

Croton-Harmon UFSD | June 4, 2020 Board of Education Meeting CHUFSD

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Welcome, everyone. I would like to call to order the June Business Meeting of the Croton-Harmon Board of Education. And given these troubling times, I would-- and the recent events in Minneapolis and throughout the country, I would like to ask for a moment of silence on behalf of the board to reflect upon what we can do as a community, district, and individuals to advance healing, respect, and inclusion, and to remember those who have been harmed by injustice.

Thank you. Recommended action that the Board of Education approves the agenda.

So moved

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Opposed, abstain? Motion carries. And now it's time for my president's report. Thank you, everyone. To begin with in my president's report tonight, I would like to hand it over to Tracey Borges, our district clerk, to discuss the ballots and results process.

Thank you, Sarah. Well, I'm happy to report that the absentee ballots have been delivered, and there has been a steady stream of ballots being placed in the lockbox at the district office throughout the day. I've received well over 200 ballots so far, and at this rate, I anticipate voter participation will be higher than usual.

Please return your ballots to the district office by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, June 9, and they cannot be postmarked by that date. Mailing takes one to three days, so if possible, drop your ballots all in the lockbox at the district office which is located at 10 Gerstein Street. If you have not received your ballot by Friday, tomorrow, June 5, please contact me, the district clerk, to make arrangements to pick one up before the 9th. Again, all ballots must be returned to the district office by Tuesday, June 9 at 5:00 PM.

We will also livestream the unofficial school board election vote and the election results after the

counting is complete, and a link to the livestream as well as the estimated time of the announced results will be sent in a K12 alert and social media outlets on the day of the vote. I also want to say that we will have a question and answer sheet, an absentee ballot that will be placed on the district website to answer questions anyone might have about the ballot. And also, you can always call and contact me, the district clerk, at the district office.

Tracey?

Yes?

Just for the audience, maybe since they can call you, why don't you tell them which phone number.

OK. I can be reached that 914-271-4713, and my extension is 4202. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Tracey.

You're welcome.

All right. So to continue on with my president's report, I did want to take a moment to thank, again, our staff, and all of the community that participated in the wonderful parade of Croton-Harmon's staff that we had on May 26. I also wanted to take a moment to, again, thank the Village for their partnership in helping us put this together and making it such a success. It was wonderful to see so many of our staff out and so many people in the community out to cheer them on as well.

Next on my report, I know that reentry is on everyone's mind, and Dr. O'Connell will be giving an update on the district's work thus far and her superintendent report regarding that. I also wanted to take a moment to discuss the Junior Achievement Business Plan Competition and congratulate two of our students, Abbie Julian and Nell Cote, who participated in this competition.

To give you a little bit of background about it, every year, the Junior Achievement-- Junior Achievement sponsors a business plan competition where students are given a theme and must create an entrepreneurial project focused on that theme. This year, the theme was to create a for-profit business that would provide a service to the community.

In a typical year, students go through about seven weeks of lessons with Mr. Lidner and occasionally a guest speaker from JA on how to formulate a business plan. Along the way, each team of students develops their business plan, and at the end of the sixth week, they have the option to either enter the competition and make presentations to a panel of professional judges in New York City, or make a

final presentation in class.

This year, of course, COVID-19 struck in the middle of this seven weeks of this competition preparation, so live presentations were out. But Mr. Lidner had one group of students, Abbie Julian and Nell Cote, who decided to move forward with the competition. They worked with Mr. Lidner and a JA volunteer, Caroline Martin, for about three weeks, and about 50 hours to work on their final business plan, which was Green Tree. They created a PowerPoint presentation, a business plan, a pitch. The judges reviewed their work and awarded them an honorable mention in the competition.

So their business plan was called Green Tree. It was an eco-friendly service that acts as an educator of the consumer and broker between consumer and suppliers of green products. This brokering of products and education is all done through an app. And so I just want to take a moment to congratulate them on some great work.

Absolutely. Wonderful.

Yeah. And then lastly, as we started our meeting with a moment of reflection, I do also want to acknowledge that we have heard from community members regarding the district's efforts to promote diversity in our schools. The Croton-Harmon School District is committed to inclusiveness, compassion, understanding, and fostering a culture of respect. From a board perspective, we adopted a specific goal earlier this year regarding inherent bias and cultural responsiveness. This was done in concert with a district-wide focus on these important topics.

Administration have been actively engaged in this work throughout the last few years and are committed to continuing their professional development plans for district staff. The board is committed to participating in similar training in an effort to improve our decision-making and foster an inclusive community where all students are safe and feel valued. We look forward to continued dialogue with the community. Thank you.

If I can, for a moment, Sarah--

Absolutely.

I know normally doing polls on a board, we have the opportunity to talk about what different committees are planning, and I plan to give a more detailed report later on in the meeting, but I just wanted to connect to what you were just saying. Some of the work that the communications committee had started to work on with respect to diversity and inclusion and the importance of it in our district.

One of the things that the communications committee has started to plan on is we want to do a-- before COVID hit, we had started to plan for a town hall with the community on that specific topic. And it's something that, as you know, Dr. O'Connell works with a student advisory committee which works to-- which discussed with her their experiences in this school.

And it's made up of various students in our district, and it gave Dr. O'Connell a unique opportunity to hear directly from our students, what it's like to be a student in Croton and a student of color or student with different gender identity, and that was one of the reasons why we decided, this is an important topic that we need to address immediately, as soon as we could, and we started putting together this town hall.

As you also know, we have the Student Against-- Students Together Against Racism Club that began in the high school about I want to say maybe two, three years ago?

