

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 17, 2022

Executive Session – 6:30 p.m.

Public Meeting – 7:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

On a motion by Mrs. Noto, seconded by Mr. Maider, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to public session at 7:04 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Board President, Theresa Joyce, who stated that the meeting was convened in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, the Sunshine Law; notices were sent to the *Courier News*, filed with the Township Clerk and posted in the Branchburg Township Schools.

The following members of the Board of Education were present: Vincent Carpentier, Kristen Fabriczi, Theresa Joyce, Robert Maider, Carmela Noto, Olga Phelps and Jonathan Sarles.

The following members were absent: Cathy Curcio and Keerti Purohit.

Also present were: Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Elizabeth Nastus and Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary Thomas M. Venanzi.

II. The Secretary called the roll.

III. CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Mrs. Noto, seconded by Mr. Maider, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to convene to Executive Session at 7:04 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Student Matters, Contracts and Legal Issues.

On a motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mr. Maider, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn Executive Session at 7:23 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mrs. Noto, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to reconvene to public session at 7:30 p.m. with 13 members of the public present.

IV. The assembly saluted the flag.

V. Statement of Adequate Notice

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Nastus spoke about the following:

- She read a message which was previously sent out to Branchburg families regarding the mask mandate, and Governor Murphy's announcement to make masks in school optional, but required on the school buses effective March 7, 2022;
- She thanked the students who participated in the Valentine's for Veterans project; and
- She introduced Jennifer Anderson, Director of Curriculum, who did a presentation on the district's state testing data for 2020/2021 school year.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VIII. GOVERNANCE

Motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mrs. Noto that Items VIII.A. through VIII.E. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items VIII.A. through VIII.E. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Mrs. Joyce thanked everyone who sent emails to herself and the Board, and thanked them for sharing their opinions and concerns. She said she read all the emails, and responded to each of them.

A. Approval of Minutes

It is recommended that the Board approve the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of January 13, 2022, the Minutes of the Executive Session and Special Meetings of January 17, 2022, January 20, 2022, January 21, 2022, February 3, 2022 and February 4, 2022.

B. Approval of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Report			
Building	Incident #	Date	Discussion
SBS	SSDS# 015871	12/21/21	BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts the recommendation of the Superintendent that this incident did not meet the criteria of H.I.B. as defined in N.J.18A:37-14.

C. Approval of Submission of Application for Special Education Medicaid Initiative Waiver

It is recommended that the Board approve the submission of an application for a waiver to not participate in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative to the County Executive Superintendent of Schools.

D. Approval of Three Year Program

It is recommended that the Board approve the submission of the three-year Bilingual/ESL Plan to the New Jersey Department of Education.

E. Approval of 2021-2022 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement Officials

It is recommended that the Board approve the 2021-2022 Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between Education and Law Enforcement Officials.

IX. POLICY

Motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mr. Carpentier that Item IX.A. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Item IX.A. was unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Mrs. Noto said the Policy Committee met, and discussed the policies and regulations listed on the agenda.

A. Policy and Regulations First Reading		
Policy/Regulation	Title	Discussion
P 2415.05	Student Surveys, Analysis, Evaluations, Examinations, Testing, or Treatment (M)	Revised
P 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries (M)	Revised
R 2431.4	Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries (M)	Revised
P 2622	Student Assessment (M)	Revised
R 2622	Student Assessment (M)	New
P 3233	Political Activities	Revised
P 5541	Anti-Hazing (M)	New
P7540	Joint Use of Facilities	Revised
P 8465	Bias Crimes and Bias-Related Acts (M)	Revised
R 8465	Bias Crimes and Bias-Related Acts (M)	Revised
P 9560	Administration of School Surveys (M)	Revised

X. EDUCATION

Motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mr. Carpentier that Items X.A. through X.G. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items X.A. through X.G. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

Mrs. Phelps said the Education Committee met, and discussed the following:

- February 18, 2022 Professional Development EdCamp day, and the courses that are offered;
- Special Education summer programs;
- Update on the district assessments;
- Social, Emotional Learning at the schools; and
- District's academic calendar

A. Conferences/Travel

WHEREAS, the employees listed below are requesting Board of Education authorization to attend the conferences/workshops listed below; and

WHEREAS, the attendance at the stated function was previously approved by the Chief School Administrator as work related within the scope of the work responsibilities of the attendee and within the funds budgeted for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the attendance at the function was approved as promoting delivery of instruction or furthering efficient operation of the school district; and fiscally prudent;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes attendance at the stated conferences/workshops and reimbursement for the related expenses in accordance with Board policy on conference and workshop attendance.

