

**MENDHAM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BROOKSIDE, NEW JERSEY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYMNASIUM
(MEETING IS BEING HELD VIRTUALLY,
NO IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE WILL BE ALLOWED)
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020, 7:30 PM**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

II. Flag Salute - Mrs. Holquist led the flag salute.

III. Roll Call of the Board of Education

Mrs. Gretchen Holquist	President	Present
Mr. Aadithya Thayyar	Vice President	Present
Mr. Andrew Christmann		Present
Mr. Peter Dumovic		Present
Mrs. Heather Fraser		Present
Mr. Richard Gondek		Present
Mrs. Joan Mody		Present

Also present: Dr. Salvatore Constantino, Superintendent
Mrs. Donna Mosner, School Business Administrator
Ms. Perrotta (MTMS) & Mrs. Clark (MTES)
General Public – 60 approximately

IV. Sunshine Law

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, Mendham Township Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Mendham Township Board of Education Office, sent to the Clerk of Mendham Township, and the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record. This is an official meeting.

V. Superintendent's Report

➤ District Updates, News, and Events

1. The West Morris Junior Women's Club submitted the final results of the Virtual Feathers for Food Thanksgiving Drive:
WMJWC raised over \$15,000! Over 300 families will be fed thanks to the charitable donations of our school community.

The following classes lead the collection efforts:

Mendham Township Elementary
1st place - Mrs. Johnson's Kindergarten (\$960)
2nd place - Mr. O'Keefe's 2nd grade (\$520)

3rd place - Mrs. Smyth's 4th grade (\$515)

Mendham Township Middle School

1st place - Mrs. Cyr's 8th grade (\$480)

2nd place - Mr. Hooker's 8th grade (\$380)

3rd place - Miss Kavalos's 6th grade (\$240)

2. Clarification of District Goals - Assigned to Curriculum Committee

The Administrative Team will work throughout the year, in collaboration with faculty, staff, and the community to update and regularly review the policies, practices, and structures in our school system to ensure equity-based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. (Focus areas: Staff & leadership recruiting, hiring & training, and culturally responsive Curriculum)

3. Latest NJDOH data on local/statewide Covid conditions. Impact on schools. Want to reiterate that if anyone has symptoms to please stay home.

4. Report on Social Emotional Learning and Guidance Programs for SY 2020-2021 from Guidance Counselors, Allie Perrotta, and Hillary Clark presentation to the BOE and the faculty in January.

Official Results of Election - November 5, 2020

Official results of the November 5, 2020, School Board Elections for two, three-year terms on the Mendham Township Board of Elections were as follows:

<u>Candidates (Two Candidates - For 3-Year Term)</u>	<u>Total Votes</u>
Thomas Keeling	1,299
Robert Wowk	1,369
Richard Gondek	1,065
Rekha J. Mandel	1,316

Discussion:

Mr. Dumovic – terrific presentation on social-emotional learning and guidance programs by both Ms. Perrotta and Mrs. Clark. Huge body of work, clearly well qualified, dedicated, and caring professionals. Does the work that you both do allow for individualized support?

Ms. Perrotta – absolutely there is work done at the individualized level, in addition to the classroom and small group. Positivity, enthusiasm, staff wellness are all super important to mental health for everyone.

Mrs. Clark – there is a lot of individualized counseling at the MTES level, especially in the morning. I take the students for a walk outside. Also, encourage them to reach out to me via email. It is a collaboration with the teachers, parents, and students.

Mr. Dumovic – well done, thank you!

Mr. Christmann – the bell in the video has traveled the world. The presentation was incredible, blown away by all that is going on. Thank you. Is your job typically in support of staff or did you pick that up as additional work due to the COVID situation?

Ms. Perrotta – we support one another, the staff is fabulous.

Mrs. Clark – absolutely, I would always support the staff too, but especially this year.

Dr. Constantino – these two have taken on so much, especially this year. Thank you very much!

VI. Board Secretary's Report

➤ District Updates, News, and Events

NJSBA is hosting a virtual webinar on the 3R's

The program is designed to provide you with important information you will need as a new board member. The program will cover a variety of topics and will offer ample opportunity to ask questions and to network with board members from other districts. This meeting is designed to educate new board members; however, it is equally informative and useful to veterans.

