations in our families. We do know who they are and we have been reaching out to them. I was impacted too and it is a strange feeling and it must be a strange feeling for children because where is the closure, how do you go through it, what is being said at home? We do know and we will address those issues when we can with the parents and how do we support them. They need to tell us what they need, we don't want to step too far in but our hearts are with them and we know that the grading piece cannot be another part of the burden or the sadness that they have to carry. Our counseling department is doing that. Mrs. Ahern has all that information and some of that information is also going to the principals and then passing it to Mrs. Ahern our supervisor of guidance.

Mr. Tatum stated in terms of students that have been impacted. I think Gerry Benaquista can answer this better than I can. We are also doing wellness checks on students when we are not getting responses from them. If we are getting feedback that students are not logging in for attendance, we are doing wellness checks. We are trying to locate and find if they do need assistance. That is a whole other layer to put in place. We want to ensure and we are reaching out to parents via phone calls and Mr. Benaquista and I were talking about it this morning and the whole process. We want to ensure that children are safe and if there are needs, we are doing everything we can to meet them. Parents have indicated to us through emails that they have had issues within the home and I will leave it at that.

Mr. Benaquista stated we have been keeping track of the families of students that we have had to do wellness checks on and it is not just attendance. We have been checking on the ones that we haven't heard from. There are two sides to this and we will clarify that in the near future. There is an attendance issue where we are not getting anything from a child and we are doing a wellness check on and Central Office is involved in the last stage of that. Through this process the State talked about "flexible" and we are finding that some students are participating in some classes but not others and we are trying to get to the root of that. I think our administrators needs to be involved with the families on the why – is the child having a difficult time and not want to work in math. If a child doesn't understand, they will avoid sometimes and it is all about communication. Communication is the key to success. Is it the parents having the hard time? Or are the children having a hard time? Please reach out to your building administration and start that conversation so that they can put you in contact with the guidance counselor, the CST member, speak to the teacher saying that this child needs more direction – I do think we will be ironing out some of that confusion but right now our residency department has been doing wellness checks and it has worked out well where we are getting information from parents about why the child is not participating and getting them on track to move forward and be successful.

Kim Conti stated I wanted to add that we are also reaching out to the out-of-district schools as well and working collaboratively with them in considering the whole child – if someone is not participating and learning as well as in-district. Social emotional learning is so much more important even now – we have to consider that. When the time comes for students and staff to reenter the building, a plan in considering the social/emotional needs are going to be very important.

Reema Patel stated I teach at Union High School and a member of the UTEA. I have a question about class sizes for next year. I know myself and a lot of colleagues are concerned that due to budget cuts and restrictions that class sizes will be increased. It is already difficult to have class sizes above 20 sometimes so increasing class sizes to 25-30+ is a huge concern for teachers in our district. Especially if we go back to school and not knowing when the virus will end. Class sizes that are larger is not going to help this Coronavirus or limit the spread of the this disease. Also a current concern and continued conversation is about the grading policy. As the year closes out for the 4th marking period, I know Annie Moses spoke in regards to that but a little more clarification and policy in terms of what is going to happen as the year ends. I received tons of emails from parents with these concerns. Also teachers are reaching out to their supervisors on trying to get a gage on how we should be grading students and how we expect to end the year. Will there be finals that we should begin to prepare students for? Being notified about things will help us prepare to end this year on a strong note. Thank you for everything you guys have been doing.

Mr. Tatum stated the class size issue – that is a decision of some type of scheduling and a budgetary issue as well. That is why I made the comment about our needs being greater in our district because we have a very large high school and middle school. You raise the issue about raising class size and we have been fortunate in the years that our class sizes have been pretty stable. I see it as two possibilities – one is a scheduling issue, the second one is budgetary and if we continue to lose funds then certainly things will have to be done differently as far as maintaining a smaller class size. We are still dealing with the unknown piece only because we just don't know what the funding is going to look like other than what we know. Moving forward hopefully more guidance will be coming down. Hopefully some win fall that will help us and/or serious negotiations about how school is going to operate from day-to-day and how it is going to impact staffing as well as operations.

Motion to Adjourn:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Ruiz, seconded by Dr. Francis, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MANUEL E. VIEIRA
BOARD SECRETARY**