

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Welcome, everyone. I would like to call to order the August 24 Special Meeting of the Croton-Harmon Board of Education. And then I would like to recommend an action that the Board of Education approve the agenda as presented.

So moved.

Second.

On the question, all in favor?

Aye.

Aye

Aye

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. Recommended action that the Board of Education approves all items under the Consent Agenda.

So moved.

Second.

Second.

On the question, all in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right.

I will turn the meeting over now. We will move into our reports, and we will have a Superintendent's Report from Dr. O'Connell to continue discussions about reentry.

Perfect.

Dr. O'Connell.

Thank you. Thank you very much. And good evening to the board as well as our viewing public. And again, thank you to the board for putting in these additional meetings so that I can, with our team, continue conversations about the school entry process.

I did invite Paul Gibbons, our director of facilities, here this evening because I'd like to give and have Paul give us an update on the MERV 13 filters that we discussed at our last meeting. We did receive word from our vendor that there's a delay in some of the filters being delivered. So Paul, if you would give the board an update on that for us this evening.

Yeah. Good evening. Yes. Today I received a letter from one of our filter suppliers, and it indicates that it's a notification on past delivery dates. This notification takes precedent to any delivery date you have been given in the past. And they're basically resetting all their deliveries now.

There is an apparent shortage or obvious shortage of MERV 13 filters. And we've obviously been on the phone today with some other suppliers. And it appears it's not just the filter itself but the media, the fabric that makes up that filters, because there's obviously been a surge in demand on that media that's really escalated and even peaked in the last week.

The letter came out from that from the-- from NYSED last week. It's been in the news increasingly over the last several weeks. So anyway, there are filter issues. We have received-- I don't want to give you exact numbers-- but the majority of the filters for our larger equipment, so equipment that serves libraries, and cafeterias, and auditoriums and that kind of thing.

The filters that this particular company provides us typically provides the longer, thinner filters, generally more custom, not stock items that serve our unit ventilators. And we have unit ventilators in a lot of classrooms, and we have unit ventilators in some offices as well.

Anyway, the whole filter issue has come up fairly quickly relative to some of the other issues that

we've been going through. I'm sure you all are well aware of the masks and the N95s and all of that. And that started obviously earlier in the spring.

The filter issue and the recommendations to provide a higher, more efficient filter came up generally in the middle of the summer. And then there were some publications that started coming out on it, but it really didn't gain steam until the middle of the summer. So this need is kind of lagging some of those other things that we knew about earlier. So I wish, in a way, it came out earlier, but I don't think the analysis or even just the discussion about it was there to get us to that level in July. So it's obviously something we desired.

Should mention, too, that in the-- to go back to a lot of what we did starting in the spring is we looked through the guidance that we received and said, what do we need based on the guidance that the CDC has given us, the Department of Health has given us? And then I can't remember the date, but the New York State Education Department gave us some guidance, too, which was fairly late in the show, too.

But if you go back to that guidance on ventilation, even that the Department of Health-- I mean, not Department Health-- the SED gave us and their recommendations to maintain adequate code-required ventilation natural mechanical as designed. They do have in that paragraph somewhere that you may consider installing higher efficiency filters, but it wasn't a requirement. So going back to what we were working on through the spring and early summer was meeting the requirements of these documents.

So just want to say the filter thing came later. I think we jumped on the wagon pretty early relative to other schools. And just to give you some background on what I've heard from other schools in the area, I've heard some schools are only doing the larger units-- ironically, that's what we did receive-- and were avoiding the unit ventilators in entirety.

So I think it's kind of-- we're unusual in that we were even trying to do the unit ventilator part. But we did find a supplier who we've used in the past, who has made our filters in the past, who would provide a MERV 13 filter. And the guidance from you know ASHRAE and others said it's something that you could try, but you have to keep an eye on it. And we've looked into it somewhat.

So Paul, can I ask a clarifying question? In the letter that we received, they did give us some indication that they will be sending the additional filters. Could you just speak to that?

Yeah. Well, we had-- there's different deliveries that we've received. Some filters may come as early

as next week, some mid-September, some as late as October.

Obviously after hearing this, we've been today looking at our filter chart and seeing, well, if I receive some at the high school or double the order at the high school, can I move some over? Not so easy. I don't think we've-- it's been across the board pretty much the same filter from the same provider pretty much for unit ventilators.

So anyway, going back to-- I don't know who's on listening to the meeting, but I should mention-- and we've gone through this before in the past meeting, but I'm not sure if we have new viewers-- that we did, as part of our last Building Condition Survey, we did a ventilation assessment. I'm not sure if everybody understands why we got to that ventilation assessment, but I guess the point I'll make is that we did a ventilation assessment that most other schools have not done. And I don't know of any other schools that have done it.

So we're very unique in that way. And if-- I guess if you want to get into it, we could go off on the sidebar on that. But we did a very unique ventilation assessment which was thorough, went through all of the buildings. And the goal-- a goal of that ventilation assessment was to make sure that all spaces have adequate ventilation by current standards.

And I've mentioned before that there are areas that were converted from perhaps a shop to a classroom or whatnot. And codes have changed over many years, but-- although the ventilation has been a requirement in the code for a long time.

But there's also been renovations to our buildings that may have been 40 or 50 years ago that, for reasons unknown to me, did not meet that code. The valves and the way the systems were set up was not set up in a way that could provide adequate ventilation. So there are a lot of reasons why we had spaces that did not have the ventilation that would meet current standards. But the purpose of that study was to go through and bring all those spaces up to current standards.

And as a result of the 2018, 2019, 2020 projects, which were very extensive-- I mean, many large holes in floor, ducts run-- we have an attic in the high school which is full of ventilation equipment. It's a huge stand up attic, might be 12 feet at the center and hundred and something feet long, which had nothing in it before, is now full of ventilation equipment. So there's a lot of examples like that where we've put new equipment in or made changes.

So there are other things that we're doing to increase ventilation and obviously increasing the hours of operation of the system before and after school. I think the after school is probably more for the

disinfecting work that will occur in classrooms, which normally would not occur during the year. You want to disinfect the classroom and let that obviously be ventilated after that.

We're going to look at changing economizer in minimum outdoor settings, lowering fan settings where we can, lowering demand control to increase ventilation. That's basically just-- a few of these are just settings on the computer. And we'll have to add MERV 13s as they become available.

We could also look at other options. Can we get two MERV 13s in the same size that we could put together, something that's stock? But we haven't gotten there yet. Having only gotten this letter today, we're not-- we haven't gotten that far with this.

And the other thing we don't mentioned, though, that is huge is in September, you can open the windows in-- I would think most of the time in the classrooms, if not all open, at least get them cracked to a good degree. So it's ironic that we would have windows opening and ventilating the air anyway. So September, I think the concern for the mechanical ventilation, the filtration is lower. As you get obviously deeper into the fall, that-- the importance of filtration will increase.

So Paul, and just another clarifying question is, again, that the MERV 13 is an additional piece not required by SED but we were doing as an additional piece to filtration?

Right. Page 53 of the SED Guidance does not require increased ventilation--

Right.

I mean, not increased ventilation-- increased filtration.

Right. And it is our plan then, as the MERV 13 filters come in, that we would be replacing them or putting them into, as you mentioned last week, to the unit ventilators, et cetera, where we don't have them.

Correct. The other thing I should mention, too, is that-- you don't necessarily think of it right off the bat-- is this maybe a long term issue. I know we've ordered two sets of filters to start. They're probably not going to last as long as the current filters because they will clog up faster and become more of a resistance, and they'll have to be changed more frequently.

That will depend on how dirty the rooms are and how many people are in the building and some other factors, and whether or not you have your windows open or whatnot. So it could be a longer term issue, too, where you may get them. And then down the road, could-- come November,

December, you can't get-- you can't restock. I don't know where--

So we would be planning on making those orders, the reorders, sooner than later so that we would--

Right.

--have them for replacement, is what I hear you saying.

Hopefully, yes.

Yeah. I see. OK.

I think I--

All right. Any board members, questions for Paul because we really thought we would have them all in place? So questions?

Dr. O'Connell and--

I got a question.

Oh.

Go ahead, Beth.

Thanks, Neal. So Paul and Dr. O'Connell, thank you for this update since it came today. And I realize that it having come today, you might not have had this opportunity yet, but have you been able to analyze what-- do a capacity, like an impact on classrooms? How many filters are we down, and how many classrooms does that impact--

Yeah.

--by building?

It impacts most classrooms with unit ventilators. So it's a-- impacts a lot of classrooms.

OK.

Do we have--

And then I guess-- and sorry. I'll cede it. I know other people are going to have questions. But so where you mentioned multiple-- this is our only supplier I'm-- presumably--

Well, we did check with a couple of others today, actually a couple of others, as well as HVAC contractor. And I did hear from independent sources that there's a material issue with the filters, the media itself, and did get lead times of six weeks or so from--

Six weeks?

--a couple different-- at least two different sources.

And what current filters do we have? So just if you could explain to the public--

Typically about a MERV 8.

A MERV 8.

MERV 8, yeah.

And can we-- and the reason this matters, Paul, if we could just explain to the public is that while not the New York State Guidelines haven't said this, but the reason that letter-- that it showed up, and our teachers have requested this, and governor spoke about it, but it's because the higher the number, the better the filtration in essence, right, for airborne--

Right. You have a chance of capturing some of the virus in the air. I don't think it's-- it's not by any means a total capture.

Right. But you have the higher the number, the better the capture.

Higher the better.

Right, and we--

We should also mention, too, there's a downside to a better filter. And that's the better the filter, you reduce your pollution in the air a little bit. You lose your ventilation a tad. And a way to capture some of that back is you have to change-- if you start out with a resistance that's somewhere up the scale already on a MERV 8 filter, and you have to change it out relatively quickly before it becomes significantly more of a resistance than a MERV 8 filter that's been used. The only way to keep your equipment running with the same ventilation is you have to change those filters more frequently.

Yeah. Go ahead, Josh.

Actually, from the research that I've done and looking around, basically if it's less than MERV 13, the

virus just passes straight through it. Less than MERV 13 is basically meaningless with respect to the virus because it'll just pass right through. It's too small to be caught in a filter that's less than MERV 13.

And MERV 13 will catch a fraction of them.

And even MERV 13 is not perfect, absolutely. Actually, no-- first or all, no filter is perfect. In order for it to be perfect is to just not have it pass any air, and that's just not going to happen, obviously. HEPA filters trap more, but they're very inefficient and might not work with our ventilation systems, right? And they're very expensive.