Topic include:

- The function of a board of education
- Board member responsibilities
- Services available to you from NJSBA
- Strategies and tips to survive and thrive in your first year of service
- Where to go for help when you need it

The 3R's programs are available at no cost to board members or their districts and offer one Board Member Academy credit. Registration is required.

Have a healthy and happy Thanksgiving weekend!

VII. Board President's Report –

1. Bond/Referendum Committee to meet in December before the next meeting.
2. Confirmed election results for successful seats, will miss Mrs. Fraser and Mr. Gondek and appreciate their time served. Welcome to Mr. Wowk and Mrs. Mandel.
3. Want to reinforce - please stay home if you have symptoms.

VIII. Correspondence –

1. Mr. Keeling – dated 11/24/20 – congratulations to in-coming and out-going BOE members
2. Mr. Keeling – dated 11/24/20 – extra teaching help/time for students

IX. CONSENT ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Work Session Minutes: October 13, 2020

Regular Session Minutes: October 27, 2020

Approval of Executive Minutes

Executive Session Minutes: October 13, 2020

Curriculum and Instruction

1. **Audiological Support Services**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the Lake Drive Program to provide Audiological Support Services for one (1) student (14047627) for 3 hours at a rate of \$200.00 per hour for a total not to exceed \$600.00.

2. **Home Instruction**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the continuation of Home Instruction by Charles Gallo commencing December 1, 2020, through January 29, 2021, for one (1) student (12546235) for up to a total of ten (10) hours per week, at a rate of \$41.00 per hour.

3. **HIB Self-Assessment for Determining Grades** *(Attachments)*

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the submission of the Mendham Township Elementary School's and the Mendham Township Middle School's Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Operations and Finance

1. **Certification Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education certify pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:19-4, does certify that no line item account has encumbrances and expenditures which in total exceed the line item appropriation, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9 and N.J.S.A. 18A:17-36, after review of the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's monthly financial reports for the month of November 2020 that no major accounts and fund balances in the 2020/2021 budget have been over expended and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

2. **Board Secretary's Report** (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the October 2020 Board Secretary's Reports.

3. **Treasurer's Report** (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the October 2020 Treasurer's Reports.

4. **November 2020 Transfer Reports**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the November 2020 transfer report.

5. **November 2020 Bills List**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the final November 2020 Bills List. This includes payroll checks N0227 through N0230 and N0231 through N0234.

Fund 10	\$ 47,440.73
Fund 11	\$1,297,996.68
Fund 20	\$ 9,410.01
Fund 40	\$ 0.00
Fund 60	\$ <u>13,010.88</u>
Total:	\$ <u>1,367,858.30</u>

6. **District Travel**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Board of Education approves the listed travel events in agreement with Chapter 53, Public Law 2007, NJSA 18A:11-12, NJAC 6A:23A-1. All mileage will be reimbursed at the maximum NJ Circular 08-19-OMB rate (currently \$0.35 per mile).

Program Name	Date	Employee	Event Cost	Total Cost
Rutgers Online Conference: Literacy Development	11/17/20	Lisa Lombardo	\$35.00	\$35.00
Rutgers Online Conference: Literacy Development	12/10/20	Lisa Lombardo	\$35.00	\$35.00

7. **School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drill Reports** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drill Reports from the Mendham Township Elementary School detailing the October 15, 2020 drill at 8:50 a.m., Mendham Township Middle School (blue cohort) detailing the October 15, 2020 drill at 2:45 p.m., and Mendham Township Middle School (gold cohort) detailing the October 15, 2020 drill at 2:45 p.m.

8. **2020 - 2021 Joint Transportation Agreement with Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative** (*Attachments*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the 2020 - 2021 Joint Transportation Agreement between the Mendham Township Board of Education and the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative for transportation to special education, schools for the handicapped, and other students who have specialized and specific transportation needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the 2020 - 2021 Joint Transportation Agreement between the Mendham Township Board of Education and the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative for transportation of students to Public Schools and Private Schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the 2020 - 2021 Joint Transportation Agreement between the Mendham Township Board of Education and the Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative for transportation of students to sporting events and field trip expeditions to specific destinations.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **Staff Retirement - Sterry Colvin** (*Attachment*)
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts with regret, the letter of retirement from Sterry Colvin, Elementary School Custodian, effective January 1, 2021.