Yes--

Where again, the students were relaying to us their experiences and how they would like to work with us to bring about a different dialogue and a different view as we go through looking at our curriculum, our programs, interactions and relationships in the district. So I'll give a more detailed report at the end, but I really wanted to just connect it to your presidents report for just a brief moment, because I thought it was really important to make sure we highlight the voices of our students are being heard, and we are working-- we are definitely going to work to continue to improve our district and improve relationships and help our students understand how to navigate in a world where everyone is appreciated regardless of who they are.

Thank you very much, Iris. So now, next up we'd normally be hearing of the public. I have not-- did not receive any letters for hearing of the public this evening, so we will move forward to our superintendent's report, and I will turn it over to Dr. O'Connell.

Well thank you and good evening, everyone, and Sarah and Iris, thank you for sharing those very important points and highlighting the work of our students, et cetera. So my superintendent's report, I'll start out with left Sarah brought up about the reentry work. So if I could ask John Griffiths to put a colorful flowchart, if you will, or block-- thank you. Let me just move my--

So we have as a district launched our-- what we call the School Entry Task Force. And the visual that we have on the screen is a way to show how we have structured our task force. So let me first start

out by saying, I will be sending out a K12 alert to the community. I wanted to have the official notice of the launch at the board meeting, and I will then send a community message out after this.

But we have been having conversations about school reentry since, I would say, April, and informally as an administrative team with the superintendents in the area and our continued conversations with organizations and outside of the school districts. But we have formally launched our own Croton-Harmon Reentry Task Force.

The visual you have before you shows how we're structuring our task force, so let me take you through that. Of course, myself and John Griffiths will be task force managers. We then have what we call a Task Force Core Team, and that's made up of the administrative team, the-- when I say unit leaders, it's a member from each of our bargaining units, as well as our nurses. And then we have our task force members.

I will say to date, we have 56 task force members, the entire task force team. If we look at the major goal of our task force, is to establish the process for school entry. So if you're following along with this visual, I'm working my way down. As a task force, we thought through what were the key focus areas? What were the areas we felt we needed to address? And you see this in green on the visual right here.

Under Health and Safety, we have two key focus areas, what we call what we're calling the physical plant, and student and staff protocols. As you can see, in Teaching and Learning, we have four key focus areas-- Assessment of Learning, Instructional Program, Social and Emotional Needs, and Sports and Extracurricular Activities. Then we have another key focus area for staff training, and then the last key focus area is transportation of students.

So as a task force, one of our first jobs to do was to identify what we felt were the key focus areas. If you follow under that, in blue, we have then facilitators for each of the key focus areas. And then in a lighter blue, what, if you will, task force members will populate that particular key focus area.

So for example, under Physical Plant, we wanted to make sure we had representation from our custodial staff, our clerical staff, teachers, parents, H&S means the Health and Safety Committee, our nurses. I'll come back to show why we've highlighted certain groups or names in each of those in a moment.

Under Student and Staff Protocols, we want to make sure we had representation from our nurses and our teacher aides, our Clerical Teachers, Custodial Health, and Safety Committee. Then if you follow

along, those continue to state what kinds of representation we feel would contribute to really deep dialogue and thinking surrounding that key focus area.

So let me go back to what's highlighted in each of those areas. So for example, under physical plant, you see Rochelle O'Mara name highlighted. Under Student and Staff Protocols, you see Building Leaders highlighted or Administrative Team, et cetera or others. The reason why those are highlighted in each of the light blue boxes is because those represent key thought partners in the work.

So for example, Paul Gibbons might be leading and facilitating the work in physical plant with those members such as custodial, clerical, teachers, et cetera, but because there's a considerable amount of overlap and consideration needs to be given to transportation given the types of conversations they might be having, that team needs to include Rochelle O'Mara and transportation representatives in their conversation.

And just to cite one more example, for Students and Staff Protocols, although Karen Gatto and Kelly Maloney are the key facilitators, they have to make sure whatever it is they are discussing, that they include thought partners of all building leaders, because everybody brings their own lens of their area to the discussion.

So so far, just to reiterate before I go down further, we have an entire task force, which is then broken down into these key focus areas, and the members of the task force belong to a key focus area for the bulk of their work. And I'll come back to that structure one more time before I conclude.

If you follow the grid down further, you see in a cream-like color, those are major goals that we have identified for each of the key focus areas. So I know it's tiny to see, and eventually we will put this up on our website so that people can look at it at their leisure, but as you can see here, for physical plant, some of the major goals-- determine needed supplies and process their ordering for students and staff. Now, that's a very broad topic. In each of these goal areas, there are further tasks or questions that align with each of those.

Let me jump to assessment of learning and that key focus area, because I want to highlight this in public because it's going to be highlighted as well in my community message after this. The assessment of learning key focus area and the team associated with that have been working on surveys. If you read down, it says survey students thoughts relative to their current e-learning experience. Survey faculty and staff to gather info about the virtual teaching experience. Survey parent thoughts relative to the e-learning experiences.

So here, I want to show you how we-- a part of the task force is operationalizing its goals. So before we close out of this school year, surveys will be sent-- they're in draft form right now. Surveys will be sent out to those key groups, as I said, students from grades three through 12; parents, all; and teachers. So they're in draft form now and they will go out, because it's critical for us to be able to, again, give voice to our community, to hear about the e-learning experiences so that it helps inform the work of the task force moving forward as we plan for reentry.

So I highlighted that piece and those goals just to show something that is very-- more time sensitive before we close out this school year. But how the task force works. Although we are in our key focus-- divided into our key focus areas, we then come back together. So let me highlight this assessment of learning plan piece.

The entire task force at our Monday meeting will have an opportunity to see the draft surveys that have been produced so that everyone on the task force, even though you might be assigned to a particular focus area, but everyone in our task force will be given opportunity to weigh in on every part of the task force work.