If you go back to the state guidance, again, it's not in there. Many schools, I would think being they're older systems, won't even be able to handle the MERV 13. Is that correct on that, Paul, that some schools can't even venture into the MERV 13 area?

Well, if you had a MERV 8 before, and you changed the MERV, put a MERV 13 in, and you change it frequently, you'll basically be riding on the higher end of the-- there's a resistance curve. You're riding on the higher end. So you're starting out somewhere in the middle of where a MERV 8 would turn in terms of resistance to airflow.

You'll be getting to the end of that curve quicker. And that depends on, like I said, how dirty the room is and a lot of things. Irony is the windows open, yeah, I don't know what you're doing. When you have the windows open, how much-- you might be getting a majority of your ventilation from the outside and not even need to filter.

So that's a big curve, a game changer when you have your windows open. But once the windows-- you need to close your windows, it will be-- I think it will have more of an impact obviously.

But with the windows open, now you have added loads. Your filters are going to deteriorate more quickly because you're also going to be picking up pollen and all the environmental--

Right. But the thing is--

--contaminants and stuff.

--if we had a lesser filter in there with the windows open, it would-- that wouldn't matter as much. But once you put a MERV 13 in there, you might say, well. Then you're right, though. You're going to clog up quicker.

The other question, and I echo Beth's request for this, is it'd be really good to know how many classrooms at each building are impacted.

I think it's-- I don't want to say all classrooms. Not all classrooms, a lot of classrooms, most classrooms.

Because I think at the high school, most of the classrooms do not have unit ventilators. Is that correct, or--

At the high school, most classrooms have unit ventilators.

Oh, they do now. OK.

Yeah.

My misunderstanding.

And the rooftop units you talked about are bringing in the air to the-- filtering that to the larger spaces. That's what you were saying earlier, Paul?

We have air handle units which are usually in a mechanical room. And then they have-- they call them rooftop units which are obviously on a roof. So just, I guess, the terminology used in the trade.

And we do have the filters for the larger units, you said, Paul?

Yes.

And in the mechanical rooms.

Right. There are large units both on the roof and in the mechanical rooms.

And we have the filters already there.

We have. I looked at the chart today, and it says that they're all there. Now, I'll give you-- you'll go through all your boxes, and God knows you might have a something short or this or that. But from what I could see on the charts that we have, yes, we have them all.

But that [INAUDIBLE]

And in terms of the--

--the classroom.

--I guess MERV 8 equivalent filters, we have an adequate supply of those for each of the classrooms currently, but we'd be swapping them out as--

They're easier to get, so than MERV 13. I could actually-- the other thing is I could go to a MERV 11, but I don't know that does anything, as Josh said. So--

Dr. O'Connell--

And are the MERV 11s easily accessible? Are they easier to get?

Easier to get. That's what I've been told, but I have not ordered them or gone [INAUDIBLE]--

Yeah. I don't--

I'm sorry. Neal, I know you had some questions before you [INAUDIBLE]

No. I think some of my questions were answered, I think. And the main thing is, when the question was raised about MERV 11s, is if in fact we are not-- if MERV 13 is the minimum, then it really doesn't seem to make sense to try to get something which is not quite up to that standard unless it makes some difference. And apparently it does not. Is there any sense from the ventilation and engineers that you may have spoken with as to whether keeping the windows open to provide additional ventilation will be sufficient as a stopgap, at least for a few weeks?

Haven't asked that to anybody who would know. That would be very difficult to assess, because, how wide open are your windows? Is there a breeze today? I don't know. What's the geometry of the room and whatnot?

I don't even know how you would study that. But I think if the windows are open far enough, my gut feel is that that's going to be the overwhelming-- and obviously if there's good airflow from either cross ventilation or other means, that's going to become far more significant than-- well, you all know from your own houses, you open your windows, and it's a cold day, whatever. You know that becomes much more significant than your heating system or your ventilation system or whatnot. So it's a-- I don't think it's-- anybody's studied it quite like that, but I may be wrong.

Paul, hi. It's Iris.

Hello.

My internet is going in and out. So you may have spoken on this. I can't-- I don't know. But when you were talking, there were three things I wanted to ask you. And I'm just going to ask them all at once, and then you can just answer it all.

First thing, you had said the goal initially was to make sure all spaces had adequate ventilation and that we met the code. So my question is-- and I know that's what the governor said. I know that's what the CDC said. I know that's what the Department of Health-- they just spoke in general terms of making sure you have adequate ventilation.

What would define if we have adequate ventilation? And when you say that meets the code-- when they said that meets code, are they referring to just general operating code on a normal school year when you're not combating a virus, or-- I'm not 100% clear I understand when what's-- when you say that meet the code. Are they factoring in-- when they issued that guidance, were they factoring in a virus scenario, or were they just talking in general?

And then the last thing-- the next thing is you mentioned other things were being done to increase ventilation. Can you please give me a little bit more information on that? I know MERV 13 filters is something that's come out within the last two or three weeks. I hear it often in the workplace and elsewhere.

But I know there are alternatives that were issued by ASHRAE for if you don't have MERV 13 filters, because I think they recognize that if you were to say every single institution had to have MERV 13, you might have no one doing anything for a very, very long time until supplies increased. So I just want to know if-- I know we were attempting to exceed the standard, but are we able to do any of those things that if you don't have MERV 13?

And what it mentioned was like you increase filtration in your units to maximize available outflow. You provide recirculation fans. You get the HEP filters. I would like to know, are there things we can do? I know I'm rambling now, but are there things we can do to still exceed whatever that code was to try to make sure we're providing adequate-- beyond adequate-- I don't want to strive for adequate if we can go beyond.

OK. I'll start with the first one-- all spaces adequately ventilation. What does that mean?

Yeah. When engineers design an HVAC system, they're looking for typically 15 to 20 cfm of outside air for each person in that space. And that's what the SED refers to as adequate ventilation in their guidance.

Paul, is that cubic feet per minute?

Yes, cubic. 15 to 20 cubic feet per minute per person. So they will look at a classroom and say, well, this classroom, the maximum could be 30 people, including the teacher. So we're going to multiply 30 times the 20 or whatever. And we're going to come up with you need 600 cfm of fresh air to that space.

So in each space-- unlike in a home, each space has a means of outdoor air coming into a room. And in a unit ventilator, it could mean those little grills on the outside of the building. On a rooftop unit, it might mean a hood on the side of a unit which pulls in fresh air. On a mechanical room unit, it might mean a separate-- it will mean a separate duct that goes somehow out from that unit up to the roof or out through a wall somewhere to pull this required cfm per person into the space.

So that's what the intent of our-- the ventilation study we did. They went through our buildings and looked at all the areas to see where that was not happening and added ventilation to make it happen. So that's, I guess, the first part.

Other things we can do to-- obviously, one of the easiest things we could do, we could change our occupancy settings on our building management system. And that's more fresh air before people are in, more fresh air after they're in. Just change the hours at which that outdoor air damper is open on all of our units. We can also look at changing the minimum settings. And that may vary from piece of equipment to a piece of equipment and depending on how you're heating or cooling and what that's competing with.

We can change the demand control settings on our-- their CO2 settings on the building management system. So in other words, we could lower it from-- the fan only goes on and brings in more outdoor air when the level is 800. You could bring it down to 200. So adjust above the normal ambient CO2 level. So you're forcing the fan to run all the time.

Then your last question was about MERV 13 and other things that could be done. The SED did issue a guidance which I saw today on some other things. One was the HEPA, portable HEPAs in the classroom. I actually did speak to the SED about this last week, to one of the engineers.

He said-- indicated you could do it, but you got to be careful, that they can be noisy. And I guess the concern is that the student that sits next to it may have difficulty hearing what the teacher's saying. And SED's guidance did issue a caution on it, said that you could do it, but it was precautionary.

We have purchased several of those, and I know we got four of them in. I know we ordered two more. I think they are due very shortly. They were due at the same delivery. They might actually all be in already, but portable HEPA filters for the nurse's areas.

So they thought it would make sense there. They don't have to worry about hearing and-- as much as in a classroom. So I think I answered your questions. Was there anything else, Iris?

You're muted, Iris.

[INAUDIBLE] I know. I saw that. So thank you. No, I was just wondering, so when they say the code, they're just talking a general-- the normal code that exists on a regular basis? Or are they looking at-- or does it matter? I don't know. CO2 level, does it matter whether there's a virus or not out there, or I-

There is no code that pertains to the virus. There's just this ventilation which you have to maintain all the time when the building is occupied regardless. That's just, I guess, for several reasons, just normal viruses as well as other things that could be in the air. You could have students using-- I don't know, whatever-- adhesive or something on a project, their art project or something. And you want to-- that to be ventilated.

Just one--

Paul--

Just one. One more, guys. I'm so sorry, and then I will cede, leave the floor. So I'm just curious because I know the CDC and ASHRAE came out with some further assistance for school districts in terms of ventilation. How does that equate to the code, not as much as what we have done or [INAUDIBLE]--

Some of these things I mentioned are from the ASHRAE guidance. And I should mention-- I mentioned it. I'm not sure if you were on before, but the whole ventilation stir came relatively late in the game. And the ASHRAE guidance came very, very late in the game, too.

And the ASHRAE guidance that's out there now, if you read it closely, it's not even an official standard yet. It's just interim guidance on the situation we're in. So usually ASHRAE comes out with standards that are very-- I guess like a code developed by committee and research and whatnot. So this guidance put together by ASHRAE was probably something they were pressed to do quickly.

And I think July time frame was the first time. And then they've come out with revisions to it and different presentations. So late to the game, really, needing to make significant changes in September for school, to come out with something in mid-July and then revise it again in August.

So Paul, in that our classrooms are going to have more limited occupancy because we have the Corton cohort and the Harmon cohort and distant and social distancing, does the fact that there will-- let us say, instead of having 24 students and a teacher and perhaps another staff member in the room, but instead we're going to have half that number, does that change the amount of air that must be circulated in order to have a-- to meet standards?

I don't believe so. If you have half the students, you'll base-- and you got, say, 20 cfm on average per student before, well, now you have half the students or 40% the students. You're going to get 40 or 50 cfm per student. I haven't seen anybody-- nobody's interested in cutting back to meet the code.

Oh, no. I'm not saying that. What I'm saying is the fact that there will be fewer people in the classroom make this less concerning than if the entire class was filled as before. That is my understanding. [INAUDIBLE]

Right. Yes. Well, from a ventilation, yeah, obviously the load on the ventilation system or the potential to spread from whatever means, obviously, goes down with lower occupancy no matter how you-- how it's potentially transmitted.

And also, the other things that you discussed regarding changing the occupancy settings or the minimum settings or circulating earlier and later will also be-- ameliorate some concern even before we get the MERV 13 filters in place.