2. **Staff Resignation - Rosalynn Ariza**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education accepts the letter of resignation from Rosalynn Ariza, Elementary School Cafeteria/Recess Aide, effective November 23, 2020.

3. **Leave of Absence - Elizabeth Hollman** (*Attachment*)
BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Elizabeth Hollman, Middle School Teacher, for a leave of absence, having received doctor's certification, commencing January 29, 2021, under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), ending after Twelve (12) weeks on April 30, 2021, while utilizing Twenty Eight (28) sick days.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Eight (8) weeks under the NJ Family Leave Act (FLA) for Elizabeth Hollman, commencing on April 5, 2021, through May 27, 2021, as requested in writing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves Elizabeth Hollman with an anticipated return to work date of May 28, 2021.

4. **Substitute Transportation Dispatcher - Deborah Mercurio**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Deborah Mercurio, Substitute Transportation Dispatcher for the 2020 - 2021 school year at the current rate of \$20.00 per hour.

5. **Substitute Cafeteria/Recess Aide - Olga Garcia**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the appointment of Olga Garcia, Substitute Cafeteria/Recess Aide, at the current rate of \$12.14 per hour for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

6. **Substitute Teachers**
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following substitute teachers, pending completion of paperwork, for the 2020 - 2021 school year at the current rate of \$92.00 per day:

James Francks

Christine Thalacker

Policy and Planning

1. **Second Reading** (*Attachments*)
BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the second reading of the following policies and regulations:

P 1620 Administrative Employment Contracts (M) (Revised)

- P 2431 Athletic Competition (M) (Revised)
- R 2431.1 Emergency Procedures for Sports and Other Athletic Activity (M) (Revised)
- P 2464 Gifted and Talented Students (M) (Revised)
- P 5330.05 Seizure Action Plan (M) (New)
- R 5330.05 Seizure Action Plan (M) (New)
- P 6440 Cooperative Purchasing (M) (Revised)
- P 6470.01 Electronic Funds Transfer and Claimant Certification (M) (New)
- R 6470.01 Electronic Funds Transfer and Claimant Certification (M) (New)
- P 7440 School District Security (M) (Revised)
- R 7440 School District Security (M) (Revised)
- P 7450 Property Inventory (M) (Revised)
- P 7510 Use of Facilities (M) (Revised)
- R 7510 Use of Facilities (M) (Revised)
- P 8420 Emergency and Crisis Situations (M) (Revised)
- P 8561 Procurement Procedures for School Nutrition Programs (M) (Revised)

Mr. Thayyar moved to approve the Committee Reports and the Consent Items for November 24, 2020; Approval of Regular and Executive Minutes, Curriculum & Instruction items 1-3, Operations & Finance items 1 – 8, Personnel & Human Resources items 1 – 6, Policy and Planning item 1, seconded by Mrs. Fraser and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Christmann; yes, Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mrs. Fraser; yes, Mr. Gondek; yes, Mrs. Mody; yes, Mr. Thayyar; yes, and Mrs. Holquist, yes – motions carry.

X. ACTION ITEMS

Operations and Finance

1. Transportation Agreement for the 2020 - 2021 School Year (Attachment)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education approves the following joint transportation agreement between West Morris Regional HSD and the Mendham Township Board of Education for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Joiner District: Mendham Township BOE To and From Total Route Cost: \$941.21						
Start Date	End Date	Host District's Route#	Destination	# Of Host District Students	# of Joiner District Students	Joiner Cost
09/02/20	06/30/21	BR04	Gill St Bernards	1	15	\$941.21

2. **School Health Insurance Fund**

WHEREAS The Mendham Township Board of Education hereby resolves, effective February 1, 2021, to make the following changes to its group medical, prescription drug, and vision insurance carrier:

1. Terminate its Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey group medical, prescription drug, and vision insurance policy, group number 8507F.
2. All appropriate Board of Education staff members are authorized to take such action and affect such documentation as necessary to implement this change.

