

CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Closter, New Jersey

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

September 3, 2020 - 4:00 PM

The Board meeting was called to order by Mr. Lambert at 4:01 PM

The following Board members were present:

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

The following Board members were absent:

Ms. Lee

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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

- We officially began the 2020-2021 academic year yesterday as our staff returned for reopening meetings, professional development, and planning. In his welcome back message to staff, he encouraged everyone to view the challenges presented to us as opportunities. The challenges of the hybrid schedule are an opportunity for students to have more individualized instruction from the teacher. The challenges of virtual learning are an opportunity for teachers and students to use technology in new ways. He also shared a message that he saw on social media, "Let's give this school year the opportunity to be awesome. Don't throw a label of judgment on it before it begins. It may just surprise us in big, beautiful ways." He believes that Closter is prepared for the challenges this new school year presents and we will continue to help every student develop academically, socially and emotionally.
- On Tuesday, September 1, 2020, He received a letter from the Interim Executive County Superintendent, Louis DeLisio, which stated that based on the county-level review of the Closter

Reopening plan, it contains all of the elements required by the NJDOE checklist. The Closter Reopening Plan is posted on the district website, along with a comparison of the hybrid and fully virtual options, frequently asked questions, Department of Health guidance, and information about preparing students to wear masks. He encourages everyone to review these online documents.

- Health and safety have been, and continue to be, our top priority as we reopen. We will be stringently following the requirement that all staff and students must complete a daily health screening questionnaire via Realtime. Information about this process, along with a student ID card, has been sent to parents. Everyone is required to wear a mask during school. He encourages parents to review the information about preparing students to wear masks prior to starting next week. He also asks that all parents wear masks when walking on school property to pick up and drop off students.
- On tonight's agenda, there is a motion asking for approval to adjust the 2020-2021 school calendar so that the students' start date will be September 9, 2020. In order for our teaching staff to be fully prepared for a successful school year, they communicated that they needed additional preparation time prior to students' arrival. By providing one extra day of planning, our teachers will be better situated for success in delivering instruction in the hybrid and virtual formats. Our calendar for the 2020-2021 school year had one snow day built in for a total of 181 student days. We are required to have 180 days, so as of right now, we do not need to add an additional day to the 2020-2021 school calendar as a result of this change. If there are any emergency closings during the year, we may be able to meet those using a virtual format for the school day. If there are any necessary changes to the school calendar throughout the year, He will let everyone know. He wants our teachers to feel confident in meeting students on the first day and better prepared for a successful year, so I thank the Board of Education for their consideration of this calendar change.

Again, we look forward to the return of our students next week!

PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Finkelstein 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.

No Public Comments

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

BOARD OPERATIONS

Moved by Ms. Bhagat, seconded by Ms. Finkelstein 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, Mr. Linn, Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert
NAYS: Ms. Micera

A. **APPROVAL - Revision of School Calendar**

Motion to approve the revision of the SY 2020-2021 calendar to reflect the following:

- September 8, 2020 - Staff Professional Development
- September 9, 2020 - First Day of Classes

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

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

Moved by Ms. Bhagat, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motion A.
Motions was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein,
Mr. Lambert
NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Staff Coursework**

Motion to approve the following courses for 2020-2021 as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

Staff Member:	Sarah Kang
Course No./Title:	15:253:520 Principles of Language Learning: Second & World Language Acquisition
Institution:	Rutgers University
Credits:	3

FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE

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

Mr. Mchale explained the district will be sharing speech services with Demarest Public Schools. The therapist will work 2 days a week for Closter Public.

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Finkelstein 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, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Ms. Finkelstein,
Mr. Lambert

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Shared Services for Speech Therapist**

Motion to approve the shared services agreement with Demarest Public Schools for Speech Therapist for two days per week for SY 2020-2021.

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Lee, Mr. Lambert

Mr McHale advised the board regarding the appointment of additional staff in order to open the schools with all areas covered.

Ms. Finkelstein asked about the rescindment in motion B. Mr. McHale explained that the person accepted the position initially, but after they were approved they no longer interested in the position.

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A - F.
Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

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

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Grade 4 Substitute Teacher**

Motion to approve Christopher Rota as grade 4 substitute teacher from September 2, 2020 to September 23, 2020, at a rate of \$90 for the first 10 workdays and \$110 thereafter.

B. **APPROVAL - Rescindment of Appointment**

Motion to rescind the appointment of Senada Gurzakovic as a paraprofessional effective August 28, 2020.