I think it helps a little bit on the tail ends if you keep it running longer. Obviously, if the students leave the room and there's still something in the air, it-- you'll hope to get rid of that, so it doesn't settle out on the surface or get a custodian sick or something. And we're trying to cut the cycle anywhere you can.

Paul?

Oh, do you have more, Neal?

No, I'm done.

Sure. Paul, so just to-- because you've given us a lot of information, are you just saying that all our

classrooms definitely meet the cfm standards, any of the classrooms that we're going to be using will be meeting the cfm standards, and we can even make them meet them on the high level?

Well, there's more that goes on even in the classroom. And it happens with the seasons, too, which during the spring and the fall, there's a mode called economizer mode that exists on most of the units. And what that does is that opens the fresh air up. And even on some exhaust fans, some of the new exhaust fans we put in, it ramps the exhaust fans to a higher level.

So in other words, if your classroom is 75 degrees, and it's a little warm because there's people in it, the sun is coming through the windows or whatever, and the outdoor air temperature is 57 or whatever, and your set point is 72, well, you're above the set point. And outdoors is free cooling.

So the system knows it's time to turn my fan up or my exhaust fan, that's something like in the attic at the high school, to ramp it up at a variable speed drive. It brings it up to a higher speed. It opens the dampers on the unit ventilators more. And in economizer mode, you may be moving multiple times the air that you would have in a minimum 20 cfm setting. So in that mode, you-- I don't want to throw a numbers out there, but you could be moving multiple times the air well above the 20 cfm--

Great.

--per person.

But isn't that-- there's a bit of a problem here because-- and I've been reading about this as well. What is needed under code for the number of air changes per hour per student is a separate question from the question of what is the appropriate amount of-- which amounts of airflow are appropriate to reduce virus transmission. They are two completely different purposes, and they're not totally correlated with each other. They don't track linearly with each other, as I understand it.

One of the issues that we have is that if the airflow is greater, it's actually blowing the virus around more from person to person. So that six foot social distancing may no longer be sufficient because we're now blowing the air across from one student to the next student. And if we increase the fan speeds, then we're increasing that flow of air from one student to the next student. That's my concern about if we're doing that without the added filtration, that we're actually potentially increasing the possibility of transmission.

And Josh, to get back to the filtration, I just-- having seen what's been going on with certain materials in the country, and there is this-- suddenly all this focus on M 13s, I don't think that the district can feel certain that we'll be getting those M 13 MERV filters in a timely manner, because they originally

told you that they would meet this deadline.

They're offering other deadlines, but it's just that's just something that we may have to face is that there's going to be a shortage of MERV 13. Have you heard anything more about that, Paul? Because if the materials are scarce, and every school in the state and every state is trying to get their hands on it, [INAUDIBLE]--

It's potentially a problem. Yeah. I mentioned it before.

Right. Yeah. I know you mentioned it.

I don't know what the winter will bring or--

Exactly.

And I don't know what the factories will do. Can you change a factory operation from making MERV 8s to MERV 13s? And if they can, and then maybe we're in some luck.

Exactly.

I don't know what it takes to make that material either. What--

No. And it's out of our hands basically. We've seen this again and again with different materials and different things. Thank you for giving us this information in such a specific way.

But I think we just have to possibly accept that we'll be opening school without that and might-- I think probably the board feels the same way, that in our Reentry Task Force meetings and our presentations, we've told parents that those filters will be in place when they're making their decision about whether their kids are going to be coming to school or not. I'm just wondering if that's going to affect our planning in terms of-- I'd like to hear from Dr. O'Connell what her thoughts are about that.

OK. Were there any more questions for Paul before I go into that next piece? I didn't want to cut anyone off on that.

Yes. At a semi high level, how does the ventilation actually work?

Are we recirculating and filtering interior air? Or when it goes through a filter, where does it go? Does it just go out the ceiling, out the roof, or is it recirculating around the building?

We have systems that do both. I would say the majority of them take some indoor air and some

outdoor air and mix it, goes through the filter, comes back to the room. When that outdoor-- if the economizer mode is on more in the spring or fall, you might have-- you'll have less recirculated air and more outdoor air. So the fraction of outdoor air would be higher. There are systems where we have-- 100% outdoor air comes in. We have different systems.

OK, because--

And then the air inside the room would be-- exhausted outside outdoor air would be 100% fresh air.

Right. And that's interesting to me because if we were having class in the soccer field, and the kids were 6 feet apart, we wouldn't be talking about filtering anything. We would say, oh, it's outdoors.

So if we could force all sorts of outdoor air to go through the system and exhaust virtually all the indoor air, I don't-- I certainly haven't studied it, but that seems appealing to me for the people who are going to have their children, and the teachers, and everybody else who's in the building. I just don't know what the overall impact is, but certainly that, having a lot more fresh air and maximize the fresh air, seems like the prudent thing to do at least to start.

Wouldn't there come a point where we would run out of ability to heat that sufficiently, to meet the set point?

Eventually in November or December, but yeah.

Yeah. That's why economy--

But not initially.

But not initially, yes. Initially it might be a win for us. It might be cooler outside than in, although it doesn't address the issue of outside allergens and stuff like that.

Correct.

No.

Also doesn't address the thing that Josh mentioned about the more air you're pushing through from the outside, the more breeze there may be in the classroom. I don't know if that is significant, but I understand the concern that Josh had mentioned as being one that we would have to think about.

That's a difficult thing to solve, though, because you have a system with no airflow to create no breeze across anybody. Well, then you have no fresh air. I don't think anybody knows what the sweet

spot is.

Right. Yeah. If I--

So, Paul--

--were to guess, I would say that the maximizing the fresh air is probably desirable.

Yes.

And to Brian's point, is that something that in that economizer mode that you spoke of or in ways we could override the system or manually program the system to increase the outside air?

We are going to try to push the economizer mode, yes. It's hard to do some of these things and see how they work when you don't have those conditions, you know what I'm saying, at the time. It's definitely going to be something we're going to have to continue on into the fall with and watch and see how things work.

Yeah. And--

Paul?

--the last thing I'll say--

Sorry, Brian.

--I'll echo basically what Andrea said, which is they told us they'd have the filters for us. And they said-- and then now they don't. And they may have them in next week, they may not. They may have them in October, they may not.

So to me, they've proven unreliable, not necessarily because they were duping us but because of the situation. So I don't think we can really count on filters any time in the immediate future no matter what they say.

We've had that issue with other PPE that we've-- but thank God we had enough time to recover because we knew about these things a lot earlier than the filters. For instance--

Certainly not through any fault of our own. There's a manufacturing issue. And that could be addressed, but we won't get into that.

So without any further questions for Paul right at this moment, so this is our preliminary thinking. Again, not the letter we wanted to receive today, but nonetheless, we did with the information. Paul and his team will continue to look for other vendors to ensure we maybe have an opportunity to get some MERV 13 filters in through other avenues. So I want the board to know that we are continuing on, and we will be replacing the MERV 13 filters throughout the district as they come in.

I take great pride in the work that the district has done with our ventilation work and capital project over the last three years. So we have ventilation systems in our school buildings that are of quality. We as a district said, I know what the State Ed is saying. We want to take that next step and have something additional. But there's nothing to say that we had to have that. But it was something we chose to do, and we're really on target for having it all done.

With that said, I also want to be sensitive to any family that made a decision on which model they selected, whether it was the in-person hybrid versus the remote, but specifically the in-person hybrid if they made that saying in their mind, OK, I know there are MERV 13 filters in all of the classrooms. So one of the pieces that, again, as we said, we just received the letter today. So I was with the admin team to just briefly-- to alert them to Paul's news. Noticing that we're calling it Paul's news now, but I'm teasing you, Paul.

But with that said, we gave some thought to maybe sending out a notice to the families that chose the hybrid in-person and letting them know this information. And if they wanted to change their thought, their decision, I should say, to the remote option. And again, preliminarily, just thinking it through, if any family made that decision based on the comfort level of the MERV 13 being in place, I think that's only fair and right to alert them and let them decide if that's still the model for them.

My concern with that is linking to something else that was actually what I was going to share tonight before learning about the MERV 13 filters. We're still awaiting some responses from families. We closed out on Friday, as the board might recall.

And what we have done is principals have reached out, either via phone call or email, directly to families to say, we haven't heard of your decision, to give them a little bit more of time. But we basically said, and if we don't hear from you by tomorrow, we're going to assume the in-person hybrid model. But the principals made those calls and emails outreach today.

Just to give you a sense for CET, which is the one that I'm most keeping an eye on because of some of the things we talked about the other day with the whole K-4 remote dynamic and sections and et cetera. We still await-- and again, these are approximate numbers-- to hear from 17 kindergarten

families, 8 first grade families, 9 second grade families, 6 third grade families, and 8 fourth grade families.

So that's down considerably from where we were on Friday-- at the-- actually, at Saturday morning. The principals gave me their numbers preliminarily on Saturday morning and then again on Sunday morning. They made these calls and outreach today.

And as I said, the numbers that I just read to you are where we are there. Where PVC and high school are concerned-- let me just look at this-- we are still waiting to hear about from, I should say, about 30 PVC families and about 17 or so high school families on their decisions.

So going back to the piece we were talking about, I would like to have the principals reach out again maybe to the hybrid in-person to ensure that they are aware that the MERV 13s aren't in place. We will replace them as they come in due to delivery and manufacturing issues, but just in case they wanted to change their mind. Again, thoughts from the board, anything based on what I shared here?

The one thing I would follow up with, though, is originally we were talking about that, well, hopefully we'll be getting them a couple weeks after school starts. I just don't think we should make any promise about them coming, because it just sounds like there's a big backlog, that we [INAUDIBLE]--

That's a good point, Andrea. Yeah. It's our hope, but should we-- type of thing.

And Dr. O'Connell, I think that's a good strategy. I think exactly what you said. It's only fair to let-- you have to open it up again. You have to give everybody a chance to re-decide.

And yeah. I think it's necessary because we don't know what decisions people used to make that determination. So I think that's excellent that you and your team are doing it, because I know it has an impact on planning.

Do you have any-- if my numbers are right, you said 48 families from CET. That's 9%, 10% of CET. That's a lot of-- that's a big percentage that hasn't responded.

Do you have any general sense about what that is? I'm a little alarmed about the kindergarten number. Is it just that information-- do you feel like people are just still processing or that they don't know, or the deadline, or does it--

That's a great question, Beth. I'm not certain being that I didn't have the conversations, and the principals didn't report what those conversations are like, if they're still in decision-making mode or if

they just-- it's summertime, and it's off the radar, not following emails or K-12s. That I can't answer because I haven't had a conversation with the principals about how those conversations are going. If it was just lack of understanding they needed to respond or if they were still grappling with some decision-making, I can't answer.