WHEREAS, a number of school boards in the State of New Jersey have joined together to form the SCHOOLS HEALTH INSURANCE FUND hereafter referred to as "SHIF", as permitted N.J.S.A. 18A:18B-1 et seq., and;

WHEREAS, the SHIF has received approval by the Commissioner of the Department of Banking and Insurance on August 10, 2015;

WHEREAS, the statutes and regulations governing the creation and operation of a joint insurance fund, contain certain elaborate restrictions and safeguards concerning the safe and efficient administration of the public interest entrusted to such a school board joint insurance fund;

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Mendham Township Board of Education, hereinafter referred to as "SCHOOL BOARD" has determined that membership in the SHIF is in the best interest of said SCHOOL BOARD.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of the SCHOOL BOARD hereby agrees as follows:

- i. SCHOOL BOARD shall become a member of the SHIF for the period outlined in the SCHOOL BOARD's Indemnity and Trust Agreement.
- ii. SCHOOL BOARD will participate in the following type (s) of coverage (s):
 - a.) Health Insurance as defined pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17B:17-4, the SHIF's Bylaws, and the SHIF's Plan of Risk Management.
- iii. SCHOOL BOARD accepts and approves the SHIF's Bylaws and agrees to be bound by the terms thereof.
- iv. SCHOOL BOARD shall execute an application for membership and any accompanying certifications.
- v. SCHOOL BOARD agrees to commit to the four principles of the SHIF which are:
 - a.) A long term philosophy on rates.
 - b.) A willingness to work with bargaining units to achieve plan design changes.
 - c.) Professional management with stability and commitment.
 - d.) Rating structure based on actuarial numbers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governing body of the SCHOOL BOARD is authorized and directed to execute the Indemnity and Trust Agreement and such other documents signifying membership in the SHIF as required by the SHIF's Bylaws, and to deliver these documents to the SHIF's Executive Director with the express reservation that these documents shall become effective only upon:

- i. Approval of the SCHOOL BOARD by the SHIF.
- ii. Receipt by the SHIF of a Resolution from the SCHOOL BOARD accepting SCHOOL BOARD's SHIF assessment.
- iii. Approval by the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance of SCHOOL BOARD as a member of the SHIF.

3. **School Health Insurance Term Health Agreement**

WHEREAS, the governing bodies of various school boards within the State of New Jersey, have elected to form a joint insurance fund as defined in N.J.A.C. 11:15-5.2, and as such an entity is authorized and described in N.J.S.A. N.J.S.A. 18A:18B-1 et. seq. and the administrative regulations promulgated pursuant thereto; and

WHEREAS, the SCHOOL BOARD has agreed to become a member of the SHIF in accordance with and to the extent provided for in the Bylaws of the SHIF and in consideration of such obligations and benefits to be shared by the membership of the SHIF;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed as follows:

1. The SCHOOL BOARD accepts the SHIF's Bylaws as approved and adopted and agrees to be bound by and to comply with every provision of said Bylaws and the pertinent statutes and administrative regulations pertaining to the same.
2. The SCHOOL BOARD agrees to participate in the SHIF with respect to health insurance, as defined in N.J.S.A. 17B:17-4, and as authorized in the SCHOOL BOARD's resolution to join.
3. The SCHOOL BOARD agrees to become a member of the SHIF and to participate in the health insurance coverages offered for an initial period, (subject to early release or termination pursuant to the Bylaws), such membership to commence on February 1, 2021, and ending on January 31, 2024, at 12:01 AM provided, however, that the SCHOOL BOARD may withdraw at any time subsequent to the delivery of ninety (90) day prior written notice of the intent to withdraw to the SHIF as provided in the Bylaws.
4. The SCHOOL BOARD certifies that it has never defaulted on payment of any claims if self-insured and has not been canceled for non-payment of insurance premiums for a period of at least two (2) years prior to the date of this Agreement.
5. In consideration of membership in the SHIF, the SCHOOL BOARD agrees (i) that it shall jointly and severally assume and discharge the liability of each and every member of the SHIF for the periods during which the SCHOOL BOARD is a member of the SHIF, (ii) acknowledges that the SCHOOL BOARD and all other members of the SHIF, as a condition

of membership in the SHIF, have executed and delivered an Indemnity and Trust Agreement similar to this Agreement and (iii) by the execution of this Agreement the full faith and credit of the SCHOOL BOARD is pledged to the punctual payment of any sums which shall become due to the SHIF in accordance with the Bylaws thereof, this Agreement or any applicable Statute. However, nothing herein shall be construed as an obligation of the SCHOOL BOARD for claims and expenses that are not covered by the SHIF, or for that portion of any claim or liability not within the SCHOOL BOARD's retained limit or in an amount which is in excess of the SHIF's limit of coverage.