C. **APPROVAL - Staff Resignation**

Motion to approve the resignation of Jessica Winter as a paraprofessional effective September 2, 2020.

D. **APPROVAL - Paraprofessional**

Motion to approve the following paraprofessional for the 2020-2021 school year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Building</u>
James lafrate	\$18.83	5.0	Tenakill Middle School

- E. **APPROVAL - Mentor for Provisionally-Licensed Teacher for 2020-2021 School Year**
Motion to approve Regina Pesce as a mentor to Katharine Meyers. Mentors will be paid by the provisional teacher.

- F. **APPROVAL - Bilingual Waiver for the 2020-2021 School Year**
Motion to approve the Bilingual Waiver for the 2020-2021 School Year.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Micera. Ms. Kothari

Mr. McHale advised the board this policy was required by the Department of Education which allows families to have the option of remote learning. The option is given to the parents during the beginning of the school year, after the first trimester or if they are new to the district.

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Bhagat to approve Motion A, attached hereto as Appendix A. Motion was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Cross, Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera,
Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Lambert
NAYS: None

- A. **APPROVAL - First Reading of Policy #1648.02 - Remote Learning Options for Families**
Motion to approve the first reading of Policy #1648.02 - Remote Learning Options for Families.

BOARD COMMITTEES

None

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

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

No Public Comments

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

CLOSED SESSION MOTION (If required)

No Closed Session

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Micera to adjourn the meeting at 4:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Floro M. Villanueva, Jr.", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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

REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES

On July 24, 2020, the New Jersey Governor and the Commissioner of Education published a supplemental guidance document titled "Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning Options for Families 2020-2021" as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This supplemental guidance includes an additional "anticipated minimum standard," as this phrase is used throughout "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education" (NJDOE Guidance). This additional "anticipated minimum standard" provides that, in addition to the methods and considerations explicitly referenced in the NJDOE Guidance for scheduling students for in-person, remote, or hybrid learning, families/guardians (hereinafter referred to as "parents") may submit, and school districts shall accommodate, requests for full-time remote learning.

Requests for full-time remote learning may include any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to students on an in-person schedule, which may be a hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services, special education, and related services. A parent may request some services be delivered entirely remotely, while other services follow the same schedule they otherwise would according to the provisions in the school district's Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) and Policy 1648.

A parent may contact the Principal or designee of the building the student would attend with any questions on: a request to transition from in-person services to full-time remote learning; a request to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services; the procedures of this Policy; and/or any other information regarding the school district's Plan and Policy 1648.

To ensure clarity and consistency in implementation of full-time remote learning, the Board of Education adopts this Policy that addresses the following:

- A. Unconditional Eligibility for Full-time Remote Learning
 - 1. All students are eligible for full-time remote learning.
 - a. Eligibility for full-time remote learning cannot be conditioned on a parent demonstrating a risk of illness or other selective criteria.
 - b. Unconditional eligibility for full-time remote learning includes students with disabilities who attend in-district schools or receiving schools (county special services school districts, educational services commissions, jointure commissions, Katzenbach School

for the Deaf, regional day schools, college operated programs, and approved private schools for students with disabilities).

B. Procedures for Submitting Full-time Remote Learning Requests

1. A parent may request a student receive full-time remote learning from the school district by submitting a written request to the Principal of the school building their child would attend. The written request shall be provided to the Principal at least 14 calendar days before the student is eligible to commence full-time remote learning in accordance with B.2. below.
2. The student may only begin full-time remote learning at the beginning of the school year, or at the beginning of a new trimester.
3. The written request for the student to receive full-time remote learning shall include:
 - a. The student's name, school, and grade;
 - b. The technology the student will be using to receive full-time remote learning, including the student's connectivity capabilities;
 - c. A request for any service or combination of services that would otherwise be delivered to the student on an in-person or hybrid schedule, such as instruction, behavioral and support services, special education, and related services;
 - d. For students with disabilities, the school district staff will determine if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting or an amendment to a student's IEP is needed for full-time remote learning; and
 - e. Any additional information the Principal or designee requests to ensure the student, when receiving remote learning, will receive the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.
 - (1) The documentation required by the school district to be provided in the parent's request for full-time remote learning shall not exclude any students from the school district's full-time remote learning option, but rather be limited to the minimum information needed to ensure proper recordkeeping and implementation of successful remote learning.