Conferences/Workshops	Employee/ Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals /Exp.	Tolls/Parking /Mileage	Total
Mathematical Mindsets Virtual	Erica Landesberg 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/1/22 3/4/22 3/7/22 3/11/22 3/14/22	\$149.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$149.00
Mathematical Mindsets Virtual	Danielle Puzzo 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/1/22 3/4/22 3/7/22 3/11/22 3/14/22	\$149.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$149.00
Livingston School District Technology Site Visit Livingston, NJ	Joseph Larramendia N/A	2/18/22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Livingston School District Technology Site Visit Livingston, NJ	Timothy Spork N/A	2/18/22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Livingston School District Technology Site Visit Livingston, NJ	Matthew Zimmerman 11-000-223-580-02- 144-999	2/18/22	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$8.75	\$8.75
Equity in Action Leadership Academy Virtual	Matthew Barbosa 20-270-200-500-02-649	1/28/22 2/23/22 3/14/22 5/20/22	\$450.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$450.00
Dyslexia: Best Strategies for Students Who Struggle to Successfully Read Virtual	Ludmila Battista 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/21/22	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
Catching Up Your Students with Disabilities Who Have Fallen Behind Virtual	Alane Cook 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/24/22	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
Practical Strategies to Improve the Behavior of Attention Seeking Students Orange, NJ	Alexandra Gallo 20-270-200-500-02-649	4/5/22	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
NJ State School Nurse Spring Conference Virtual	Janet Hoffman 11-000-219-580-03-001-999	3/19/22	\$125.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$125.00
Summit on Civil Rights in Education Virtual	Leigh Keely 20-270-200-500-02-649	2/21/22- 2/22/22	\$300.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$300.00
How to Use an Open Middle Problem Virtual	Erica Landesberg 20-270-200-500-02-649	2/18/22	\$39.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$39.00
Foundations of Fractions Virtual	Erica Landesberg 20-270-200-500-02-649	5/23/22- 6/30/22	\$297.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$297.00
Designated Employer Trainings Virtual	Elena McFarland 11-000-270-580-07-000	3/15/22	\$159.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$159.00
Reasonable Suspicion Supervisory Training Virtual	Elena McFarland 11-000-270-580-07-000	3/16/22- 3/17/22	\$58.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$58.00
NJ Pupil Transportation Conference Atlantic City, NJ	Elena McFarland 11-000-270-580-07-000	3/24/22- 3/25/22	\$350.00	\$174.00	N/A	\$83.30	\$607.30
Teaching Media Literacy Virtual	Wendy Michels 20-270-200-500-02-649	4/1/22	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Refresher Virtual	John Hindmarch 11-000-261-580-10-428	4/14/22	\$195.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$195.00
Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Refresher Virtual	Samad Mobley 11-000-261-580-10-428	4/14/22	\$195.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$195.00
Annual Regional Woman's Educational Leadership Forum Garwood, NJ	Jennifer Anderson 20-270-200-500-02-649	2/25/22	\$50.00	N/A	N/A	\$3.15	\$53.15
Annual Regional Woman's Educational Leadership Forum Garwood, NJ	Tina Neely 20-270-200-500-02-649	2/25/22	\$50.00	N/A	N/A	\$11.87	\$61.87
2022 NJPSA/FEA/NJASDC Conference Atlantic City, NJ	Tina Neely 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/24/22- 3/25/22	\$320.00	N/A	\$88.50	\$59.92	\$468.42

Conferences/Workshops (continued)	Employee/ Account Number	Date(s)	Registration Fee	Hotel	Meals /Exp.	Tolls/Parking /Mileage	Total
Develop Growth Mindsets in Mathematics West Orange, NJ	Danielle Puzzo 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/23/22	\$279.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$279.00
Add + VantageMR Virtual	Catherine Rello 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/7/22 3/9/22 3/14/22 3/16/22 3/21/22 3/23/22 3/28/22 3/30/22	\$995.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$995.00
IMSE Literacy Summit Virtual	Brienne Rodriguez 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/23/22	\$20.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$20.00
NAEA National Art Convention Virtual	Meghan Russo 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/3/22- 3/5/22	\$200.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$200.00
The Future is Language Virtual	Esthela Solano 20-270-200-500-02-649	4/29/22	\$65.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$65.00
West Windsor-Plainsboro School District West Windsor, NJ	Suzanne Updegrove N/A	2/18/22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Controversial Issues in Pediatric Audiology Virtual	Randi Lee Venturini 20-270-200-500-02-649	3/24/22- 3/25/22	\$160.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$160.00
LEGAL ONE Non-Certified Staff Hiring, Evaluation, Tenure Issues Virtual	Enea Yard 11-000-230-580-01-303	3/4/22	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$150.00

B. Approval of Contracted Educational Service					
Vendor	Account Number	Student ID#	Rate	Effective Date	Discussion
Stepping Forward Counseling Center Chatham, NJ	11-150-100-320-03-069-020	9763835574	\$75 per hour	1/17/22	Partial Care Program with Home Instruction to take place at SFCC 10 hours per week

C. Approval of Fundraisers/Service Project				
School	Group	Event Coordinator	Dates	Purpose
BCMS	Student Council	Wendy Michels	2/4/22- 2/11/22	Valentine's Day Grams fundraiser planned with all the proceeds going to the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation.
BCMS	Student Council	Wendy Michels	3/4/22- 3/14/22	Gaming Fundraiser to benefit the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation. Students can donate money to participate in various video gaming sessions with classmates and volunteer staff members. They will have a chance to play their favorite games such as Minecraft and Roblox, as well as new and retro consoles with games, board and card games..
BCMS	Band Students	Kristine DeNicuolo	2/18/22- 5/31/22	BCMS Band would like to include a Shout Out section in the Winter and Spring Concert programs. Parents can purchase a shout out to their child to be published in the program. Proceeds will help offset the cost of the Music in the Parks trip for students.
BCMS	Drama Club	Nicole Kepner	2/18/22- 3/12/22	In order to offset costs of the BCMS play, the BCMS Drama Club would like to sell space in the playbill as well as having a concession stand selling snacks and flowers.
WES	School Wide	Kristen Kinsella	2/28/22- 3/4/22	In collaboration with Read Across America, students will be invited to donate one of their gently used books to the Bridge of Books Foundation. The Bridge of Book Foundation's mission is to provide an ongoing source of books to the underserved children throughout New Jersey.

D. Approval of Field Trips			
Trip	Coordinator	Grade	Purpose
Home Depot Bridgewater, NJ	Emily Williams	K-5 Life Skills	Students to apply taught life and social skills to real world application.
Target Bridgewater, NJ	Emily Williams	K-5 Life Skills	Students to apply taught life and social skills to real world application.
Whiton Elementary School Neshanic Station, NJ	Toni Lynn Burke	GATE 5	An "Across the Schools" activity to assist with Kindergarten Students at the Whiton Science Fair.

E. Approval of Field Experience					
Name	College/University	Certification	Location	Dates	Discussion
Lecann Bartushak	Rutgers University	School Nurse Certification	SBS	2/18/22- 5/2/22	Clinical Preceptor: Janet Hoffman
Daniella Lally	Centenary University	Elementary School Teacher in Grades K – 6	SBS	2/18/22- 6/30/22	Cooperating Teacher: Stephanie Formus Observation of 4 hours
Peyton Moor	Susquehanna University	Elementary School Teacher in Grades K – 6 & Teacher of Students with Disabilities	WES	5/23/22- 5/31/22	Cooperating Teacher: George Moor
Rosanna Vitiello	Drexel University	Preschool through Grade 3	WES	1/24/22- 3/12/22	Cooperating Teacher: Brienne Rodriguez. Observing a K-4 grade ELL classroom. 10 hours total
Rosanna Vitiello	Drexel University	Preschool through Grade 3	WES	3/28/22- 6/30/22	Cooperating Teachers: Catherine Rello and Tara Forsyth, 30 hours observation in math and 30 hours of observation in literacy