6. If the SHIF in the enforcement of any part of this Agreement shall incur necessary expenses or become obligated to pay attorney's fees and/or court costs, the SCHOOL BOARD agrees to reimburse the SHIF for all such reasonable expenses, fees, and costs, inclusive of attorney fees, on-demand.
 7. The SCHOOL BOARD and the SHIF agree that the SHIF shall hold all money in excess of the SCHOOL BOARD's retained loss fund paid by the SCHOOL BOARD to the SHIF as fiduciaries for the benefit of SHIF claimants all in accordance with N.J.A.C. 11:15-5.1 et seq.
 8. The SHIF shall establish and maintain Claims Trust Accounts for the payment of health insurance claims in accordance with N.J.S.A. N.J.S.A. 18A:18B-1 et seq., and N.J.A.C. 11:15-5.13 and such other statutes and regulations as may be applicable. More specifically, the aforementioned Trust Accounts shall be utilized solely for the payment of claims, allocated claim expense, and stop-loss insurance or reinsurance premiums for each risk or liability as follows:
 - a) Employer contributions to group health insurance
 - b) Employee contributions to contributory group health insurance
 - c) Employer contributions to a contingency account
 - d) Employee contributions to a contingency account
 - e) Other trust accounts as required by the Commissioner of Insurance
 9. Notwithstanding the terms of paragraph 8, above, to the contrary, the SHIF shall not be required to establish separate trust accounts for employee contributions provided the SHIF provides a plan in its Bylaws or Risk Management Plan for the recording and accounting of employee contributions of each member.
 10. Each SCHOOL BOARD who shall become a member of the SHIF shall be obligated to execute an Indemnity and Trust Agreement similar to this Agreement. Each SCHOOL BOARD, by the execution and delivery of an Indemnity and Trust Agreement, agrees to be jointly and severally bound with each other member of the SHIF who executes and delivers an Indemnity and Trust Agreement to the terms and conditions set forth in said Indemnity and Trust Agreement.
4. **Appointment of FUND Commissioner to SHIF**
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Mendham Township Board of Education approves the School Business Administrator, Mrs. Donna Mosner to be appointed as the FUND Commissioner to the Schools Health Insurance Fund on behalf of the Mendham Township Board of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Superintendent, Dr. Salvatore Constantino is appointed as Alternate Fund Commissioner to the Schools Health Insurance Fund effective immediately.

5. **Appointment of Benefit-Risk Manager**

WHEREAS, The Mendham Township Board of Education hereby resolves effective February 1, 2021, to designate James T. Finn, CLU, of Brown & Brown, Inc. as its Benefit-Risk Manager for our Schools Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) medical plan.

Personnel and Human Resources

1. **Termination of Employment** (*Attachment*)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendham Township Board of Education hereby terminates the employment of Employee #4211 based on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and pursuant to the terms of the employment agreement, and which shall be effective November 18, 2020.

2. **Leave of Absence**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the following employees for emergency sick leave, commencing December 14, 2020, under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), ending on December 23, 2020, while utilizing 8 sick days.

Jeanne Brown
Donna CasaGrande
Nancy Hammer
Theresa McNamara

Darlyne Pieper
Ann Quidore
Stephanie Sawicki

Mr. Thayyar moved to approve the Action Items; Operations & Finance items 1 - 5, Personnel & Human Resources items 1-2, seconded by Mr. Gondek, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mrs. Fraser; yes, Mr. Gondek; yes, Mrs. Mody; yes, Mr. Thayyar; yes, Mr. Christmann; yes, and Mrs. Holquist, yes – motions carry.