4. Upon receiving the written request, the Principal or designee may request additional information from the parent to assist the Principal or designee in providing the student the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs.
5. The Principal or designee will review the written request and upon satisfaction of the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal or designee will provide written approval of the parent's request for full-time remote learning.
 - a. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy.
6. The Principal's written approval of the request shall be provided to the parent within 10 calendar days of receiving the parent's written request.
 - a. The written approval will include the date the remote learning program will commence for the student in accordance with B.2. above.

C. Scope and Expectations of Full-Time Remote Learning

1. The scope and expectations of the school district's full-time remote learning program will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. The length of the school day pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3 and compliance with the Board's Attendance Policy and Regulation 5200; the provisions of the district's remote learning program outlined in the school district's Plan; and any other Board policies and regulations that govern the delivery of services to, and district expectations of, students participating in the remote learning program and their families;
 - b. The technology and the connectivity options to be used and/or provided to the student during remote learning; and
 - c. Any additional information the Principal or designee determines is needed to ensure the student, when receiving remote learning, will receive the same quality and scope of instruction and other educational services as any other student otherwise participating in school district programs (i.e. students participating in a hybrid model).

(1) This includes, for example, access to standards-based instruction of the same quality and rigor as afforded all other students of the district, the district making its best effort to ensure that every student participating in remote learning has access to the requisite educational technology, and the provision of special education and related services to the greatest extent possible.

d. The school district will endeavor to provide supports and resources to assist parents, particularly those of younger students, with meeting the expectations of the school district's remote learning option.

D. Procedures to Transition from Full-Time Remote Learning to In-Person Services

1. A parent may request their student transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, if in-person services are being provided, by submitting a written request to the Principal of the building the student will attend. This request must be submitted at least 14 calendar days before the student is eligible for in-person services.
2. A student is only eligible to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services commencing at the beginning of the school year or at the beginning of a trimester.
3. The written request from the parent for the student to transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services shall include:
 - a. The student's name, school, and grade;
 - b. The in-person program may only commence for a student transitioning from full-time remote learning to in-person services in accordance with D.2. above; and
 - c. Any additional information the Principal or designee determines would be important on the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services.
4. A student previously approved for remote learning wanting to transition into the school district's in-person program must spend at least one full trimester in remote learning before being eligible to transition into the school district's in-person program.
 - a. This will allow parents to make the arrangements needed to effectively serve students' home learning needs and will support educators in ensuring continuity of instruction for the student.

5. The Principal or designee will review the request for compliance with this Policy, and upon satisfaction of the procedures in this Policy, will provide the parent of the student a written approval of the student entering the school district's in-person program.
 - a. In the event the request does not satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy, the Principal or designee will notify the parent in writing of the issues that need to be addressed by the parent to satisfy the procedures outlined in this Policy.
6. Upon approval of the student's transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services, the school district will provide specific student and academic services to better assist parents anticipate their student's learning needs and help educators maintain continuity of services.
7. School districts that offer Pre-K will consult their Pre-K curriculum providers regarding appropriate measures to assess a Pre-K student's learning progress during the transition from full-time remote learning to in-person learning.

E. Reporting

1. To evaluate full-time remote learning, and to continue providing meaningful guidance for school districts, it will be important for the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to understand the extent and nature of demand for full-time remote learning around the State.
 - a. The school district will be expected to report to the NJDOE data regarding participation in full-time remote learning. Data will include the number of students participating in full-time remote learning by each of the following subgroups: economically disadvantaged; major racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; and English learners.

F. Procedures for Communicating District Policy with Families

1. The school district will have clear and frequent communication with parents, in their home language, to help ensure this important flexibility is as readily accessible as possible. Communication must include, at a minimum, information regarding:
 - a. Summaries of, and opportunities to review, the school district's full-time remote learning Policy/Plan;

- b. Procedures for submitting full-time remote learning requests in accordance with B. above;
- c. Scope and expectations of full-time remote learning in accordance with C. above;
- d. The transition from full-time remote learning to in-person services and vice-versa in accordance with B. and D. above; and
- e. The school district's procedures for ongoing communication with families and for addressing families' questions or concerns.

G. Home or Out-of-School Instruction

- 1. No provision of this Policy supersedes the district's requirements to provide home or out-of-school instruction for the reasons outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A, N.J.A.C. 6A, or any applicable Board policy unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent or designee.

Board of Education Approved: (First Reading: 9/3/20)
(Second Reading: 9/10/20)