So what you see before you is really just a way in which we're structuring how we work with a very large group of 56 people, how we drill down into key focus areas so that we can really intensify the work in each of the areas, and then how we come back together as a full task force.

What I've also shared with the task force is, we've started earlier than the guidance that we're anticipating receiving from New York state and/or the governor's office or the New York State Department of Health. We felt it prudent to start earlier just so that we could be wrapping our heads around the CDC guidance and other guidance that we've been reading or other pieces of information we've been reading, and just to get into our groove of how we work so that we anticipate continuing to gain momentum.

We anticipate having to be receiving guidance along the way from various entities and wrapping our heads around it and refining our work or helping us redefine our work, but I first and foremost I want to thank all of these volunteers that are part of this very important work, and I've just been impressed with the dialogue thus far.

So that is my briefing on our School Reentry Task Force.

Debbie?

Yes?

Can I ask a quick question?

Sure.

Will the task force be developing multiple-- I may have missed this, my computer glitched-- multiple scenarios or will that be done in a different way in terms of what it will look like starting August 15?

Right. So if you see the Instructional Program section-- and no, you didn't miss it, Iris, I didn't say it-- if you look at the instructional program piece, one of the goals there says, Determine Reentry, Student Schedules, Learning Routines, et cetera. We most definitely have to look at multiple scenarios because we do not know what we're going to be faced with. Will we be faced with school is not open and physically open in September? What would that look like? What if the guidance we receive is that our plan must include school can open, but with only a certain percentage of capacity? What would it look like then? What would it look like if, dot-dot-dot.

So yes, we are-- that group is looking at multiple scenarios and continuing their work along those lines. And you're right, Iris, I think it's going to continue on through the summer. Our group is aware of that, and talk about putting out so many disclaimers at the beginning of a task force, right? That we do need to be able to pivot should guidance change along the way.

Thank you.

OK. I'm going to continue with my superintendent report. Just as a reminder, I know the communications went out, and God, I didn't really have to say it twice to our students, but just a reminder that our last day of classes for our students will be on Friday, June 19. Usually at the end of the year we have an opportunity to recognize those that are retiring. So I'd like to just take a few minutes to recognize Mr. Dan Large, our special education teacher at PVC is retiring, and he started to work at PVC Middle School in 2005.

In his time as a special educator, Dan did more than just teach in the classroom. Through his efforts, his mentorship and students, his collaboration with colleagues, Dan has demonstrated teacher leadership at the highest level and with distinction. He's a wonderful teacher and colleague. He understands his students and has built a warm and affectionate rapport with them. His lessons are always first-rate, and they're crafted with his students' needs in mind.

Students look up to Dan due to the manner in which Dan supports and cares for them. They trust him,

and they know that he has their best interests at heart. Dan has become an integral part of the PVC culture. If you're ever there in the morning when the Jokeman is on, oh my goodness, you could hear a pin drop because they're hanging on to every word. And I have to admit how many times I'm chuckling and have to be quiet because I'm in the office and I don't want people to hear the laughter over the PA. He's been involved in so many efforts to make PVC a wonderful place for students, staff, and community.

We want to recognize his enthusiasm, his commitment to students, and his passion to education. We congratulate him and wish him good fortune as he embarks on a full-time job of being a grandpa. He will be missed by students, his colleagues, but most of all, by those who are fortunate enough to have him as a friend. Best of luck, Dan, with your retirement, and best wishes to you and your family.

The second person I'd like to highlight--

I just-- I just have to say this about Mr. Large, that he was literally one of the most significant mentors that my son had during his great 12 years, and I'm just an example of one family that was so deeply touched by him, and I just am sorry, I just needed to interrupt and say that.

No, that's beautiful. Thank you.

I want to echo what Andrea said. Dan was a massive force for positive educational experience in my older son's life when he first started here in Croton. I think both Dan was new and Max was also new, and that it just-- the impact was massive and positive. And we will miss you.

Absolutely. No, that's beautiful. And I do remember when I first came to Croton that he had his students create a beautiful, beautiful-- almost like a scrapbook on things I needed to see and visit in Croton, and that's how they welcomed me to Croton with their beautiful, beautiful artwork and inviting me to meet with them so they could tell me about the blue pig and other places, and I still have it in my office to this day.

The second person I'd like to highlight that is retiring is Marlene Galazin. She has proudly served our district as a secretary for over 25 years. She has served both in the Facilities and Transportation Department. Her latest role in the Transportation Department was on the bus as an aide to our special education students. She discovered our secret that kids are the best part of the job.

Her gentle kindness and empathy were much needed supports to our challenged students at the end of their day. During her years in Croton, Marlene was an active-- active in her community, as well as part of the Holy Name of Mary Prayer Ministry and Office Assistant for the Bennett Conservatory. As

she enters her retirement, Marlene is looking forward to spending play time with her granddaughter Bea and her new dog Brandy. It certainly will be quiet without her.

[LAUGHS]

That was-- I'll leave that hanging in the air in a little bit. And the final part of my superintendent's report tonight is about our summer programs. We'll be having virtual summer programs as per the information from the governor. We will continue with our extended year program, which is our program for students with disabilities. Recommendations for those services are made in the annual review and are based on guidelines by IDEA. The programs are already set and will be operational for our extended year program. And that will run for 30 days.

CET we will have their literacy and math camps, and our PVC will have their summer virtual camps as well in ELA reading and writing, creative writing, math skills and math enrichment, region science prep, et cetera. So we will still have a vibrant summer program for our students. Principals have been communicating this with their families, and again, it will be virtual however it will be. And I'll-- yes?

One question about that. Given the fact that many people's summer plans are probably much less certain than they had been in other years, has there been any indication of how much interest we have among our CET and PVC families for those programs and whether we're adequately staffed and whether we're going to be able to meet the desires of our community?