XI. Discussion

Dr. Constantino school calendar discusses community and updates locally in area and state and schools, how things are being managed in the school environment. DOE provides a weekly update that is detailed with recommendations. We are part of the Northwest region. The risk levels of Covid health conditions, speaking with local and governmental risks. In terms of the most recent update, which placed us in the orange column (high risk) – we are asked to consider the following, if remain in-person learning, if someone has symptoms, treat them as a case. Do an investigation and assessment, require staff and/or students to isolate for 14 days. Have a daily screening tool, which we have always had and we are supposed to coordinate with active resources in case of situations for families. Based on these scenarios there are closing guidelines set forth. The best course of action is decided by health officials entirely, not a school decision. Locally, in response to the designation of orange and high risk, seven local schools have closed. It has caused a daily check-in by superintendents and local health officials. Rising levels of transmission and positivity rates. This is the most challenging time since May, local officials continue to think things are going to worsen. If we do move into the red column, the DOE will order a school closing, either by a school, region or statewide. This segways into the school calendar –

questions have been asked about the level of concern by staff. Seven staff have requested to have time off before the break, manageable to find coverage and handle it. Staff members feel some closure before and after the winter holidays, based upon the health and safety of the staff and students, also the level of fatigue the staff has seen in our students. Some staff thinks we can continue in-person and forge ahead but I would be remiss to not share what the level of concern is for students and families, staff, and families. Put this on the table to work towards the calendar for the winter break. Important to know there is feeling on both sides to this.

BOARD

Mrs. Holquist – the first two weeks in January virtual, comments?

Mr. Christmann – thank you for clarification of the report – I will highlight the first sentence under the orange column – consider full remote learning now that you are in the orange category. Has our county been given a direct recommendation in regards to this?

Dr. Constantino - current decision to close is a local one. The rate of infection remains low and as a school district for both students and staff has remained low, certainly we have not seen much disruption. Whatever you want to attribute this all to, luck, hard work, awareness, not like some of our neighbors.

Mr. Christmann – the move to red is not based upon district performance, it depends on the region.

Dr. Constantino – that is correct.

Mr. Dumovic – last week, I said I was okay with all virtual learning. Strange to close for the first two weeks next year odd without before for consistency purposes. This week we have some data telling us that some staff are uncomfortable. I personally think we should go all virtual distance learning. The situation has changed, it is Thanksgiving, it is to be expected that over the next few days this situation could change. I am okay going all virtual effective 11/30/20. Would like to hear from some on-call but that is my perspective.

Mrs. Fraser – Peter do you mean through the new year?

Mr. Dumovic – I wanted to originally piecemeal it but due to the information that is where I am at. 18 days school days from November 30 to December 23rd. Then until January 19th. Going back to what we did in April, May, June.

Mrs. Fraser – so you are saying go back to virtual learning until January 19th.

Mr. Dumovic – yes

Mr. Thayyar – important to stay in school and the emotional social-emotional learning (SEL) I would be okay for them to go December 14th to January 19th allowing parents to have time to figure it out.

Mrs. Mody – move appealing option to have a date stop. So we are not told to stop and can be better prepared. I am interested to hear about teachers' fatigue. They have taken on more and exceeded so much above what we expected. I want to see where they are at. Monday is too soon.

Mrs. Fraser – wish the teachers spoke first – virtual adds to their burden. Many of us have the option to work from home but not everyone. I am not comfortable doing that as of this Monday. Everyone is feeling fatigued.

Dr. Constantino – conversations from the staff there was not any reaction to immediate. The data collected surrounded the winter break. The suggestion made by the department of health in many cases isolation can be a 10 period. Meets CDC requirements and a safe window. Certainly would work if there was a closure from December 14th on. Could also return on January 13th instead of the 19th if we follow that guidance.

Mr. Gondek – Agree with the fact that the transition needs more time for some families. The discussion around the 14th would help to hear from staff. What is the tipping point if the 7 go about being able to see the impact on the district?

Dr. Constantino – Going to present a challenge to cover it. We exhaust all of our subs quite often. We believe we have a plan to cover and staff the leaves that have been requested and work through it but it would be tight and it will be challenging. Naïve to say that it wouldn't be a stretch.

Mr. Gondek – what is the plan to cover a sub when those 7 are out,

Dr. Constantino - we have a very small amount in sub staff for flexibility and if they are available it should work.

Mr. Gondek – when you hit a point when you can not cover it, what would be done.

Dr. Constantino – perhaps a particular school or class will have to go virtual. Depends on who is out and where. It is hard to get out in front of it, several moving parts and the unknown.

Mrs. Holquist – I would be very concerned about a Monday date – 11/30/20 for the families. Open to hearing from the public and staff. So we can sort this.