My only other concern would be that those numbers don't reflect people that don't either-- that are ELL learners, are children with IEPs, that there isn't a core constituent here that we're missing that somehow is saying, wait, this-- I'm not on board. So that we're-- there's not a mistake, but that somehow where outreach process isn't effectively reaching them at this time to help them make a decision. That's where I would want to make sure that we're covering all our bases with all of our families.

I think with the principals' outreach to families directly, which we had said we were going to do all along, should we have not heard from folks. But I cannot answer the actual specifics or if there's a general type, area that we feel we're not reaching. My concern is we're out pretty far now, and what-- by reaching out again, what kind of impact a delay would have in terms of the opening of school with the model that we talked about on Thursday. So that's my only concern with my thinking and of the team's thinking is we're reaching out now, we will, and look at what we have. We still have people that haven't responded.

Now we're going to repeat again. Again, this would be for the hybrid and in-person group because they were the ones that said they would come to school. No sense doing the remote piece unless somebody's picking up on something that we haven't discussed. But they've already decided not to be in the building. So we thought we would target the hybrid, in-person hybrid group for this outreach about the MERV 13 filters, again, in case they used this to make a decision, used the MERV 13 to make their decision to be in-person.

Well, I'm in agreement with the general approach you've described. And I know that while there are 40 or more individuals mentioned at CET, that could be children who have-- who are CET parents maybe of more than one child in PVC, or in CET, or in the other schools as well.

I guess the question would be a-- with regard to a deadline to get those responses, what is a deadline that you need in order to be able to figure out classes and sections, if you want to call it that, for your remotes and also for your-- the number of sections for each grade in CET in particular in a hybrid model? What's the deadline that you need?

Well, that's the age old question, right, Neal? We would-- yesterday. That's how intricate a process

placement is. It's not just let me take these-- this number of students and divide, divide, divide. It's really a full process of numerous attributes that a principal looks at in order to make placement.

So I'd have to say, Neal, I haven't again spoke to our team because this came late in the day. We would be looking at a very, very swift turnaround of a day to the folks. But again, I understand that might not be such a reality.

But it's always my hope that people have been tuning into our conversations along the way. And then if we send out a K12 Alert to or email directly to the hybrid families, that the families that chose the hybrid option, just to alert them, and that they should contact their principal via email immediately if they wanted to be considered for the remote plan.

Doctor O'Connell, generally speaking, I guess, have the responses as they've come in, have they aligned with the earlier survey in terms of the breakdowns?

Good question as well. So when I look at PVC and the high school-- John, maybe you can look at our survey data while I'm looking at this. If I look at-- I keep opening the wrong one. So I apologize. Hold one second.

OK. When I'm looking at the high school-- so John, if you could open up the survey data that's on the website-- we have 86.4%. Again, they're still missing 17 or so. 86.4% for the hybrid model and 13.6% for the remote. And that's the high school. And John, can you see what high school was?

At the point of the first survey that we sent out, it was 34% that were considering doing the remote option at the high school.

And now PVC, again keep in mind they still have about 30 families. So right now with their data, the hybrid model is at 81.4% and the remote 18.6%.

And in the original it was 60-40, 60% for hybrid and 40% for remote.

For PVC?

Yes.

OK. Now, I'm not sure this was updated yet because CET is still counting. So I could be wrong on this percent. So I don't know when this was updated.

Let me see. Let me check one more piece for CET. Yes. They have not updated their percentage from

the other day.

So let me just see. 17-- 57. Let me see. The other day, they were running 81%-- I'm sorry, I'm reading the wrong one-- 71% for hybrid and 27% for remote.

But I'm going to take and say that's very cautionary. I don't have a date on when that was calculated, and they updated their class by class today. They didn't update their big picture. So I think I should take that back and not answer for CET, because I don't want to-- I will give you the exact numbers of what we haven't heard from yet.

For kindergarten, we haven't heard from 17, as I said, grade 1 eight, 2 nine, 3 six, and 4 eight folks. The numbers if they're running high, we're looking at having two sections in the remote. But again, we're still not there-- move the cat here.

The cat really wanted to join the meeting.

Yeah. The cat wants to come to the Zoom meeting.

Dr. O'Connell--

[INAUDIBLE]

Oh.

Go ahead.

Thanks. Just a quick question, though.

And then--

Real quick, I just want to know, have we been hearing from any families who've said they're not coming back? Has that been clear? Because I've just anecdotally heard a couple of families here or there. Has that been counted again? Have those families being counted?

So we do have families for home schooling, if that's what you're referring to. Some families have opted for home schooling, and that number has increased. John, I know you received the number today. Is it 20 families districtwide? John, you're on mute. You're still on mute, John.

We're at 26 families right now--

26.

--requesting home schooling.

And Dr. O'Connell, I think you might have already heard this already, but I think the PVC and the Croton High School, the way that it's been explained to me is that the families, at least for PVC and the high school, the-- I think the reason the hybrid number is higher than when you were surveyed reflects the optionality of that program, because the principals there have indicated that if you need to, you can flex to remote. But at CET, the principals have indicated pretty clearly that you're choosing one model for the term.

And read from that what you want, but parents have literally directly told me, I am choosing hybrid because I have nothing to lose. If I get comfortable, I'll flip to remote. And I don't have to lock myself into a remote. So I don't know if that helps, but I think that might be a reason you're seeing such a different set of numbers coming out when it was first surveyed, because there wasn't that level of clarity when the survey went out that you could-- how the model would actually work.

Yeah. And that's the beauty part of taking a pulse check along the way. We took a pulse check early on even earlier than that last one. And we've done that throughout, I guess, even starting in June when we first started to survey, just to get a little pulse check on things here and there. And that's when you finally get to a point where you then say, OK, now we need a definitive answer.

But those pulse checks are really just to help inform your thinking along the way. And if you think about it also, along came with many community forums, many principals' coffees. So people could make more informed decisions.

Plus watching our infection rate, which is below 1%. I think the governor said it was 0.77% today or yesterday or-- and when we first started to survey people, early on in the earlier surveys, they'd be like, I don't even know what August is going to bring. So that has something at play.

The model is certainly different at CET. We thought it best to have a dedicated teacher or teachers to the remote piece because the hybrid piece of streaming in has a lot of independence associated with that. So that is why we went with two different models between elementary and middle, high. But the elementary one comes with its challenges.

And one of those challenges-- so let me just go back to-- and actually, this really brings me to the things I wanted to talk about tonight, not thinking we had the MERV 13 piece. But so I'm really getting into the conversation I wanted to have with the board and for the meeting tonight. So if you think

about-- I'm looking at one of our charts for CET.

So for example, if we're looking at a class that might have 33 students who are interested in the full remote program, so-- or 34 in another grade level, so that's a high number. So we would be thinking of then splitting that in two. So now you have a lower number. But then when you look at your students that are in the hybrid model, the in-person hybrid model, so now you have those numbers there.

Now you take the 33 or the 34 out of the whole number. Then if you have-- if you were six deep on a grade level, meaning six teachers, and you take then two out of that grade level to run the remote program, so now you have four teachers left. And then you take the number that is left from the total enrollment. And then you divide that among your four.

Now that makes perfect sense, and that sounds equal, et cetera. But now we have another complicating factor. So that's why all along, you always hear us say, we have to look at the big picture. We have to look at, it's not just one grade level. It's about staffing, and it's about here's the other piece. It's about space.

So when I say space, we then have to look at-- so now whatever-- those four sections that are left, and we divide the number. So let's say we divide the number. And let's give a beautiful number, like it was 20 per class, which it's not. But then we have classroom 1 and 2. So then we'd have 10 and 10.

But now drive that number higher to 22 or 24. Now you have maybe 12 and 12. If it's 26, you have 13 and 13.

So here's the piece. Based on our classroom designs with social distancing in mind, some of our classrooms are-- can accommodate between 10 and 13 given the social distancing paradigm. So that's why it's very complicated, is it isn't just saying, OK, now you have 10 and 10, or 12 and 12, or 13 and 13.

It has to be what-- also we have to align it with the space we have because our custodians-- we did a study on each of the classrooms. And Paul, I thank you for this. We worked with CAD and all this, a person that helped us look through given the dimensions of our classroom, how many-- and social distancing parameters, how many desks can we put in the room, et cetera?

And Paul worked with someone to actually give our custodians a design for each of the classrooms. So we know about the spacing of the desks, et cetera, and what they thought was maximum and optimal and all of that. So now we look at the numbers of the-- in the in-person. And then we have to

look at it in terms of the space we have, et cetera.

So it is complicated. It's convoluted, maybe is a better word. It's just that I think we mentioned in the-- I mentioned in the last meeting about when we have-- when we make one decision in this model, in this new world that we're in, it has numerous implications on something else whereas-- and I think I gave you an example. Whereas we used to think nothing about, let me take my class, we're going to go over here now and do whatever, because of our new world, any movement, any change seems to impact so many other things. Questions from the board on anything I've shared or--

Apologies, Dr. O'Connell. Are you-- so initially, I thought you might be saying you're recommending-- you're not recommending anything here? You're not saying you're going to try-- you're going to hit a certain threshold and maybe perhaps split a remote class into two.

We might be splitting a remote class, especially if we have numbers like 33. We would have to split. We would have to have two remote classes. We wouldn't run one remote class with 34 people in it.

OK. All right. So right now, it sounds like you're saying at least for two, but it doesn't reflect this new addition of having to survey people who said they were hybrid and perhaps might be pushing into the remote?

Right. And that the other piece-- so thank you for asking a clarifying question-- the other piece is from the families we haven't heard. So that's why I talk very loosely about, so if we have 34. I don't know. Maybe we'll have more, because we haven't heard from certain families.

And again, it's until we have all of the answers and the numbers. We can't move forward on the CET piece until that's in stone, if you will. And so one, hearing from the families we haven't heard from will change the numbers. And two, if we want to go back out and ask those families, given this new information, that it appears that our MERV filters-- to Andrea's point-- are certainly delayed, and we can't be certain when and if they will come in, does that change your decision and how you wanted your child placed?

And Dr. O'Connell, if-- so between the families who haven't answered and the-- and reaching back out-- and I do think it's a good idea. I think your suggestion of reaching back out to those hybrid families is a good one, because we don't know what they based their decision on. And we want people to feel comfortable.

Does that then-- from a practical perspective, I guess, does that change what our-- I know we've said

this through this whole process, that we need to be fluid, and we need to be-- changes for in hybrid or remote could be on a dime. Needing to-- the extra time to get those, does that change the-- change how we might want to move forward with our plans?

Well, thank you for posing that question, and I would like to have this as a board discussion. It very well could be changing that, where our plans called for starting K, 1, and 2 on September 8 in person and grades 3 through 12 remote. If I haven't set what our classrooms are in terms of placement-- I will tell you, driving home from the office, speaking with the CET administrative team, they were still busy at work working on class placement.

And so I phoned in to Kelly at the time and said to her, we'll-- this could impact timing. But they're still busy at work trying to do those placements. But I have to be-- always speak from a realistic point of view. It could very well impact our design to start as we wanted to start and may have to push to all remote K-12 for the first days of school if we're still sorting out proper class placement.

But I'm not there yet to say it, but-- and I'm glad you brought that up, that our key word has been to be able to pivot. And this would be one of the reasons why, if we couldn't secure what our class placements were. Our goal would be to communicate out tomorrow and stress that the information needs to be changed. If it needs to change, please to communicate with your building principal, and keep working on the class placement piece.

Dr. O'Connell, another issue-- and again, there's so many moving parts. I just really feel for everybody. We just read that letter from the Teachers Union at the last meeting. And they mentioned that MERV 13 filters as being something that they really felt was necessary. So I know you probably haven't had time to reach out to them, but I'd be interested to see if there's any feedback from them. It's just something that--

I know that I did ask John. While he was driving home from work, I was speaking with the elementary team. And I did ask him to reach out to the CTA president and to alert her. That's as far as that could go.

I will tell you, today we continued our meetings to follow up with questions that our staff had. It was a full staff Zoom meeting. I had held two of them the week before, I believe. I'm losing track of time. I think it was the week before.

And we couldn't get to all of their questions. So I said that we-- I would schedule another time and finish the questions. So we had just finished that. And it was, I guess, very soon after that that I'm

hearing about the MERV information.

So with that said, I don't have specific feedback. I know they had a lot of things in their letter. MERV 13 was one of them, but it's certainly a process.

Neal?

Yeah, one question. Talking about the parents who have not yet been reached, would it be-- for purposes of planning, would it be better and/or easier to say, those parents who are not reached, for them the default is going to be remote because-- or the default is basically going to be whatever we as a district feel is best to set the class rosters on?

Right.

Because we may have a situation where you've got 24 in a particular class that can be split 12 and 12. And if five people say, oh, I want hybrid, now we've got a problem. And we may want to say, in that situation, you're going to be remote.

That's what happens. Sort of like in college when you're late, you might not get the course you want. And we really can't help that as long as we have been fair and appropriate about the communications that we have provided to people.

Right. So those principals did reach out today. And they tell me, in their communication they did say to the people we haven't heard from that they would be-- and again, they have had some dialogue. And it's about them hearing tomorrow.

They did give them till tomorrow. And if they-- we didn't hear from them, they would be scheduled for the in-person hybrid, so that if we don't hear from them tomorrow, again, because there was outreach today, we will schedule those students for the in-person hybrid.

OK. So that's what we're doing now.

So there was a default built in there. We initially thought about putting a default in. Here's where-- the good thinking of the group. And then we said, you know what, if a parent doesn't respond, there might be-- it might be because they're grappling with something. So we didn't want to put the default in so that there would be yet another opportunity for conversation.

It just makes it challenging when you're trying to pull the specifics together. So our intentions were to give families, if they were struggling with something, yet another-- perhaps a personal outreach

between the principal and the family to make a decision that's so important.

[INAUDIBLE]

But now are we going to have to-- we're going to have to re-outreach to those families? I hate to say this. We're probably going to have to-- because you had the conversations today without them having the information about the MERV 13 filters, right?

Right. So if we don't hear from them, Beth, and they were put in the in-person hybrid, yeah, there would be an outreach to anybody in the in-person hybrid.

OK, thank you.

Just in case families haven't heard from us enough, we'll give them yet another call or email.

Andrea?

I just want to say that I think that's a really great part of our district, that we do have this personal outreach. And I admire our school principals and assistant principals for how much they bring to their job, because they really do reach out. And they really do know their families.

Well, thank you, Andrea. Yeah, they're working very hard. And today was Dr. Mojica's official first day in Croton-Harmon Schools, although he's been at so many of our meetings and things throughout the time. So anything else relative to this?

Again, I had wanted to just talk about school in general and opening of school, et cetera. Again, the MERV 13 was something that came late today. But I just want to reiterate-- and I think, Sarah, you've mentioned it, and we've kind of looped around several times about this very issue and the key word of "pivot."

And Beth, I go back to something I think you said early on. I don't know how you worded it, but like, what's the critical number of how it'll all work and et cetera? So we talk about things like that as an administrative team often, probably daily, and because this is a very, very intricate plan.

Somebody said to me, wow, that's a really complicated plan. And yes, it is. And this is a complicated issue and a complicated time.

And so we not only talk about how we need to be fluid and be able to pivot from the in-person hybrid to the remote or vice versa, but we also have to always consider, what are some of those factors?

And I think we got to some of them over time, but I thought I'd use tonight to just again pull it all in and together so that my messaging stays consistent.

And I often get the question of, Dr. O'Connell, when would you close schools, and what would that scenario be? And I get the question often because it's on everyone's mind. You can't seem to move from point A to point B without there being a COVID-related conversation, which then brings us back into these really, really important conversations.

So please don't think just every time I bring it up that by any way, shape, or form, I don't think it's an important question, because it's on everybody's mind. So why don't I use it as an opportunity to once again say, what are some of the things that would cause that pivot from the in-person to remote?

So one, of course, is what we talked about last week. We spent a little bit more time last week talking about-- excuse me-- the-- if we have a COVID positive. And we took the time to look at the [INAUDIBLE] chart on the decision tree. That is something that would close schools.

That would be something that I'd be speaking with, of course, as I mentioned, Dr. Mier and consultation with the Department of Health. But that would be a reason to, at least between perhaps 24 and 72 hours, the need to close school. Why? Because the contact tracing process begins when we have a positive case.

And we want to make sure the Department of Health has time to do their good work where we're figuring out who might have been impacted or come in contact and all of the things they do. And we would work in collaboration with them. So that could-- that would be a reason why a school would close.

Now, a question I get is, would multiple schools close because of that? So we're a small community. So would you, Dr. O'Connell, then be closing-- if this were something at the high school, would you be closing PVC and CET?

So the answer would be that would depend on the contact tracing piece and how far-reaching something was, if there was a need and we felt there was a need that because of busing or because of the people that were impacted. Were there linkages to the other schools? That's all part of the contact tracing process. So that would be determined on how far-reaching a positive was through that process.

Another reason why we might have to close a school is, of course, if we had insufficient staffing. Part of the guidance speaks about having sufficient staff to safely open your building. I think that's almost

the exact verbiage that's in the guidance documents.

So another thing-- again, we talked about it last week, but I thought I'd use today to bring those points together-- is staffing. So John, I know that you've spent a lot of time explaining to various folks, our staff. I know there's been a lot of conversation about the different leaves. And if you would just quickly share the two leaves that are COVID-related that could impact staffing numbers, et cetera.

Sure, I would love to. Yes. So the side of my desk that tends to the personnel and human resources side is a bit busy really trying to do our best to meet the needs of our staff members in two different areas.

Both of them are in response to federal legislation, the first one being the ADA, the American Disabilities Act, which really calls upon us to offer workplace accommodations when there is an expressed and substantiated medical need. So especially with the nature of the school reopening in light of COVID-19, it does present a compelling need to address workplace accommodations.

So we have been sending out a form that staff members could fill in and return requesting an accommodation. Those accommodations could be-- really, they really exist on a continuum where they could be anything from requiring extra PPE to potentially a different location within the school or perhaps a request to work remotely. With all of these, we've obviously been going through the lens of our medical director, Dr. Mier, our good counsel, to really help us to work with the staff person to make the most reasonable accommodation to meet their needs.

The other federal legislation that we have been working with in conjunction with the EDA is the FFCRA, the Families First Coronavirus Release-- Relief Act. The one that's really been the most pertinent-- the aspect of that legislation that's been most pertinent now is that aspect that requires us to provide leave for anybody who has to attend to a child care need if there is a need for child care based upon a COVID-19 response.

So in other words, if a child care facility closes, if a school has an alternate schedule, and it requires because of COVID-19 child care, there is the ability for a-- one of our staff people to take an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave. That's done at two thirds of the employee's regular rate of pay. So that is something that obviously, now that school schedules around our region have been published, it is now the time that staff members will be looking at their child care needs in comparison to their workplace schedule here in Croton-Harmon and to make the requests as needed.

The other part of the FFCRA, which we hope we won't have to deal with, but it is really the expanded medical leave. Once there are-- if and when there are-- is the need to have any kind of quarantining or isolation, there is then the request based upon substantiation of that need to then provide leave of up to two weeks, 80 hours at a full rate of pay for any worker who is on leave because of their own personal needs.

And if it is due to the needs of any family members, it is still at that same two weeks, 80 hours at 2/3 of the rate of pay. So that is something we're obviously not dealing with at the moment, but there is a potential of us then having to deal with that part of the FFCRA once we get into the school year if the numbers do rise here in our region.

John, can you just clarify? So the last one, so you're saying that if and when we all need to quarantine, that part of the Act, there's a leave eligibility for our staff to be able to take care of their family members at a full rate of pay and--

So if they're on a leave because of their own personal health needs or their own requirement to quarantine, that becomes the leave at their full-rate of pay. If it is to attend to the needs of a family member while they're quarantining, that's when it's at the 2/3 rate of pay.

Just to clarify-- now I'm a little confused-- if we say we have to switch to the remote model because we have positive, and therefore we're quarantined, this kicks in?

No.

Oh, OK. I didn't think so, but I just wanted to make sure I understood.

That would be if you have a situation where an individual staff member must quarantine because that staff member had contact with someone who tested positive, or their child had contact or spouse had contact with someone who tested positive, and they had just had to stay home. Or the 10 weeks being their school closed, or their child's school is closed, and then there was no alternate place for the child to be. So those are all federal leaves above and beyond any sick leave they may have or whatever other benefits they have under our contracts and policy.

And one of the qualifying reasons for leave would be that they're unable to work, whether in the workplace or through telework. So if they are able to work remotely, that would then say that would then not qualify them for the leave.

So the reason I asked John to just share that is just to, one, just show the complexity of it. John will

manage all of that. And now that certain school schedules have come out, it's clear to some families what their needs will be. So for the board and the public to know that we are working on our request for ADA accommodations as well as sorting through the needs we're going to have with any leaves.

My purpose for sharing that is to share the complexity of it and, again, go back to the question that I receive, what are some of the reasons to close schools? So one would be, again, with a COVID-positive case. Number two, insufficient staffing due to quarantines that might come, leaves that might come, et cetera. But we'll continue to work with our staff there.

And then the third would be what the governor has said early on, that he would be watching the infection rates in the area. And there would be a time, I guess, if it got to a certain point, that perhaps there would be the closing of schools. But just to give people a little flavor, again, because I get the question often on some of those things, when we talk about how complicated a system is on bringing children back to school following all of the social distancing, et cetera, and what that means and looks like in each and every district and in ours in particular since that's where-- what we're talking about.

It is complicated. And going back to the one statement I made how one piece impacts the other, and another, and another, et cetera. So before I move off of that, I just wanted to use a moment to summarize. I just had a few other points I wanted to share with the board, but I don't want to rush through if you had any more clarifying questions on anything I've shared.

Dr. O'Connell, just one thing. I was going to say, it gets a little confusing when you talk about closing schools, because I think maybe if you could use the terminology "closing buildings," because school often will be continuing during that time. It'll just be remote.

Thank you. That's a very good point. We often talk about that very piece internally, but you're right. That might have a very different piece to the public. So thank you.

And as I think through that, to your very point, I talk about going from the yellow light to the red light or the in-person hybrid to the remote. And that is exactly what I'm talking about. It would be the shift from that where the building, physical building may be closed, maybe not, but where we would be into the remote. So thank you, Andrea.

Any other questions before I move on? I don't want to rush anyone in your thinking. That's called wait time in the classroom. So you hope that you're able to give people enough time to process. And it is a lot to process.

I'd like to share a reminder of a few things. After our last meeting, we did-- we have our updated plan. Our School Reentry Plan is on the website. We did include the Putnam Northern Westchester piece. So that's there.

And the other piece I wanted to share is, again, I find the Department of Health FAQ, Frequently Asked Questions, that we have in our document-- right at the top we've included it-- I find it to be very helpful, which it goes through some scenarios. Sometimes I do get questions about, what's the difference between isolation and quarantine, and how do you know when to count? What's the contact tracing piece? So there's really good information from the Department of Health. I just want to remind the public, remind the board that is there.

We talked about the screening process and how there are questions that students and staff and temperature taking and all of that. One piece that the administrative team is-- has been talking about where students are concerned is child gets up, parent takes the temperature, parent looks at the screening questions, et cetera. The way in which the app is set up is we as a school district then get the information on who, let's say, didn't complete the screener.

Now think of that. Superimpose a list, a spreadsheet on the arrival process at school. So we have children coming in. Yes, they're socially distanced as they're coming in.

And now you have somebody that's just learning who the people are, who the children are perhaps and trying to cross reference it with the-- here I check, check, check. That could cause a bottleneck. So what the administrative team has been thinking about is perhaps-- and I just wanted, while I had some air time with the board and the public-- is fleshing that out a little bit more. Yes, parent would do the temperature check and the screening, et cetera.

And let's say all is good to go. There were no yeses to the questions, no temperature. So now the child is ready to come to school. We're giving some thought to actually having like a clearance card or something, just so the child can show the bus driver as they're entering. No information on it besides maybe a parent's signature saying, yes, completed the screening, or anything.

So I just wanted to alert the board and the public that we're still thinking that through on what would allow for a more swift arrival process, not bottle necking outside as we're checking things off. It might be a great way to alert the bus driver that there's clearance, but there might be a paper portion.

And that's the only piece I wanted to share at this point, that the administrative team-- I met with the nurses today on the nursing team. And we were giving that some more thought. Maybe in the first

weeks of school, maybe first two months of school thinking about, how do we move kids in their arrival process knowing that they've done the screening and all was fine, and not worry about somebody getting into the building that perhaps wasn't fully screened, et cetera? So we're just giving that a little bit more thought.

Nurses had some good ideas. We'll be sharing it with the administrative team. And, of course, wherever we land, the principals will be sharing that with the public. So that's just a little nuance that we're still working on the operational-- how we operationalize that. So any questions before I move off of that?

Yeah. On that, question I have comes from the other end, which is if the child does not have that paper because the parent has not filled it out, or the parent even has not done the screening, then don't you have an issue on the other end?

The child comes to the bus stop. Nobody is there. The parent is not there, although we want the parent to be there. And as the bus driver is probably going to say, without your paper, I can't let you on the bus.

Well, the bus driver wouldn't be saying that because we would never leave a child there. And that's why we always said we weren't going to be taking-- at one point, somebody said, could we take a temperature? Can we take temperatures before a child gets on the bus? There could be a million things. The child lost the paper, et cetera.

What would happen when they got to the school building? If they did not have the paper, they would be then screened. We would actually do the screening, call the parent to do the screening on the-- with the questions and then do a temperature check there. So that was the preliminary thinking.

And but that would mean that when the children get to the building, as happens in my office building, or we do that at the front desk, you'd have to hand in those papers, or my wife does. You have to hand in those papers.

Right.

And if a child does not have the paper, they're going to be pulled off to the side. And then you're going to go through that screening process.

You go through the screening right there.

OK, which--

Not right there. Not [INAUDIBLE].

Right, but that creates or potentially creates a-- more of a bottleneck in the process of entering the building. Maybe, maybe not. I'm just thinking about 200 kids entering CET within a 10-minute period. Instead of just walking in, they're going to be walking in and having to hand these and obviously also check on it. Somebody's going to have to look at them and make sure that they all say no, no, no.

No, the questions are not going to be on there, Neal, because they-- it would just be some sort of attestation that I did the screening, and that was it. The question [INAUDIBLE]

So I did the screening, signed parent?

Mm-hmm. Yeah. We wouldn't want that information to be on anything that was-- yeah . And again, it's really just to move the children, the students in. And then if somebody didn't have it, which there could be-- I lost my shoe one day on the way to school. So I guess I could lose a piece of paper, right?

And it would just be a person-- a child would then go and just be screened prior to entry into the main part of the building. That would be privately done, but et cetera. Again, it's something just to share that we're fleshing out so that as we get to know the children, maybe the looking at the spreadsheet would be a lot easier. But in the beginning, we were thinking about, how do we ensure that everybody who is entering the building has gone through a screening process, et cetera?

And Debbie, would that be-- I guess would it then be like something that would have to be dated for each time the child enters versus then-- versus stating like a standard card, which--

Right. It wouldn't be-- it would be-- the principals were thinking about when they send their welcome packets to have several of the papers in there. And it would be dated and submitted and not handed back to the child. So they would have a [INAUDIBLE]

That was mine. That was basically what I was thinking. So they couldn't have one to just reuse every day.

No. And with that, if you think about it, for students in the hybrid, it really wouldn't be that many because they're coming in two days a week. So it's not like we'd have to send reams of paper home with the students. More so for the K, 1, and 2, our little ones. But anyway, that's just-- again, not to get into the weeds here, but I just wanted the board to know we are thinking about one other piece until

we get real fluid with the arrival processes that we might have to put in place to assure that we're capturing that everyone has been screened, gone through the temperature piece, et cetera, before entering the building.

So I have a couple points and a question. Point number one is really, we really are here relying on-- it's almost an honor system. We are trusting that the parents will do these checks and will sign and will give the card to the child to take to the bus stop if the child is actually not showing symptoms, and that we are trusting that the parents will in fact complete the screener accurately and correctly. And there's not much we can do about that, right?

And we're sort of at-risk to a certain degree on the bus because we can't do temperature checks before kids get on the bus. We can't just leave them sitting there by the side of the road, obviously, which means that on the bus, there is that potential. And we really are counting on our community to be on top of it with this.

One question I had about the arrival process, right now we narrowed-- for security reasons, we narrowed down entrance into the building to single doorways. I wonder whether in order to speed up the building entry process, it might make sense to split things up so that some of the kids are getting off of the bus and into one door, and others kids are getting off of the bus and into a different door of the building. I wonder whether that might be worth looking into.

We have already looked into that, Josh. For arrival purposes, we are opening up two doors. And they will be-- they will have staff at two doors because, like you know, we've always said single point of entry for security purposes. But for this time period, we are opening up two doors at arrivals.

Principals are working on their arrival processes. And just for that time, two doors will be open. And once we're in school, then we'll go back to the single point of entry, just to your very point of having more come in.

Although I have to say, at CET as well as the high school, we've been manning two doors for the arrival process for quite some time because we have the cars in one area at the high school and the buses in another area. And CET, same thing. Cars in one area, buses in the other. So we have been for some time at that process as a process to have the two doors open.

PVC has been the one door. Michael and Lauren are talking about a second door there. And they're working that out just to-- pardon me-- move students in more swiftly and--

And Dr. O'Connell--

--go right to their class then.

And I'm sorry to interrupt. So towards Josh's point, though, which I think is an important point, and I just wanted to clarify. We had talked, I guess, at a couple of board meetings ago that the screener wasn't just going to be for children, right? It was going to be for adults, anybody.

Correct.

So I think to just emphasize this even more clearly, you're going to be filling out-- for parents, you're going to be filling out-- we are going to be filling out this screener. And it's going to be-- it's going to apply to any member of your family. So if you have one child that has any of those symptoms, none of your children are going to school. If you have any of those symptoms, your children aren't going to go to school. If you have a toddler that has those symptoms, who isn't in the school system but nonetheless has the symptoms, your children aren't going to go to school.

So I think it's a hard message to hear because I-- but I think it's really important for everybody to understand, for the-- for staff, for our students, and our educators, and our other families that we've all done it when we've had that terrible day. We're like, they just-- they have to go to school, but it can't-- we can't do that. It can't be a day like where it's, like I just need this day. She just has a little cold, or I have a little cold.

I know it's a cold. I know it's allergies. So I'm sending them. It's no. So if you could just reiterate that, it's like any member of your family has these symptoms, your children don't go to school.

Right. And to your point also, both Josh and Beth, first of all, glad you clarified. The screener is for everyone, our staff and our students-- I just want to talk about in school now-- are completing the screener and which requires a temperature check. The guidance document is clear that the recommendation is that occurs at home prior to coming to school.

So I get the question at times, why aren't we checking temperatures of everyone that is entering the building? Because the guidance document has said-- not to say we couldn't, and I'll talk about that in a minute. But the guidance document has said that it is ideally to be done at home, prior to coming to school.

With that said, Josh, you bring up-- we are relying on everyone. And interestingly enough, I don't know if you saw the paper today about pledges and schools and learning communities taking a pledge. This is a community issue, and we all have to protect our community, and we all have a role in that.

We do have in our guidance plan, in our Reentry Plan, I should say, an actual piece to that very thing. And I hold it near and dear. I think it's-- when you look at our reopening plan, there is on page-- I'm just looking at it now-- on page 4, which is the Croton-Harmon COVID-19 Code for Students and Staff, "We will follow our safety-- all safety protocols."

And I'm going to jump down to the one that is pertinent to this. "We will review our health every day before school or work, which includes monitoring our temperature and being aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. We will stay home from school or work if we are sick."

And that's really an important piece. And again, I think the article talked about, will pledges work, or will pledges-- I think that was the slant of what I had read from it. But again, it's an important community piece.

I just want to clarify and make sure I understood this entirely correctly. The screener that we're running, does it specifically instruct that all of the members of the household are to be screened?

Well, it says this, Josh. The last question that's on there-- and that came from our discussion with the board, I believe, one of our meetings-- "Would anyone in your household have answered yes to any of the above questions?"

So the above questions were again, "In the past 14 days have you had contact with anyone with COVID-19? In the past four days, have you traveled to a COVID-19 hot spot? In the past 24 hours, have you experienced any of the COVID-related symptoms below? And do you have a temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater? Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the past?"

And that'll give you an idea of the questions. But that last question actually came from one of our meetings. "Would anyone in your household have answered yes to the above question?"

Thank you.

I have a question, a logic question, I suppose, or "if then, else." So we are saying that if someone in my household has 101 today that nobody should go to school. And do we know for how long?

No.

Is that--

Now, so it will give you the message. It'll send a message to the family to not come but to speak with

the Health Office. So for example, Brian, the Health Office, the Nurse's Office, you might have one of those symptoms to say, I have a headache or a sore throat, or I am congested, et cetera, whatever it is. And if it's related to something that is a known concern, so the nurse knows that you have seasonal allergies, et cetera, and your health care provider can say, this is due to a non-COVID-related matter, then there's no issue.

There's absolutely no issue. The child will return to school, et cetera. It's just to give a little pause until we can make sure this is not COVID-related. And that would be between conversations with the health care provider and the nurse. If anybody answers yes to those questions and, for example, I have been in contact with somebody that is COVID-related or any of those issues, we would just want to have conversation with the-- between the nurse, and the family, and the-- or the health care provider weighing in just to make sure.

OK. So to follow up, I guess, further, if there's nothing to rule out necessarily, a COVID-related symptom-- I don't have allergies, we haven't gone to Texas or Florida recently, and we haven't been exposed to anybody with known COVID-- I guess what is-- normally if you have a fever it's 24 hours, right? Is that the same, or is it extended? If I can't say, no way, I definitely don't have COVID, and my doc-- so I guess--

So in the guidance document, I think it does say if you're fever-free for-- I don't want to cite something now, not looking at the document-- without the use of any medication to reduce fever that you would be clear to come back to school. But it's within our-- I'm not citing it right off the top of my head. And I would be-- certainly, the family should be having a conversation with the nurse as well as their health care provider if that's necessary.

OK. So then, what happens-- there's a bunch of-- how many hundreds of students come in every day. Several go home with a fever. They were fine in the morning. Now they all went up to 102 at lunchtime.

Conceivably, that's the same as somebody in my household having a fever like that. So then what happens? Do we have any idea? What happens to--

I'm not sure of your question.

--the whole entire class of-- what happens to the classes that those children were in? Because now, it's a similar situation where I've now been in the room with those people for a period of time in the classroom, so not only the students but everybody else who they were exposed to. So is there

guidance on that?

So the guidance would be clear on my end, would be that would be a discussion with Dr. Mier and the Department of Health, if I need it. What was the origin, or do they know what the origin of the fever was? I'm hearing-- starting to hear a lot of different scenarios of people and their health conditions sharing different scenarios with me.

So I guess I would just ask Dr. Mier and our nurses what the next step would be, if that were the case, if a child was sent home with a fever. And do we know known origin? Do we have any concerns? If we would follow our procedures on cleaning and disinfecting, et cetera. But if we sent anybody home with any of the symptoms that we were feeling were aligned with COVID, we would follow that protocol, which would definitely be involved with speaking with the nurse as well as the-- Dr. Mier.

And again, if we go back to the website, we actually put the Putnam Northern Westchester COVID safety protocols. So if you look down to the bottom there when you have a chance, it says, students or staff present with COVID symptoms on campus. We would be contacting the nurse. We would then isolate the child. We would have the child then picked up.

We would be contacting Dr. Mier. We would be sealing the room up and cleaning if that's where the child was in with a bunch of students, or staff member. I shouldn't just say child. But in terms of school, in terms of action items, no action is necessarily required at that time in terms of moving to a remote closure, et cetera.

Right, because considering that nobody can get a COVID test anytime all that rapidly. I don't know what the number is now, but it might be 10 days or something like that. So nobody can really say with even a tiny bit of certainty what it is that they may have been exposed to. So it's just sort of--

Well, I would presume that the way that will work is, in consultation with Dr. Mier and the Department of Health and the health care providers of these students or staff, they will also be going to find out, is it roseola? Is it mumps? Is it something else that would rule out COVID even if there was some transmission within a class? But it's all very fluid.

And the answer of-- and it sounds to me from what I see from that decision tree and what I hear is it's every situation has got to be on a case by case basis. But there are certain things on the decision tree of a process that the administration, in consultation with those other sources will go through, and erring on the side of not putting people in risk if we believe there's a risk there.

Right.

And so--

Thank you for bringing that up because every situation is different. So let's just set the fever aside for a minute. But if a child or staff member presents with something, and the nurse is very well aware of the medical history of what's documented, that might clear up the answer right then and there because the nurse is aware of information or has spoken with the parent or the health care provider or whatever.

So there might be specific information that our nurse has about a particular student that might be presenting with something, but we know it to be related to a medical condition that is non-COVID related. And that's why the nurse is a key person. Our nursing team is a key team as well as you know Dr. Mier. Maybe not all things would require a consultation with Department of Health, and maybe some would.

And I just want to let you know, Brian, in case-- I'm not sure because I've had to experience this recently. My understanding from COVID tests, when there's a suspicion of a possible COVID test, the actual turnaround is much quicker than-- like it's within two days or so. And I know someone who--

My mother-in-law-- I'm sorry, Iris. My mother-in-law was just quoted 10 days, and she was just tested yesterday.

Yeah. Well, I know someone that was just tested yesterday, and she was not a high suspicion. And she got her results. They told us she'll have them tomorrow. So I really think it-- I don't want to put out there that it's going to be 10 days or 15 days.

I think it really will be a case by case basis. And I don't want to scare people into thinking, oh my god, oh my god, it's going to be two years before we get answers. I think we'll have to wait and see. Hopefully, we won't have to wait and see, but I did have that anecdotal information.

Yeah. And I'm--

And I know my results are coming--

--not interested--

--back in three days. So I think it depends on your lab.

Yeah. And I'm not trying to necessarily spook anyone, but I also worry very strongly about the happy

path, the, oh, there's an explanation for all these things. And the test will be back in two days. And so, and then when then none of that happens, then we're like, why didn't we plan for this? So that's what I'm mostly concerned about.

I'm not trying to actually say that everybody is going to get sick, and we're all going to be out of school for the rest of the next two years. But the happy path sort of thinking, it prevents us from properly planning for a really bad situation that isn't entirely inconceivable. So that's where I was headed with all this.

Well, I haven't felt like we've been on a happy path, but we are on a path moving forward to trying to troubleshoot and get ourselves ready for opening schools. And as we said, it's extremely complicated. And these conversations push our thinking, which is great. And we continue to troubleshoot to see how best to operationalize things moving forward. So the last thing, unless there's another question--

Just one quick question. I'm just wondering, hearing about what a key role our nurses are going to play and just thinking about how they have a pretty full schedule normally, do you feel that they have enough support? Or do we have any-- again, just looking down the road, I'm just wondering-- you talked about the team. Are they going to need some additional team members? Just something for the board to have an eye on.

OK. So thank you for asking that. We have a nurse aide, a teacher aide working with the nurse. We've had that at CET as well as PVC. We've never had one, I don't-- I shouldn't say never, but in my time here, I don't recall ever having a nurse aide on the high school level.

So to that very point, we felt that it was necessary that the high school get some additional support. So we do have that in place. I'm told that the person is in place now so that all three nurses office-- because we did see that as needing more at the high school level. So we did do-- had an increase there.

Thank you so much.

OK. I'm going to move on to what I believe to be my last piece, which was a follow up from the last meeting that once we're opening of school, we'll open up the fields for outdoor use only. So if any organization wanted to go through our building use process, and they're following all COVID-related pieces, which I'll make sure that Mr. Gulino is reviewing, but there will be no use of any internal. So if they needed to use our fields, but they wanted to use the locker rooms or the bathrooms or that,

there'd be none of that. It would just be for fields.

And I haven't had a chance to review it. I am hearing that there might be some sports opening for the fall, the September 21 date. I am slated to speak with Mr. Gulino tomorrow. But there was something that's starting to come out about maybe not all sports but some. And I await to receive a briefing on that tomorrow.

The reason I'm bringing it up now-- again, it's a little premature since I don't know all of the specifics of it. But the reason I bring it up now in relation to the use of fields, if sports are running, we would have some use of fields. And again, I say some sports. I'm not sure football, or there was another one.

The news reports say that those sports that the governor has-- now would be permitted are soccer, swimming, field hockey, cross-country, golf, tennis.

So not football and--

Not football.

--volleyball?

The only other fall sport would be football, but not football.

Right, not football. So more to come on that. Mr. Gulino will be sending out a K-12 Alert when we're ready for that. I will tell you, that adds a huge complexity to an already complex model. But so the governor did make that statement today, and we'll sort through that tomorrow anyway. OK, that was it for me.

I just have two questions, Debbie.

Yes. One is I know we learned about the filters today. And I remember Denise, when she was talking at one point, saying that she had other things that were on order that we would be needing for the upcoming school year relative to our need to have a safer opening. Do we have enough, or where are we on-- do we have the knowledge as to where we are with PPEs and other items that are being ordered specifically to enhance our cleaning supplies, whatever, to make sure we don't hit a supply chain issue on that point?

And then the second is with transportation. It was mentioned earlier, I think by Josh, but my understanding is on the bus, even if someone hasn't been-- filled out their screening, there will be social distancing on the bus, to the extent kids aren't going to be six in a row or three in a row.

Rochelle has mapped out the seats?