Correct. That's a great question, Neal, and the principals are in the process of doing that because a lot of families didn't know due to the uncertainty of summer. So as a matter of fact, right before I came into this board meeting, another message went out through PVC for alerting families to the offerings and for their families to be contacting the Guidance Department with interest and as well as there's outreach to students. So we are still building that, and certainly can report out maybe at our next meeting to see where we are with our attendance there.

Great.

And that concludes my superintendent report for this evening. Thank you.

Great. Thank you very much, Dr. O'Connell. OK. So now we will move on to new business. And our first item is recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education authorizes the funding of the TRS Retirement Contribution Reserve not to-- an amount not to exceed \$135,000.

So moved.

Second.

On the question.

One question, and that is, in terms of the amount that is indicated, \$135,000, and I know the amount is-- that there's a formula that you can do up to a certain maximum into the TRS Reserve. Is that the maximum that we can do for the TRS Reserve.

The TRS Reserve is 2% of salaries. So the report right now has about \$250,000. So as you know, annually in June, we allocate a not-to-exceed amount to our reserves. So this \$135,000 is in addition to the \$250,000 which already exists in that reserve, and that would bring us close to the 2%, yes.

Mm-hmm. OK.

All right. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose, abstain? Motion carries. Great. Recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education authorizes the replenishment of a New York state employee's retirement system reserve to be funded in an amount not to exceed \$1 million.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

I guess-- unlike the TRS Reserve, there is no maximum. Am I correct?

You are correct, there is no maximum. The largest amount that districts generally retain is approximately five years of contributions. This increase would represent about 3-- 2 and 1/2% to 3%-- to three years of contributions. So it's considerably under the five, but we are allocating more than usual in anticipation of the employer contribution rate increasing significantly based on the financial markets and COVID-19.

So just to review, as the employer, we have a designated employer contribution rate to which we

have to pay for all of our employees, our ERS employees and our TRS employees. So after the last financial crisis, we saw fluctuations that went up as high as 16% of salaries that were required to pay in the employer contribution rate, so we thought that this was an opportune time to add some additional to that reserve.

So-- and what do we have in that reserve now to which the \$1 million would be added?

So in that reserve now, we have \$1,300,000. So that would bring that up to \$2,300,000.

So the \$2.3 million is about three to four years of payment? OK.

It's approximately three years at the salaries of today and the rate of today, which is considerably lower. So as the rate goes up, it reduces the number of years in reserve.

Sure. Sure. But obviously this is the prudent planning to make sure that we are able to meet that obligation in 21-22 and 22-23 because we're able to fund this reserve.

Correct. Reserves are essential to multi-year planning. They help us mitigate risk, maintain financial solvency, keep the tax levy as balanced as possible.

Thank you.

Thank you.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. OK. Moving on to the next. Recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education approves an amount not to exceed \$100,000 which shall be transferred from the unappropriated fund balance to the unemployment insurance reserve.

So moved.

Second.

Second.

On the question. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. Recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education authorizes the replenishment of an Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve to be funded in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

So I guess in terms of the Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve, is that reserve based on what we currently know are the expected employee reserves that we're going to have to pay? Does that also take into account what we have anticipate in future years as to retirees, because I think to make it clear, as I understand it, this is used for paying a copay, the employee-like retiree health or pay out of unused sick time that retirees will have.

And I'm just asking, then, are we setting up-- or is this reserve now going to hold what we know we need as of today? Or does it also anticipate that we're going to have several retirements next year and we can plan for that?

No, this is a prescribed formula--

OK.

--that we go through at the end of our fiscal year, and it's based on actuals.

OK.

But yeah, it's used to offset retirement costs.

All right, thank you.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Opposed, abstain? Motion carries. Now we're on recommended action that the Board of Education approves the following resolution as presented-- and this is related to the Capital Reserve Fund to 2016.

[INAUDIBLE]

Second.

A question?

Before we do on the question, I guess it's-- just to make sure we know what's going on here as a community, at that point, if we-- looking at this resolution, we are going to add \$829,463, an amount not to exceed. At that point, how much more room is there to add to that 2016 Capital Reserve Fund before it is maxed out?

Trying to get my job, Mr. Haber? [LAUGHS] That would be the max. That would be the max. We are-- that's the maximum allowable in that reserve based on voter approval. Good question.

Well, you're welcome. So I guess if come next year, as we plan for-- in the building condition analysis and future work that will need to be done, maybe I'll be asking to-- the voters to establish the Capital Reserve Fund 2021.

Correct.

OK.

But Denise, if my memory serves me correct, this capital reserve has-- will have about \$2 million in it that's not appropriated?

Correct.

So we may not need to start a new capital reserve--

As far as a new one, no, we still have a considerable amount in this capital reserve, but it would have to be-- it would have to be designated by voter approval.

Right. But my point was that if we should decide, because we are going to want to save for its future

capital projects, we cannot do it by adding money through that capital reserve. If the board should decide that we need to save more money for that purpose, a new reserve will have to be established and approved by the voters.

A new designation, yes.

Agreed.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. Recommended action, be it resolved that the Board of Education authorizes the funding of the Legal Liability Reserve Fund an amount not to exceed \$400,000.

So moved.

I think I was seconded, but you had her--

Yeah. OK. All right, on the question. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right, now we will move on to ongoing business, and we have-- let's see, a policy for second reading. So recommended action that the Board of Education conducts a second reading of and adopts board policy 5100 attendance.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

This was discussed at first reading. I did-- as the head of the Policy Committee, didn't receive any comments or suggested changes, and as I said last time, this policy has been carefully and

comprehensively reviewed by administration to see how it will be able to be implemented in a manner that is best for students and staff and administrators.