XII. Verbal Communications from the Public

Tiffany Reed - 9:28 PM - I would like to speak when the time comes for a comment

Huge person to advocate for in-person instruction. Learn best when in school. I do want to say that the teachers are feeling real fatigue. Wearing masks for 7+ hours a day, behind glass, making certain the students are doing what they need to do. I feel like many of us have been anxiously awaiting the break. Appreciate PD advocating for us. Personally, I would like to have that 2-week break. It is difficult to explain to the students why a child is being pulled by their family but you need to stay. It is much easier to teach students that are all in one place. A lot of anxiety and stress among the staff. A set date would be great. Much needed a mental break for staff and students.

Geno Garofalo - 9:28 PM - I would like to speak

Feel very strongly. I fully support everything that was just said. They are exhausted. It is tiresome, exposed, stressed, everyone needs a little bit of an extended break. I think the BOE would strongly consider extending virtual learning. The November date is too soon. Balance it out, the virtual drop in and adding a way to much stress to the staff, straining the system. Clarification on those who go out of town, relocating, or going on vacation. I would hope that parents would be a little more aware of the things you are asking the staff to do to help you.

Dr. Constantino – option to allow virtual schooling was directly from the governor. It is a parents' option to choose it and we are required to provide education for those students.

Amy Williamson - 9:36 PM - Yes! Completely agree with what Tiffany is saying. The teachers are exhausted and worried...

Rochelle Kiam-Abraham - 9:36 PM - Absent any hard data demonstrating that there has been an uptick of covid cases in Mendham, we should not close the Mendham schools especially on such short notice. For many working parents, this will create extreme hardship, without any indication that the closure is warranted given the current covid numbers in our area.

Carolyn Allen - 9:37 PM - thank you, Tiffany Reed, well said. I totally agree with what she said

Brianna Boland - 9:37 PM - Thanks, Tiffany. Agreed!

Laura Porrovecchio - 9:37 PM - I would like to support everything Tiffany had to say. The fatigue of the staff is definitely going to have a negative effect on the students. In order to help these students best, we need a break. We need to regroup. This break is important to all of us.

Eugenia Mastrogiannakos - 9:38 PM - Thank you, Tiffany. I fully agree.

Melanie Smith - 9:39 PM - I think it is worth mentioning that many of our teachers have children in the school districts in the area that have closed. So they have the added stress of finding child care,

Hillary Clark - 9:40 PM - One concern not mentioned yet is that the kids being sent homesick or are staying home sick are not being tested for covid.

Dr. Constantino – it is up to our nurses and the family doctor to determine whether or not a test is needed. Not all illnesses need a test. Up to family physician.

Cindy O'Connor - 9:40 PM - Thank you, Tiffany. I also agree with everything you said. Very well done!

Beth Smith - 9:42 PM - Thank you, Tiffany and Mrs. Garofalo

Jennifer Eliassen - 9:42 PM - Well said Tiffany, I agree! Thank you, Mrs. Garofalo!!!

Amy Williamson - 9:45 PM - May I add something when there's a chance?

Thank you Tiffany for speaking for our staff. The survey with the request for days off was under the assumption that we would be teaching at that time virtually. I have a letter all ready to go but I put it off because I thought those two weeks would be virtual. It is not easy teaching virtually, it is a lot of work and planning. We did a great job in the spring and could do it again.

Dr. Constantino – thank you, Amy, appreciate it. Many of us are looking at the infection rate.

Sarah Bizzarro - 9:45 PM - We want virtual teaching, prior and post the holiday, on our terms. Let us set a date, plan it, and stay safe.

Erica Parke - 9:45 PM - I would like to add my biggest concern and preoccupation is increasing numbers encroaching around us and us not being able to prepare in time if we have to immediately close.

Robert Wowk - 9:45 PM - A couple of quick comments

Survey – roughly what percentage responded. It was limited to a few associate members. Another piece, the CDC is looking to change the 14 days to 7-10 days Overreacting to the orange status in the community we have been extremely diligent and our cases show that and should not just react to this.

Dr. Constantino – I wanted the BOE to realize that we have moved into the orange and that much is closer to the red, where we would not have an option and we would be told to close. We have been fortunate.

Ryan Shannon - 9:48 PM - Have middle school teachers been surveyed? Just curious as to why we are only hearing from elementary school teachers.