So I'll start--

[INAUDIBLE]

--with the transportation piece, and then to give Paul a second to get ready for the PPE, and the cleaning supplies, and all of that. But yes, Rochelle has mapped out the seats, et cetera. Remember this-- even prior to us even thinking about having a paper, we were letting children on the bus, and they would be socially distanced as she has set it up. And they are wearing masks while they are on the bus.

So Paul, the PPE question, I know we have our PPE in. And if you want to just expand on that.

We'll be providing three cloth masks to all staff members and students. I have those in my office actually. So I know they're there. And we'll be distribute-- transportation is going to be helping us to distribute them out to the buildings probably tomorrow or Wednesday.

We have face shields for situations where that's needed. We have gloves for situations where they're needed, for both in the building use as well as custodial. We have N95 masks for the custodians and the nurses.

The nurses were just fitted recently with that. They went to White Plains. The Custodians were fitted a while back.

We have disinfectant. We have sprayers to apply it. We have hand sanitizer. We have signage which was ordered with the help of-- some administrators helped put the signage package together. That's received.

There's someone that's in the school now. They started today putting markings on floors and whatnot. And they're going to work with the administrators in their buildings to do that, distancing markers and whatnot. So I think I got most of it.

And Paul, your-- in terms of your cleaning supplies and all of that, et cetera?

Yeah. We have disinfectant and materials we need.

And will we also-- now that we have all this good stuff in, it gets used up. So I know you and Denise have also talked about reordering in a timely manner so that we don't run out.

Correct. It's going to be a challenge, I'm sure. Yep.

Right, but in the queue for the reordering as well. Did that answer your question, Iris?

Yes. Thank you.

OK. Anything else for the board?

I was just going to ask quickly, I've seen online that-- did the Croton Mask Makers donate masks to the school?

They did. I have a lot of them in my office. And that's going to be divvied up by some-- the transportation help. They're going to deliver them to the schools. Yeah.

[INAUDIBLE]

They look great. Yeah. We have that. Also have a Croton Strong mask was manufactured. And then we just have a third backup mask, which is just a white mask that we're going to give everybody as well.

Wow. Well, thanks to our community.

Yeah, a lot of work.

Anything else for myself, Paul, or John?

Yeah. So I think that there's some additional reassurance, I think, needed by more than a few members of the community that when-- and I say when because I just don't believe it's if-- when a child or many children are home for more than a couple of days, that their education, their learning is going to be robust. And the reason I ask that is because I have heard from actually quite a few people that observed the spring as being a weekly email with links to print and worksheets to do.

And I know that we have a much better plan than that, but I think that there-- that people are looking for reassurance and some specifics about that because I think very few people believe that there will be no breaks in the in-person option, even the hybrid people that will go two days a week. But I think most people believe that there will be a fair amount of time that, based on family or other factors, that the child will be home.

So I'll certainly make sure that we continue to keep that as our communication points with our

principals as they are talking about their plans in effect so that it becomes a continual piece that we use in our messaging and what it looks like and what the expectations are, et cetera. I know John has been doing a lot of work with our teachers over the summer, working with our administrative team also on the instructional program. So John is hearing this, and we'll make sure that we continue to keep it as part of our messaging.

Yeah. And I think that's the key is that people just want to hear it. And they want to get a real sense of what it's going to be.

It's not that nobody believes it can be done or will be done. It's actually more of, OK, I don't know exactly what's going to happen in that sense. Of course, nobody knows what's going to happen with how many days you're going to have out of school. But when I am out of school, what is going to happen?

OK. Thank you.

Anyone else have any other thoughts, comments, questions?

This is a novice board member question, but is this the last reentry board conversation we're going to have prior to us starting school on the 8th? Do we need another meeting, Dr. O'Connell, for any things that come up or--

You didn't know?

I think our next-- what? Well, yeah.

You didn't know that when you got on the board we'd be joined at the hip?

Yeah. No. I'm looking, and our next one isn't--

Until the-- what is it, the 10th?

September 10.

Yeah, the 10th.

So we put one in each week early on. We did this way back when we were saying that we wanted to continue the dialogue. And if you would have asked me last Thursday, I'd say, see you on September 10. When you get one call from someone, and it's like, now what?

So I was going to speak with the board officers about maybe thinking from twofold, that if we still had some staff-- we've been hiring substitutes as board knows and positions. So would there be a need for something, and is there a need for an update? I can't answer that right this minute, if I'm going to need an update, a chance to be again with the board and community, but it was something I was going to speak with the board officers about that. It's a long time until the 10th.

Right. That's what I was going to say.

So everyone look at your calendars just in case Brian and I are coming back to you. So have your calendars worked out.

Talk to you tomorrow.

Yeah, right? And again, Beth, for your being new, sometimes right even before the start of school, the board convenes some fast meeting just to appoint people on lists and things like that. So yeah. I'll be speaking with the board officers about what we might want to do there.

And our whole purpose-- and it goes back to what Brian was alluding to before a little bit on a different thing-- is the whole purpose of this was to just keep the community dialogue going or, I should say, information to the community going and dialogue with the board because we feel that it's that important just to not keep people in the dark and just keep seeing us process all of this important stuff.

Yeah. I agree. And I might even suggest-- but this is a conversation for you and the officers around, once we've started assessing on-- in real time and so that we make room the week of the 10th or the week after to really-- to have this dialogue real time around, how are things going?

And that's one of the reasons on the other end-- I know you're referring to community piece, but on the other end was the reasons we put in the half days was, OK, we're trying this out. And how did it go? How are the protocols? What do we need to shore up, et cetera?

Then the next week when we start to introduce more students, and the remote's going again, and where are we running into issues? How's it going? So those conversations from the one end.

But you bring up a very valid point about, are we going to hit bumps in the road? Yeah. It's just the nature of starting a school year under very different circumstances. But again, feedback, I think, is very important, and we'll be sure to include that in our processes.

And just in terms of follow up, there were a lot of issues that were raised tonight in terms of numbers of students and hearing from students. I'd appreciate hearing as a board member what you find out this week, even if we have it in our weekly-- just, I just think there's a lot of loose ends after tonight, as there are going to be constant loose ends. Yeah. But just we don't need to wait til our next meeting. So if you wouldn't mind letting us know maybe.

I will find you.

Right. Thank you. Thank you. You always do.

The one thing-- the only other thing I would add to that is that when we do get the-- any more final numbers about remote versus hybrid counts that they be shared with us, as they were-- as what we had before was, as we got the summary numbers before.

Right. What I would assume in that regard, if you could, is when things are more or less set, we would be advised we have these classes, not necessarily by teacher, in CET, how many students there are in the Harmon cohort, in the Croton cohort, in the remote cohort for that grade and the same kind of information as appropriate in PVC and in the high school, just so we really understand how the numbers ended up playing out.

Yeah. Together with the class sizes for each because that's really the question that a lot--

I agree.

Which we'll know--

Class sizes.

--in the cohort.

--of our public is asking about. Yeah. One of the most common questions that I've been seeing is like, well, how many kids are going to be in each remote section? That sort of--

Yes, exactly. I was going to say the same. I think it's very important to know that number.

Right. That's what I meant by cohort, cohort by section, if there's more than one section in a grade.

Dr. O'Connell-- and I'm sorry to ask this at the end-- if something could just flow into plan-- sorry-- that you could also address. For those remote families, remote office hours, there-- I guess maybe one thing you could also just answer, not now but coming into the school year, how are-- some districts

during the shutdown in the spring, they had standing weekly office hours for their administrators and their teachers. And the benefit of having the-- a standing virtual office hour for administrators, like the principals and families, was that they could assess in real time what was working and what wasn't and bring it up to the administrative council.

And so I'm wondering just you might want to think, as we're moving into this lots of different learning modes, that it might help if administrators had a standing remote office hours for families and how to communicate. And then maybe for hybrid, how does-- hybrid parents, how does that work? Do they have to come into the building? But I think this is one of those times where the ability for parents to share feedback, not just on a personal level but in a group level, would be very useful.

So just something to think about. I know that's hard. I'm not asking you to answer that now. And you can come back later and say [INAUDIBLE].

I put a note. I put a note.

Yeah. Put a note. That's all.

Good. Put a note. And it's good. Feedback is very important. I recognize that.

And giving people-- I mentioned to the board, I had weekly standing meetings-- I shouldn't call them weekly-- several of them for the CTA if they just wanted to just pop in. Or for staff, you want to just pop in. So I hear you. And there's a lot of merit and value to that.

Thank you for considering. OK. Now how are we?

[INAUDIBLE]

Can I just throw in something that has nothing to do with what we've been [AUDIO OUT]?

I don't know how I [INAUDIBLE]--

You went on mute.

--Iris. Sure.

Sorry. Sorry about that. Can I throw in something that has nothing to do with what we're talking about?

Sure.

Of course!

OK. Well, sort of, but not really. The Black Cow, normally we have that before the-- Beth, you were mentioning community and conversation, but that is one of the tools we often use to speak with the community. So I don't know where we are with that. So I just want to throw it out to the officers again [INAUDIBLE]

The Communications Committee--

I was going to say, I thought we threw that to Communications.

And the Communication--

Communications, so I meant for like-- I didn't want to say, Communications, what have you done? That would be the officers. But no, just in terms of our schedule would normally come out for next Saturday, which is Labor Day weekend. So I just want to know if we're thinking-- not for now to discuss, but whether or not we're going to get our Black Cows up and going again.

And then finally, our next meeting is on September 10, which is after the executive order expires. I'm sure the board officers will be talking with the administration about this. But I for one, if we are open as a school district, would suggest that we are in-person as a board meeting. So in terms of finding a space that would allow us to do that, I would appeal to the district.

I know on the one hand, there's the cleaning aspect that Paul's staff would have to deal with if we opened up a room. And then there's the inability to Livestream if we don't do it in the community room. But I did want to put that for the next board officers meeting to consider because I do believe that if we are asking our students and teachers to return, we should do everything in our power to meet in-person, giving the community an opportunity to also attend in-person.

Thank you, Iris. And Tracey and I had actually already started discussing that, so for further discussion with board officers and Dr. O'Connell. So does anyone else have any other questions or comments?

All right. Well, thank you, Dr. O'Connell, for your update. And thank you, Mr. Gibbons, for speaking with us tonight. I know there was a lot of new information that came late in the day for you. So for bringing it to us and talking to us tonight and answering our questions, thank you.

All right. And now I actually did need to call a-- before we adjourn, I actually do need to-- I wanted to move to call an executive session. So I recommend an action that the board enter into executive

session to discuss the employment of a particular person or persons.

So moved.

Second.

All right. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right.

So I will say good night to the community that joined us this evening. And we will all move into executive session. And we will expect to adjourn immediately following an executive session. So I hope everyone has a nice night.