OK. All right. All in favor.

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose, abstain? Motion carries. All right, we will now move on to our donations. Recommended action that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$200 from Erik Kohler as a contribution to the Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose, abstain? Motion carries. Recommended action that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$200 as a contribution to the Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School, and this is again from Eric Kohler.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Opposed, abstain? Motion carries. All right. Recommended action that the Board of Education

gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$500 from Debbie and Ed Braddock as a contribution to the Dr. Edward R. Furman Scholarship Fund.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Opposed, abstain? Motion carries. Recommended action that the Board of Education gratefully accepts a donation in the amount of \$1,000 from Debbie and Ed Braddock as a contribution to the Dan Delaney Scholarship Fund?

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. Just on behalf of the board, I would like to thank all of our donors again for your support of our school district, it is very much appreciated. Thank you. We will now move on to instructional personnel. And recommended action that the Board of Education approves the instructional personnel amendment as presented.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

On the question. Give me just one second. Yeah, I do have one question, which is, this is a leave replacement through-- now we're changing it to June 30?

Yes.

And earlier we stated that construction will be ending on June 19.

We have--

Are there post-instruction work that this leave replacement will be doing that would make it appropriate for this individual to continue until June 30?

We do have our school year for teachers ending on June 26.

OK. So even though construction ends on the 19th, there are post-construction work that's being done through the 26th?

That is correct.

But the resolution asks-- and it's not a big amount of money, but the resolution asked for this individual to be appointed through June 30, the end of the school year.

Yes, that is-- that is correct. What we are able to do is find work for that teacher to do for those two days. If she does have an issue with that, we can change the resolution so that they would end with the other teachers on the 26th.

OK. I mean, however you end up dealing with that, I just-- from the taxpayers' perspective, somebody's going to ask what's a leave replacement? So like a substitute teacher, why do you need them after the day that schools are-- they're no longer teaching, but if there is-- are tasks to be done, then I have no problem.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right. Let's see. Recommended action that the Board of

Education approves the request for an unpaid leave of absence submitted by Dawn Giordano, elementary teacher, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School effective May 13, 2020 with an anticipated return date of June 1, 2020.

So moved.

Second.

On the question? All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. All right. And now we are moved on to our consent agenda. Recommended action that the Board of Education approves all items on the consent agenda.

So moved.

Second.

On the question?

Hold on a second.

Mm-hmm.

OK.

OK. Never mind.

All set?

I'm sorry, if you could give me just one more moment, there was something I forgot to take a look at. Because we usually pull out the co-curricular items, but none of these are a problem for me. OK, yeah.

OK.

I'm fine.

All right. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carries. And so now we are headed into the closing of the meeting, and we will start with board reports. I will start with advocacy. If you have anything to report?

Josh, I don't have anything, do you?

I don't have anything to report since our last report.

OK. All right. Communications. I'll turn it over to you, Iris.

OK. First thing I want to communicate is I can't wait til we can do these meetings face-to-face. My internet is so twitchy. You guys freeze quite a bit. Hopefully you won't freeze-- hopefully you won't freeze while I'm talking. So I started to allude to the fact that communication-- we meet tomorrow again where we will continue to look at the communications to make sure that the community is aware of the budget vote that's going on right now, and how to vote. And we'll be looking at some other things.

But just in terms of what we had on our schedule for this year, I just did want to touch into the town hall planning I mentioned earlier. We were looking at putting together something for October or November for next school year. And it will try to do a dive into diversity, inclusion, culture of respect.

So I just want to make sure everyone knows that that's on our radar, and we were looking at one additional topic for a town hall to plan out for next year, because the town halls take some planning when you want to try to make sure you get good speakers. So I think at one point we discussed sustainability as a possible topic, and I'm not remembering what the third topic was. There was a third topic. Josh, do you remember?

Was it could it be restorative justice? Because I know the board was talking about getting somebody in to talk to us about it.

I think you're right. I think it was restorative justice. So I know we normally-- we try every year to do a town hall, but next year we may be trying to plan it at all will depend on whether we are face-to-face

or if we're still in this virtual world. But that is something the Communications Committee undertaking that we are currently involved in planning. And I think-- let me just look at my notes here a moment for communications. I had [INAUDIBLE] develop all lined up.

Iris, one thing. I was on the call with [INAUDIBLE] today, and a lot of people were talking about their communications plans about reentry. So I know that that's top of mind for our district. And especially because we have to be ready to turn on a dime, I know-- I really feel like this is going to be a big communications challenge. We may be sending out different plans. [LAUGHS] It's a--

Right.

--very challenging time for everybody.

So I'm going to make sure I have that on our agenda for tomorrow, that we start mapping that, the communications for the-- throughout the summer, because I know people may not look at their K12 alerts as much, so maybe having alternative ways of reaching parents where they are. Am I missing anything else from our communication?

No, I don't believe so. I know we have another meeting tomorrow.

Yeah.

Yes. I think that was it.

Yeah. I think our recent things have been focused on ballot communications and vote communications, so as that winds down, we'll be able to move on to other things.

Yeah. That's it.

OK. Shall I keep it with you to continue on to board development?

Oh, yes.

[LAUGHTER]

So for board development, Andrea and I the meeting, and one of the things we are trying to do is to start putting together the New Members packet for new board members to make sure that-- I always will remember what Patrice said when she started as a board member, she said, it's like you go up-- go for a drink of water and you get hit with a fire hose instead of a water fountain.

So we want to try and make as-- a transition is easy for someone moving from being a community member on to the board. So we're putting together some of the materials that will help them. We are looking at planning and board retreat. Next week we will send out a Doodle. We're looking at the second week of July, the week of the 13th as the date-- trying to find a date within that week that we can meet for our board retreat.

As you know, the week before that is July. Reorg meeting is set for the Tuesday-- the first Tuesday of July, which is July 7, and that's the meeting where the new board member will be sworn in and--

No. The board members.

The board members. All board members--

All the board members will be sworn in.

Will be sworn in on that day because our service begins July 1. I would encourage-- NESBA now has-- new board members must take the governance training as well as the-- I call it the fiduciary training, but the training on auditing-- what do they call that?

Fiscal responsibility.

Fiscal responsibility.

I said that and like she froze up.

We will definitely send that link out to them so that they can register. I froze? I'm sorry.

Yeah, you did. Right after I said fiscal responsibility, you got like all freaky.

Oh OK, yeah, I'm so sorry. It's the nature of being in the woods here. We will definitely send out the link so that-- it is a new board member who is coming on, someone who hasn't served before, that they can register with NESBA and get that governance training in under their belt if it is-- NESBA is also offering for people who are already on the board, they're offering a refresher course.

And so I just want to note that to our board members that if any of us have the time to go, it looks like it's going to be in person, which is always better for these trainees, as well as online. So I wanted to mention that that's available to us. If you have any materials that you found that were helpful when you first came on the board, it would be great if you could send that along to Andrea and myself so we can take a look at it and we can craft a nice onboarding packet.

The-- let's see. Board goals have gone up, there now on the website. They've been posted on our home page. So if you're looking to see what those goals are, the four goals that we adopted, you'll see them there. As Sarah mentioned, one is diversity and inclusion, the other one is sustainability. The one after that is--

Strategic coherence plan. Strategic coherence plan.

--coherence plan, and then restorative justice. And finally, let's see, I gave you the board-- oh, Lynn will be joining us for our board retreat. So from BOCES, and her new John, as I call him, Lou. So they will facilitate the retreat for us. Andrea, did I get all the high points?

You did, you did a great job, and I just wanted to ask Brian-- I gave him a quick invitation to meet with us at the end of the meeting because I would really like as our newest board member to get some feedback from him about onboarding. And so hopefully we can set up a time with you then, Brian, to find out when you can maybe give us some feedback. Thanks.

Yep.

And so that concludes board reports.

Great. Thank you very much. I don't believe the Policy Committee has anything new-- you've not met, correct?

Right. The only thing I will say is that with regard to the policies that NESBA sent to us for consideration in the 19-20 school year, Policy Committee and the board have addressed all of those policies and made-- and had adopted, considered, decided they're not necessary.

What we need to do-- and I just put out there just as a reminder, is we were as a policy committee in the middle of our review of policy recommendations for changes or rescission based on an audit that NESBA had done, and presumably as soon as people kind of can breathe a little bit more, we will get back to that. I had considered and mentioned briefly to the Policy Committee members and our administrators, Dr. O'Connell, Mr. Griffith, and Ms. Harrington-Cohen that we could try to schedule a Zoom meeting, but thinking about everything else that is going on and all of the very critical and time-sensitive things that they've been working on, I felt that was not the best use of their time at the moment. And I hope-- I am looking at Dr. O'Connell's face, I think she's in agreement. That's all I got to report.

OK. Thank you very much. All right, well I believe that concludes our board reports. So we'll move on

to polling of the board. Does anyone have anything they wanted to bring up for polling? Andrea, I know we had recently had a Sustainability Committee meeting? I didn't know if you wanted to give a recap there.

Thank you. Sorry, I muted myself.

No worries.

We had-- and actually, we'd love Mr. Griffiths to join in with me, because he helped lead the meeting, he did a great job. We had a number of community members and staff there, but we really focused on the electrification of buses and some of the-- we celebrated some of the achievements of the year, which is very exciting, the fact that we were able to start a composting program with our lunch program and have two schools make it to-- what was the number, Josh? Was it 85%?

I believe 80% was the threshold.

Right.

--right? Yeah.

Yeah. And--

[INAUDIBLE]

And our third thing is on its way. And we started with the benchmarking process, and we're looking forward to involving more students with that and really be able to give some clear sort of numbers or data about how our-- where our buildings are in terms of our functioning in an environmental way.

And Josh, is there anything else I forgot about?

Just that we really do have a commitment in all areas of the district to renewable energy sources, and that's definitely from your board goal straight on down to all the different constituencies on our Environmental Committee that there is that commitment to continually move in that direction.

I mean, I loved being on that committee because we have students, we have community members, we have people from-- representatives from the village government, we have-- and then are administrators and teachers and other staff, like Paul Gibbons is a very integral part of it. It's-- I think we're really moving along. I know the district really had a lot of-- had like a high bar for this committee, and I think it's moving in the direction that we all hoped. That's all I have to say. Thank

you.

Great.

[INAUDIBLE]

Yep. I have a question for Dr. O'Connell if she knows. I know we normally have in our June meeting recognition for 20-year-plus service and tenure and volunteer tiers. I didn't know if there was any discussion about how we were going to recognize anyone that falls into those categories?

And it's something we've spent time with the board officers speaking about. We would so like to be able to do that in-person. So we were hoping to put it off to the fall. If, in fact, things still have to be virtually, we might rethink it then so as to not put it off so long, but that's what we were thinking at this juncture.

We will be examining the tenure recommendations for the-- I believe it's the June 18 board meeting, and we'll move ahead with that. But again, that will be virtually, but thank you for remembering those important times that we spend moments thanking people, thanking our volunteers and recognizing such a commitment to our district with our employees. So we were putting it off for the fall and with the hopes it could be an in-person type of celebration.

I have a couple of things. First, to follow up on one of the things that was mentioned by the president of the board, I should just note that Students Faculty Congress held a virtual meeting on I guess it was Hangout this morning, which I unfortunately had another commitment and could not attend, to discuss issues relating to news media content, truthful content.

It's a continuation of a discussion that they had started previously, and I am sure that a number of the concerns that we addressed during our moment of silence or moment of reflection at the beginning, and that were addressed in the statements by the president and by Mr. Bugliosi were discussed during that session. I don't know if any--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

For the first hour today. And yes, you are correct. That is what was discussed. Students had an opportunity to share their thoughts and their feelings, and it was-- for the first hour it was wonderful. It was wonderful to be with them, it was wonderful to hear what was on their mind, it was a wonderful venue for our students to share their thinking.

I know that PVC Middle School has held sessions where students have been virtually able to connect with adults, et cetera. So thank you for bringing that up, and again, I was only able to spend the first hour with them, I don't know how much longer they went after that.

OK. And the second thing-- and I know when we last met, I asked a question and Dr. O'Connell said, I don't want to steal the thunder of the building principals-- there will be announcements. And I know that there have been at least some announcements, so I thought-- it was not in the superintendent's report, but perhaps you can tell us something about what will be happening for graduations and celebrations for our students.

So the principal of the high school, Mrs. Dubak, did launch their-- and I hope the board got to see it-- I assume the board did get to see it.

We did.

A wonderful team effort with Mr. Weinstein and all to get some great footage. So yes, that that has been announced. And now I don't want to steal the thunder of the others, but fine. There are lots of plans in the works for both PVC and CET. So I'm very excited about our high school launching their plan and in such an eloquent way, and highlighting the work of our students, and looking forward to it.

And Dr. O'Connell, just to-- for the public who may not be getting all these emails, our graduation dates are remaining the same. Like the--

Yes. Accurate. Mm-hmm. For the high school, though, the time, I don't know if that was ever put in anything.

It was in the video.

--4 o'clock.

Right.

So it's June 25. Hopefully everybody's checking, make sure I said it right.

Yeah.

June 25 at 4:00 PM, and it will be at Croton Point Park. And Mrs. Dubak is working with community as well, because she has included community in her discussions, so she'll continue to do so. I know she's

had conversations with the village, the police, community members, et cetera, and I'm sure she will continue that in her planning.

And PVC in terms of timing, will it be similar or to be determined?

I don't want to misspeak, so I would have to wait until Mr. [INAUDIBLE] shared that.

OK. All right. And again, the community is just so interested in our students and how they're doing and what's going on, it's just been really gratifying and exciting to see their high level of interest. So--

That's great, that's great. And I want to thank them, because we really feel the community. I mean, nothing could have spoken to the feeling of the Croton community than our parade, and I still think about it and it just warms my heart.

Did anyone else have anything for polling of the board?

I have one-- I have a couple of quick things, but if no one else--

Can I just-- I just want to congratulate all-- I saw the email went out for the inductees to the National Honor Society, so I just want to congratulate all the new-- inducted into the society. Normally there's a-- I am frozen again?

You did, you froze again.

[LAUGHTER]

I was saying, normally there's a ceremony, and it's more public, and so I just want to congratulate all of the newly inductees for their hard work.

Yes. Absolutely. OK. So if no one else has anything else, I did have two quick things. So the first was, as Dr. O'Connor talked about it in the superintendent's report, we have launched a reentry task force, and we would like to have two-- ideally two board representatives in case people can't make it with schedules and things to that task force.

So I wanted to see if anyone had interest to join that task force. I'm not going to put people on the spot right now, but if you could think about that and email me or you can email Dr. O'Connell directly and let them know if you're interested in serving on that task force, I think it's important for us to have a board representative there.

And then the other item, which we hear in the next meetings from me and for the next board

meeting, is really about the board after the vote and the informal or the unofficial count is given on the evening of the 9th, we do-- the board would need to convene to accept the official results.

So if we could think about everyone's availability on either the 10th or the 11th to convene a quick meeting to accept those results. So if I could ask you to take a look at your calendars, Tracey and I would thank you.

OK. I apologize. We kind of moved on. Are we still on polling on the board?

Yeah. I was saying it could go either way, so yeah.

OK.

We're still in polling. Go ahead.

Yeah, a couple of items from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, which met online about a week and a half ago. One of them is an item that I mentioned informally to a few board members and to administration about. There is some concern about the use of the-- about impromptu trails being created on both village and on district property by mountain bikers behind the district office and near Spencer Field.

I wanted to repeat that on camera because I hope that our public will understand that we are concerned about the potential impacts and erosion that can occur when impromptu trails are cut. We ask sort of-- the request from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee was that we keep an eye on what's going on there, let them know if we see anything that changes, but also that we let our students and families know that cutting new trail can cause erosion problems, which may be an issue.

And also issues to be-- concern, safety issues, liability issues for the district and/or for the village. And I have-- I had the opportunity-- I guess it was a couple of weeks ago to walk through that area, and there's a lot of area that is village property that is marked as a trail by the village, and people are going off that trail for use of mountain bikes and creating jumps and stuff like that, that is not good for-- it's not good for our safety environment. Because when we talk about sustainability and we talk about the environment, we're talking about our physical facilities as well.

Yeah. This is something that I think we actually ought to think about and maybe it's a topic for some joint work with the village. With so many people working from home and at home and looking for things to do to stay physically active, people are going out in the woods a lot more. I see that in the woods near where we live here on Colabaugh Pond Road as well, and there's been a lot of new trail

cut.

Some of that is fine, some of that is not so fine, and it needs to be done thoughtfully. I have no problems if together with the village we decide we want to have some marked and at least marginally maintained or perhaps volunteer-maintained trails in addition to the ones that are already there that are official, but it's something that needs to be done in a planned fashion rather than in an impromptu fashion, or else we're going to have some real environmental degradation back there.

The other item that was on the-- that is of interest that came for Building Planning-- Building Planning Council, I did it again-- Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee-- same initials, right? From Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee that is I think of interest to us here is the topic of the walking school bus, and this ties together with sustainability.

We'd love to see more of the students who are not eligible to ride on the school bus actually walk to school as opposed to being driven by their parents, thereby getting more roads-- more cars off the road. And the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is very supportive of that concept, and is very interested in working together with the district to help make it a reality. So look for some further updates coming on that. We're probably-- probably we're thinking that the best way to do this is for there to be some liaison in the district administration who can be the contact point for that, and I'm not sure who that person is.

Josh, can I tell you that that was actually-- we were exploring that with the Sustainability Committee, and then transportation stopped, but that was one of the discussions that we had in the meeting before this meeting, is how can we promote that kind of thing? So I'm not sure if that could be a topic that's covered in the reentry meetings in the task force, in transportation if that applies. It might be a place that--

It's interesting you bring that up, because part of what the transportation key focus area needs to look at is the social distancing requirements--

Right.

--for busing and what that could look like. So if you have a 66-passenger bus, yet you have social distancing requirements, how many students can then fit on a bus? How many trips would that take? We are very well aware that our fleet in current state will be most likely impacted in ways it's never been impacted before come September. And does that mean staggering schedules? Does that mean-

-

And another piece that we're reading about is how comfortable are people to actually have their children on a bus? And that's another element that we need to think about and consider. So it's interesting how everything is all linked and tied together and the tentacles leading into different areas. So that is something that Transportation Group has been discussing.

And I just want to get back to our topic about the vote and dealing with the results. We talked about the fact that the board will be invited to-- and all the candidates will be invited to be part of a Zoom meeting when the results are opened. So it's a feeling that we can't approve the vote at that time because it's not official, that we have to meet after that, or why can't we do it at that time?

Well we don't know what time it will end.

Oh. And so you're saying--

That's a [INAUDIBLE] yes.

Oh.

Andrea? Yeah, also, you'd have to notice a meeting.

Yes.

You'd have to notice a meeting for a particular place or Zoom and a particular time.

We're talking about noticing that meeting. So--

Noticing the meeting of the 10th or the 11th, which is-- or whatever dates we've approved.

I'm saying if we don't know if it's going to go really late, but we're talking about putting a meeting on the night of the 9th--

No, no. No, no. What was suggested was the next day or the day after.

Oh, I see. That's how long you think it's going to take at this point. OK. Yeah.

Well, wait a minute. I thought we were planning on meeting the night of the vote on the 9th.

That's for the unofficial--

The unofficial--

Right.

We can announce as those and we can all be on that and livestream that to the community and also for our social media. But those are unofficial. They aren't official until the board accepts them, and that will have to be either the following day or the day after, and I won't know until Tuesday depending on the volume of the ballots I have and how long it takes to count them.

OK, so you're talking about two meetings, basically. An unofficial meeting and then a subsequent official meeting to just-- where you just really would need at least four board members so that the resolution could accept it.

So I think-- I'm sorry, if I could just jump in for you, Tracey. So I think on the night of the 9th, we will, as Tracey said, be able to livestream the unofficial results, and we're putting an invitation to the board and candidates to come onto Zoom to hear those unofficial results. It was not being scheduled as a meeting-- as a board meeting. It was simply to hear the unofficial results at once they had concluded the counting.

In other words--

What we would schedule a meeting for is either the 10th or the 11th to accept the results from that and then make them official.

So on the 9th it would be similar to in prior years when candidates and board members stood in the gymnasium and the district clerk or the election chairperson would say, OK, here are the numbers, this is what we have for each of the candidates and we have on the budget, and I will now call it in to the media.

That's--

--but the 9th will be livestreamed.

Exactly.

And then the official acceptance, which when we did it in-- when we had the vote on the third Tuesday in May, we did at the June board meeting because--

Correct.

--we could do that. But you're suggesting not even waiting till the 18th, but accepting them-- had a

meeting to be scheduled on the 10th or the 11th.

Well, it also makes sense because the new-- the board term start on July 1, which is different, yes. So that makes a lot of sense, I understand. And the whole fiscal year in terms of the budget and everything starts on July 1, so we have to do things a little differently. Thanks for the clarification. I hope that helped clarify things for the community. [LAUGHS] Thank you.

It certainly clarified things for me.

Does anyone else have anything for polling of the board?

Nope.

OK, so we will move onto items needed for the next Board of Education meeting. So as we've just discussed, we will have a board meeting on either the 10th or the 11th. Prior to that, please remember we do also have a meeting on Monday, June 8. We will have a couple of agenda items and then anticipate heading into executive session.

So that is technically our next meeting, but then the final sort of next meeting of this board will be June 18. And then we will have our-- we'll have to plan our reorganization meeting, and the new board will be instituted at that meeting. So that's sort of all of the stuff we've got going on over the next couple weeks.

So next week we'll have Monday. Tuesday will be the election, which everyone is invited to hear the results. Wednesday or Thursday, depending on everyone's availability, we will accept those official results, and then the following Thursday we will have a board meeting. So-- because we all like seeing each other.

[LAUGHTER]

All the time.

So I don't know if anyone else had anything that they needed to bring up for items for the next board meeting. OK.

I don't think so.

All right, so with that, we will be heading into executive session next with the anticipation that we will adjourn immediately following executive session. So at this time we will conclude our livestreaming

meeting once I read the motion. So I hope everyone has a nice night, but for us, we'll be together a little bit longer, and recommended action that the Board of Education enters into executive session to discuss the employment of a particular person or persons.

So moved.

Second.

All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

Aye.

Oppose? Abstain? Motion carried. All right, thank you, everyone, and have a lovely night.