Dr. Constantino – yes, they were surveyed as well. I don't know but looking at the list of those on the meeting tonight, it seems that there are more ES over MS

Jen Vasques – 9:54 PM – did an informal survey with MS teaches, 43 responded – 30 responded they are extremely concerned it is the cold and flu season. People are really getting nervous, not all apprehensive but a good majority in the building are worried. I believe it is harder in the ES because of the smaller children. A whole lot harder to teach virtually. Turn on the news, see what is going on. Other schools are shutting down, and not knowing, it is ramping everyone up, don't have answers, don't know what will happen. We want the best for the kids. A lot of anxiety about not knowing what is happening, worried, and uncomfortable. Don't want to look like complainers or let down the BOE, Admin, parents, but are worried.

Somayah Wali - 9:54 PM - It is extremely frustrating to not be able to see family. My family lives out of state and I cannot see them because I would have to self-quarantine. I already missed 2 weeks because of possible exposure to someone a few weeks ago.

Somayah Wali - 9:56 PM - I haven't seen my family since before the school year started. Now if I visit my family, I would be forced to take additional time away from the classroom. I think a lot of us feel that way.

Ryan Shannon - 9:56 PM - Thanks so much for the feedback!

Tiffany Reed - 9:59 PM - Thank you, Jen, for your honest feedback. Definitely two different animals!

Rochelle Kiam-Abraham - 9:59 PM - The concern is not going virtual, it is the idea of going virtual on Monday. Working parents have very little notice to obtain childcare coverage.

CLOSED

Dr. Constantino - 10:00 PM - Thank you! PUBLIC COMMENT IS NOW CLOSED FOR THE MEETING - November 24, 2020

Mr. Christmann - 10:02 PM - Transition to all remote learning effective December 7, 2020, through January 11, 2021, with the return date subject to further revision either earlier or later based upon inputs from government agencies including the health department and recommendation of the administration.

Mr. Dumovic – fundamentally okay with this – to alleviate uncertainty, you put a few stakes in the ground.

Mrs. Fraser – going to play devil's advocate – thanksgiving is much different than winter break. I hear what AC is saying but the approved calendar has been out there.

Mr. Thayyar – going virtual on December 14 and coming back January 11

Mrs. Holquist – admin should implement the logistics

Mr. Gondek – December 14 to January 19

Mrs. Mody – strongly agree we need certain dates – set so that there is not a surprise
December 14 to January 19 – remain flexible after the holidays.

Mr. Dumovic – every day you speak with experts and receive data. Is it a worthwhile discussion with them
about our dates between December 7 and December 14

Dr. Constantino – I do not believe they would weigh in

Mrs. Holquist – I agree with Mr. Gondek – there is a variety of considerations on December 14, a reality since
September. January gets complicated since we approved the date of the return for people to make plans, so than
January 13 or 19 work better for me.

Mrs. Mody - 10:22 PM - Transition to all remote learning effective December 14, 2020 through January 12,
2021 with the return date of January 13, 2021 in the building. Subject to further revision either earlier or later
based upon inputs from government agencies including the health department and recommendation of the
administration.

CLOSED

**Mr. Christmann made a motion to transition to all remote learning effective December 7, 2020, through
January 11, 2021, with the return date subject to further revision either earlier or later based upon
inputs from government agencies including the health department and recommendation of the
administration, seconded by Mr. Thayyar, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr.
Dumovic; yes, Mrs. Fraser; no, Mr. Gondek; no, Mrs. Mody; no, Mr. Thayyar; no, Mr. Christmann; yes,
and Mrs. Holquist, no – motion does NOT CARRY.**

**Mrs. Mody made a motion to transition to all remote learning effective Monday, December 14, 2020,
through Tuesday, January 12, 2021, to return to all in person on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, with the
return date subject to further revision either earlier or later based upon inputs from government
agencies including the health department and recommendation of the administration, seconded by Mr.
Gondek, and the motion was CARRIED in a roll call vote: Mr. Dumovic; yes, Mrs. Fraser; no, Mr.
Gondek; yes, Mrs. Mody; yes, Mr. Thayyar; yes, Mr. Christmann; yes, and Mrs. Holquist, yes – motion
CARRIES.**

XIII. Adjournment

Moved by Mrs. Fraser second by Mr. Gondek to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at
10:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Mosner
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary