

CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Closter, New Jersey

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

May 28, 2020

5:00 PM

The Board meeting was called to order by Ms. Finkelstein at 5:02 PM

The following Board members were present:

Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein

The following Board member was absent:

Mr. Lambert

Also present:

Mr. McHale and Mr. Villanueva

NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by the President:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Secretary to the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time, and place thereof, posted at each school building within the district, the Board of Education office, the Office of the Borough Clerk, and transmitted to *The Record* and *Northern Valley Suburbanite* newspapers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

Ms. Smith provided the Board with the following updates for Hillside Elementary School:

- Yesterday, May 27th, Hillside Elementary School started our pick up of student belongings. Special thank you to Ralph and our custodial staff and Cheryl Boehm who helped keep the pick up running smoothly and seamless. Pick ups will continue through next week and include a medication pick up on Thursday.
- Hillside Family Trivia is held Tuesday evenings at 6 pm, families are welcome to join. Thank you to Ms. Jost and Ms. Iyo for organizing this fun family event.
- Highlight from Feel Good Friday - Ms. Jost hosted several zoom sessions with various scientists, most recently a paleontologist -- students enjoyed sessions.

- Virtual Talent Show on June 5th - be sure to share your talents, more information will be on the Feel Good Friday site.
- Just a reminder that a site for our fourth grade is now accessible on the Hillside school page under the events tab. The site includes information on upcoming events. Ms. Smith encourages everyone to visit it often as it is updated frequently. We are planning for a virtual moving on ceremony on June 16th at 4 pm. Families will receive an invitation with Zoom information next week.

Mr. Tantom provided the Board with the following updates for Tenakill Middle School:

- With three weeks of school left in the year, we continue to push on with instruction and end of the year plans.
- May 8th, Mr. Tanum held three town hall meetings for grades 5, 7 and 8, and will be holding one for grade 6 tomorrow at 9:00am. In these town hall meetings we discussed a number of topics including
 - Grading
 - Student Council Elections - June 12
 - Graduation Photos - May 29, June 1
 - Virtual Graduation - June 18th, 7:00pm
 - Awards Ceremony - June 17th, 1:00pm
- Additionally, we will be holding a virtual incoming Fifth Grade Orientation on Monday, June, 1 at 7:00pm via Zoom for parents and fourth graders. This is in lue of the usual visits we have from the fourth graders and the evening parent orientation every year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. McHale shared with the Board and to the community his report:

- We are in the home-stretch of the school year. There are 16 virtual learning days remaining. Instruction will continue and there will be some fun end-of-year virtual activities for students. Plans are underway for a virtual fourth-grade moving up ceremony on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. and for the eighth-grade virtual graduation on Thursday, June 18, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. Governor Murphy has announced that in-person graduations, including drive-by parades may take place after July 6, 2020. The requirements for this pose many challenges, including adhering to a gathering capacity of 25 people (including students, parents, and district staff). This capacity number is subject to change by Executive Order only. If the capacity remains at 25, we would have to have approximately 20 drive-through events to accommodate our eighth-grade. Mr. McHale will continue to monitor any new guidance from the NJDOE, but at this time the only live event that we can possibly consider would be a drive-by parade.
- The NJDOE still has not provided any guidance on requirements for re-opening school buildings in September. They currently have a steering committee working on creating a document with requirements and guidance. One of our ESL teachers, Maggie Churchill, is serving on that committee. Further, I have created a School Building Reopening Committee and Sub-Committee. This committee consists of 18 people and the sub-committee has 13 people. The goal is to create a plan that will

address: various scenarios for delivering instruction; assessing student progress toward academic standards; keeping staff and students safe and healthy; and what professional development may be needed for staff. Once the NJDOE steering committee provides the guidance document, we will adjust our plan based on their requirements. During the planning, the Closter School Building Reopening Committee will survey parents to gather their input, particularly about preferences for scenarios that may require some students to be in the school buildings and some remaining at home for virtual learning, all students having virtual learning, and if we have intermittent virtual learning throughout the school year.

- Our CARES Act funds were approved for use in a supplemental instructional program and for the purchase of additional Chromebooks for use by students. We are in the process of planning that program. The program will be offered during the summer in a virtual live instruction format for students for four weeks (up to three hours per day). The eligibility criteria: students have not successfully met grade level standards in language arts and/or math, struggled during virtual learning, and teacher recommendation. Students who are eligible for the program will receive notification in June.
- Mr. McHale is reminding everyone that the 2020 Census is underway. He has added information on the district webpage, under the heading Census 2020, about the importance of every Closter resident completing the survey. Our federal funding is based on the census, and the data will be used for the next ten years! Please complete the census if you haven't already done so!
- Thank you to the Closter Education Association for providing the "Congratulations" sign currently outside of Hillside School.

Ms. Finkelstein thanked the CEA for this wonderful gesture.

BOARD OPERATIONS

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Kothari to approve Motion A.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn,
Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. Motion to approve May 11, 2020 minutes.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Bhagat to open the meeting to the public.

Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of three (3) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. The Board urges large groups to select one person to represent them. The Board reminds those individuals who take the opportunity to speak to please step up, identify themselves by name and address, and to limit their comments to items listed on the agenda.

Dolores Witko (17 Bogert Street, Closter, NJ) - She wanted to know the district's response to the Governor allowing graduation after July 6th.

Mr. McHale responded and referenced his Superintendent's Report.

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Bhagat to resume the regular order of business.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Bhagat, Mr. Linn, Ms. Cross

Moved by Ms. Bhagat, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-C.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn,
Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. APPROVAL - Staff Coursework

Motion to approve the following courses for 2019-2020 as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

Staff Member: Kerry Vogel
Course No./Title: EDUC-7130 Building Classroom Discipline
Institution: University of LaVerne
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Kerry Vogel
Course No./Title: EDUC-713K The Differentiated Classroom
Institution: University of LaVerne
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Andrea Watkins
Course No./Title: EDUC-6612.91 Reading Comprehension
Institution: Fairleigh Dickinson University
Credits: 1

Staff Member: Judith Lagomarsino
Course No./Title: TEC 907 Technical Digital Citizenship (online course)
Institution: Fresno University
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Judith Lagomarsino
Course No./Title: TEC 948 Teaching and Learning Online
Institution: Fresno University
Credits: 3

B. **APPROVAL - New Special Education Class**

Motion to approve the establishment of a new special education class in Hillside Elementary School for SY 2020-2021.

C. **APPROVAL - Virtual Field Trip**

Group: Grade 4
Date: June 2020
Location: Constitutional Walking Tour (Virtual Field Trip)

Mr. Linn asked if the teachers are actually attending the classes in person. Mr. McHale responded that the classes are online.

Mr. McHale also brought to the Board's attention item B. It will allow the district to keep as many students in the district.

FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Kwon, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Finkelstein

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-D.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn,
Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Monthly Financials and Certification**

Motion to approve the following items as required, pursuant to NJSA 18A:17-9 and NJAC 6:20-2.13, as per Appendix A attached:

- a. Board Secretary and School Treasurer Financial Reports for April 2020.
- b. Board of Education's Monthly Certification of Budgetary Major Account /Fund status for April 2020.
- c. Transfer of funds for April 2020.

B. **APPROVAL - Monthly Bills**

Motion to approve payment of bills from May 15, 2020 to May 26, 2020 in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$724,290.55
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 3,518.11
TOTAL	\$727,808.66

C. **APPROVAL - Genesis Cancellation of Contract and Exit File Fee**

Motion to approve cancellation of the contract with Genesis Student Information Systems as of 7/1/20, along with exit file fee of \$500.00

D. **APPROVAL – Application & Acceptance of ESEA and IDEA Grants**

Motion to approve the application and acceptance of ESEA and IDEA grants for School Year 2020-2021 in the following amounts:

<u>ESEA</u>	<u>\$158,537</u>	
Title I		\$ 107,831
Title IIA		\$ 21,737
Title III		\$ 18,969
Title IV		\$ 10,000
<u>IDEA</u>	<u>\$269,496</u>	
IDEA Basic		\$ 258,232
IDEA PreSchool		\$ 11,264

Ms. Kwon asked for clarification on item C since Genesis is being canceled. Mr. McHale responded that since we are transitioning to RealTime, we still need the exit file of everything that we have in Genesis.

Mr. Linn asked what the Special Revenue Fund bill list represents. Mr. Villanueva responded that this line is the terminology used to account for all federal and other grants not related to the local tax levy.

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Lee, Mr. Lambert

Moved by Ms. Lee seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-B.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn,
Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

- A. **APPROVAL - Long Term Substitute Teacher - Grade 7 Language Arts**
Motion to approve Sarah Comstock as leave replacement teacher for grade 7 Language Arts, for the 2020-2021 school year, pending a criminal history background check. Salary is \$58,074, plus benefits (MA, Step 0).
- B. **APPROVAL - Leave of Absence Meghan Pleus**
Motion to approve the leave of absence for Meghan Pleus from September 1, 2020, through November 24, 2020, in accordance with FMLA and NJFLA, and a discretionary leave of absence from November 25, 2020, through January 3, 2021, with an anticipated return date of January 4, 2021.

Mr. McHale shared with the Board that the principals are currently interviewing for all open positions for SY 20-21.

Ms. Lee asked if the candidates were interviewed via zoom. Mr. McHale confirmed that it is through zoom, and he also shared the selection process.

BOARD COMMITTEES

No committee reports. Finance committee is scheduled to meet on June 9th.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Villanueva thanked the board for completing the board self evaluation.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Micera to open the meeting to public discussion.

There were no public comments

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Kwon to close the meeting to public discussion.

CLOSED SESSION MOTION (If required)

There was no Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Kothari to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 PM.

Respectfully,



Flojo M. Villanueva, Jr.
Business Administrator/Board Secretary