2/17/2022

F. Approval of Revision of Outside Presenter for 2/18/22 District Ed Camp				
Name		Account #	Cost	Workshop
From	To			
Nick Bruno	Katie Ellis	N/A	N/A	Edpuzzle 101

G. Approval of Additional Outside Presenters for 2/18/22 District Ed Camp				
Name		Account #	Cost	Workshop
Helga Nashed - Yoga		20-270-200-500-02-649	\$65	Yoga for Well-Being and Yoga for Stress and Anxiety Release
Suzanne & Greg Confer Gretchen Keller Jessica & Collin McMullen Christine Sena Sara & Jeff Wasserman		N/A	N/A	Gaining Perspective from Parents Raising Unique Learners in Our School Community. (Facilitated by Douglas Haan)
Pat Taylor & Lisa Pupa				Hand Massages

XI. HUMAN RESOURCES

Motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mr. Carpentier that Items XI.A. through XI.M., be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items XI.A. through XI.M., were unanimously approved by Roll Call, with Mrs. Fabriczi abstaining on Item XI.C.

Mrs. Joyce said the Human Resources Committee met on February 10, 2022, and discussed the following:

- New positions for district support staff;
- Increasing the substitute instructional aide rates; and
- Confidential items

A. Approval of Extra Duty Pay				
Name	Account Number	Rate	Location	Discussion
Kathleen Gaston Danielle Puglisi	11-130-100-101-01-021-020	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 10 hours per week combined)	BCMS	8 th grade Algebra connections planning and grading
Enea Yard	11-000-230-105-01-273	\$31.25 per hour (not to exceed 125 hours total)	BOE	Digitize personnel files

B. Approval of Leave				
Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
4151	11-000-222-105-01-255-090	Paid Sick Leave	3/8/22-5/8/22	Estimated date of return will be 5/9/22
5516	61-910-310-110-01-001	Paid Sick Leave	1/3/22-2/25/22	TBD
4962	11-424-100-178-01-013-020	Intermittent FMLA	2/1/22-2/1/23	Maximum use of 60 days total
4839	11-213-100-101-01-057-060	Paid Sick Leave	2/16/22-3/2/22	Estimated date of return of 3/3/22

C. Approval of Substitutes			
Name	Position	Rate	Dates
Ryan Collins	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$110/\$90 per day	2/11/22-6/30/22
Aleasha Outsey	Substitute Lunchroom Aide	\$13 per hour	1/27/22-6/30/22
Lynn Smola	Substitute Teacher/Substitute Instructional Aide	\$110/\$90 per day	2/18/22-6/30/22

D. Approval of Revision of Personnel			
Name	Account Number	From	To
Brooke Giuliano	11-213-100-101-01-057-020	MLR Special Education Teacher 2/21/22-6/30/22 Step 1, Level BA, \$59,449 (prorated)	MLR Special Education Teacher 2/1/22-6/1/22 Step 1, Level BA, \$59,449 (prorated)

E. Approval of Retirements				
Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Effective Date
Linda Abey	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Kindergarten Teacher	WES	6/30/22
Janice Apsley	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Kindergarten Teacher	WES	6/30/22
Lisa Quinn	11-110-100-101-01-001-090	Kindergarten Teacher	WES	6/30/22

F. Approval of Mentoring			
Mentee	Mentor	Fee	Discussion
Brooke Giuliano	Erica Viel	\$550 (prorated)	Fee to be paid by mentee via payroll deduction, Brooke is now at WES and needs a different mentor

G. Approval of EdCamp 2/18/22 In-House Presenters			
Name	Account #	Rate	Discussion
Erica Landesberg	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 1 hour)	Using Running Records to Move Beyond Memorization to Build Fact Fluency
Amy Garner	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 1 hour)	Embedding Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategies into Daily Practice
Danielle Puzzo	20-270-200-500-02-649	\$41 per hour (not to exceed 1 hour)	Using Running Records to Move Beyond Memorization to Build Fact Fluency

H. Approval of Revision of EdCamp 2/18/22 In-House Presenter			
Name	Account #	From	To
Beth Janiec	20-270-200-500-02-649	SEL Activities for K-5 \$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)	SEL and Your Class \$41 per hour (not to exceed 2 hours)

I. Approval of Revision of Maternity Leave			
Employee #	Account Number	From	To
5533	11-213-100-101-01-057-090	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 2/21/22-3/28/22 Personal Days: 3/29/22, 3/30/22, 3/31/22 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 4/1/22-6/17/22	Paid Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence: 2/1/22-3/9/22 Personal Days: 3/10/22, 3/11/22, 3/14/22 NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA: 3/15/22-6/1/22 Return Date: 6/2/22

J. Approval of Personnel								
Name	Account Number	Position	Location	Step	Level	Salary	Dates	Discussion
Brittany Kemack	11-213-100-106-01-057-090	Instructional Aide	WES	1	NA	\$19,094.60 (prorated)	2/22/22-6/30/22	New Position
LuAnn Wright	11-000-222-105-01-255-090	Leave Replacement Library Media Assistant	WES	1	NA	\$16.23 per hour (4 days per week)	3/8/22-5/8/22	LR for employee #4151

K. Approval of Revision of Salary					
Name	Account Number	Position	From	To	Dates
Rose Pellegrino	11-000-240-105-01-336-020	Office Aide - BCMS	\$23,851.00	\$35,025.53	2/18/22-6/30/22

L. Approval of Maternity Leave				
Employee #	Account Number	Type of Leave	Dates	Discussion
5478	11-213-100-101-01-057-060	NJ Family Leave Act/FMLA	2/25/22-5/31/22	Estimated date of return is 6/1/22

M. Approval of Revision of Mentoring			
Mentee	From	To	Discussion
Madison Hill	Stephanie Formus \$550 9/1/21-6/30/22	Carrie Santoro \$550 (prorated) 2/14/22-6/30/22	Fee to be paid by mentee via payroll deduction. Carrie will replace Stephanie Formus as a mentor for the remainder of 21-22 school year

XII. BUSINESS

Motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mr. Carpentier that Items XII.A. through XII.I. be moved upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

On call of the vote, Items XII.A. through XII.I. were unanimously approved by Roll Call.

There was no Business Committee report.

A. Bill List

It is recommended that the Board approve the List of Bills for the period January 14, 2022 through January 26, 2022, totaling \$266.03, for the period January 27, 2022 through February 3, 2022, totaling \$6,971.83, for the period February 4, 2022 through February 10, 2022, totaling \$959,835.47, for the period February 11, 2022 through February 17, 2022, totaling \$1,682,743.73, and ratify the Payroll for the period January 16, 202 through January 31, 2022, totaling \$991,135.17, and for the period of February 1, 2022 through February 15, 2022, totaling \$1,011,392.97.

B. Secretary's Report

The Report of the Secretary for January 2022 has been submitted for Board review. As required by N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)(3) I, Thomas M. Venanzi, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary, certify that no line item account has been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations this fiscal year.

It is recommended that the Secretary's Report for January 2022 be accepted and filed, and the Board of Education hereby certifies that no major account has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(c)(4) and that sufficient funds are available to meet the District's financial obligations for the remainder of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

C. Treasurer's Report

It is recommended that the Treasurer's Report for the month of January 2022 be accepted and filed.

D. Line Item Transfers

It is recommended that the Board accept the list of Line Item Transfers for the month of January 2022.

E. Monthly Transfer Report

It is recommended that the Board approve the January 2022 Monthly Transfer Report.

F. Approval of Submission of State Application and Plans to the New Jersey Department of Education for Approval

The Board of Education approves the submission of the state application and plans to the New Jersey Department of Education for their approval. The project is being submitted as an Other Capital Project where no state funding is being requested. The following projects are being submitted:

- | |
|--|
| 1. HVAC Renovations to the Old York School |
| 2. New Parking Lot at the Old York School |

The Board of Education also approves any changes (if necessary) to the Long Range Facility Plan as part of this project application.

G. Grant Permission for Eagle Scout Community Service Project

It is recommended that the Board grant permission for Jason Lauducci to carry out an Eagle Scout Project at Whiton Elementary School. This project is in accordance with his proposal, with time and materials to be donated at no cost to the District.

H. Approval of Resolution/Agreement for Participation in Coordinated Transportation Services

It is recommended that the Board approve a Resolution/Agreement for Participation in Coordinated Transportation Services with Somerset County Educational Services Commission for the 2022-2023 school year.

I. Approval to Enter into Agreements with the Somerset County Educational Services Commission to Administer the Nonpublic Programs

It is recommended that the Board enter into an agreement with the Somerset County Educational Services Commission to administer the following Nonpublic Programs for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Chapters 192/193 Program
- Nonpublic Technology Initiative Program
- Nonpublic Textbook Program
- Nonpublic Security Aid
- Nonpublic School Nursing Services

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Heather Maturin addressed the Board about the following items:

- The effects of masks, and what they are doing to the students;
- Learning loss and mental health issues for the students; and
- Would like the Board to consider the learning loss and mental health issues when the State guidelines come out, and when the district puts their rules in place after March 7, 2022.

David Panzarino addressed the Board about the following items:

- He thanked the Board for making masks optional March 7, 2022;
- He spoke about when children started school in the past two years, and having them now think that it is normal for them to be masked in the classrooms;
- Mental stress on students of all ages and all school levels;
- He read data from the Children's Hospital Association; and
- Asked to keep masks optional even in a slight uptick in cases, and that the parents decision should be respected.

Michael Becker addressed the Board about the following items:

- He felt the correct choice was made by the State and the Board to have masks optional effective March 7, 2022;
- Parental choice is the right approach;
- He spoke about the following five topics:
 - Learning – Students are in school to learn both academically and socially, which has been hindered in the past two years, as the test results show. While students are in school, they should not have to think about their masks or social distancing.
 - Teachers – Although he has great respect for our teachers, voicing their negative opinions regarding the new rulings is unacceptable, and should not be shared with the students;
 - Consistency and mental health – Many children are happy and excited about March 7th. It is very important we do not go backwards and implement mandatory masking. It is important for them to see each other smile and socialize in a normal fashion.
 - Responsibility – The Board has the responsibility to do what is best for our children and our future generation.
 - Hope – Guidance Counselors should hopefully be monitoring the mental health of the students of all ages. He hopes the students can get to experience normal school days.

Noah Fine addressed the Board about the following items:

- He thanked the Board and Dr. Nastus for following Governor Murphy's guidance, and lifting the mask mandates;
- Students learning and mental well-being will greatly benefit;
- Glad for parent choice;
- It is up to the Board and Superintendent to make decisions based on our children, not the Department of Health;
- Mental health and learning loss are real concerns; and
- Once masking is a parent's choice, it is expected to remain a choice.

Carrie Torchio addressed the Board about the following items:

- She is thrilled to have the commitment to make masks optional effective March 7, 2022;
- This is desperately needed for the mental and physical health of the students;
- Guidance communication and flip-flopping back and forth with the masks. Once the masks come off, every effort should be made to keep them off; and
- Parental choice.

Michael Cortese addressed the Board about the following items:

- He spoke about the events and losses over the last two years;
- He spoke about his son;
- He asked the Board to stand firm with no mask policy because it is a health issue for his son;
- He spoke about his experience not being able to be a coach due to the vaccine mandate.

Lynn Jaskewicz addressed the Board about the following items:

- She thanked the Board for making masks optional March 7, 2022;
- She spoke about the questions she is being asked by her daughter regarding mask wearing, and why she has to wear it in school and not in restaurants and parties. Ms. Jaskewicz stated, at this point, she has no answers for her; and
- For the Board to consider the mental well-being when the district sends out their rules.

Eagle Scout, Jason Lauducci, spoke to the Board about his Eagle Scout Community Service Project being done at Whiton Elementary School.

XIV. BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Mrs. Fabriczi spoke about the following Somerville Board of Education meeting items:

- Tuition contract for next school year was approved;
- The revised 2021/2022 school calendar was approved; and
- The 2022/2023 school calendar was approved.

Mr. Marder said the PTO committee will be meeting on Thursday, February 24, 2022.

Mrs. Joyce said Branchburg Township approved a new Health Officer for the township.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no second Executive Session.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Sarles, seconded by Mrs. Fabriczi, and carried unanimously, the Board agreed to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas M. Venanzi
Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary