



## **LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTING MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Executive Session - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom - 6:00 p.m.

Public Session - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom and Facebook Live – 8:00 p.m.

A **Voting Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education was held on this date via Zoom and Facebook Live. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Board President, Ronnie Konner, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 7, 2020 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Mr. August moved the following:

### **Executive Session**

**Whereas**, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-11, permits the Board of Education to meet in closed session to discuss certain matters; now, therefore be it

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education adjourns to closed session to discuss:

- Personnel and Legal Matters

Action may be taken upon return to public session. The full length of the meeting is anticipated to be approximately 120 minutes and be it

**Further Resolved**, the minutes of this closed session be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mr. August, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Messer, Mrs. Konner  
Nayes - None

At 8:06 p.m., Mrs. Konner reconvened the public session.

Members Present: Charles "Buddy" August, Pamela Chirls, Seth Cohen, Ronnie Konner, Samantha Messer and Aditya Desai

Also in Attendance: Dr. Matthew Block, Steven Robinson, Lisa Capone-Steiger, Susan Burman and Joann Goldberg

There were over 1000 members of the public and staff watching remotely through the webinar and via a Facebook Live stream.

Mr. Aditya Desai led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **1. Reopening Update**

Dr. Block announced that due to a lack of staffing, we will be submitting a plan to the County Superintendent specifying that the Livingston Public Schools will be starting the school year with full remote learning on September 8th. We will remain in a full remote format until we are able to effectively engage our teachers and establish a setting that allows for in-person learning for students. Our full remote learning plan will be posted on our website tomorrow.

Dr. Block continued that we will work to bring our students back to our school facilities as soon as we can do so safely with appropriate staffing for each grade level and it is his hope that, before the end of September, we can undergo this process beginning with some of our special education programs and our youngest elementary school grade levels. Dr. Block added we ultimately want to bring back all grade levels for in-person learning but based on our current circumstances, this will be most challenging at the secondary level.

Dr. Block explained a few highlights of the all remote learning plan include a full day of learning, increased opportunities for synchronous learning, easing in of schedules to allow everyone to adjust to the new instruction model and daily routine and in-person and virtual opportunities for clubs, activities and events as the health circumstances allow.

Ms. Messer read a statement that she supports Dr. Block, but does not support the proposed full remote learning plan and has been consistent in her stance that we need to bring back as many students for as much time in person as we safely can. Ms. Messer reviewed the merits of a free and appropriate public education and stated we have heard from numerous and respected physicians in our community who encouraged us to send kids to school, the infection rate is low, she is concerned about the long term impact on children, we had roughly 70% of families say they want to go back in person and roughly 70-80% of teachers say they will come back, and our own ESY program ran in person successfully this summer. Ms. Messer praised the administrative team and feels their hands are tied not by the governor, but by local factors.

## **Public Comment**

Cara Katz, 28 North Hillside Avenue, supports Ms. Messer's statement and can't believe 150 teachers won't come back to work. Mrs. Katz stated kids need to be back in school for their mental health and that this is a complete disservice to the community.

Stefanie Cohen, 20 Stonewall Drive, stated according to Governor Murphy district leaders must provide a timeline to get to in-person instruction, so where are we going from here? Is there a plan to get to in-person learning eventually? Why aren't we following the science? Why can't kids, especially those going to new schools, get a chance to meet their teachers while both wear a mask?

Dr. Amy Schecter, 20 Stoneham Drive, stated she agrees with Ms. Messer and is disappointed with the all remote plan because children will not get the learning experience they deserve. Dr. Schecter asked what changes have happened since the initial plan was implemented, what has to happen to open in person and will the school buildings be used by other programs for child care?

Matt Clifford, 37 Heron Road, stated he agrees with the prior comments and would like to know the threshold and actual statistics and medical advice that we factored into this decision. Mr.

Clifford would like to know more about the subjectivity of listening to teachers' responses rather than actual scientific evidence.

Laura Lemos, 154 N. Livingston Avenue, agrees with Ms. Messer's statement adding this plan will be impossible for working parents and asked if the content that is supposed to be synchronous will be pre-recorded and available because she won't be available to teach her children until later in the day.

Cindy Goldstein, 24 Mayhew Drive, applauded the decision as she is not comfortable sending her kids back in school. Mrs. Goldstein asked for a formal evaluation of the air quality inside the buildings.

Michael Traub, 8 Lockhorn Drive, asked why we can't commit to going all synchronous remotely with uniformity throughout all schools?

Stacey Melhorn, 20 Hazel Avenue, is a primary teacher who understands the importance of in-person learning and expressed the district is doing a service to teachers and the community by putting forth this plan. Teachers have child care issues of their own and if a teacher gets sick, students will have a substitute anyway.

Jorge Rivera, 5 West Lawn Road, stated we need to understand the needs of different people in the community.

Spencer and Helene Korn, 7 Cherry Hill Road, expressed they are disappointed to hear that 150 teachers are standing in the way of in-person learning while others in the community have already gone back to work. Mr. Korn asked for specifics on the parameters and timing for students to return and what will make us go from phase 1 to phase 2 to phase 3 to phase 4. What specifically will make the teachers union feel comfortable/safe coming back? Will there be additional learning at no charge from the teachers within the district? Are the teachers in our district planning on teaching in these pods? Are all seats socially distanced in the classroom being filled in phase 1? Why are secondary students being treated differently than those at the elementary schools?

Ryan Lem, 10 Marlo, applauds the decision to go remote only.

James Fox, 131 West Northfield Road, he and his wife are full-time essential workers in hospitals who deal in health care data and facts and are disappointed we are not making the decision based on facts but based on teachers. Mr. Fox stated his children need in-person learning, not sitting on Zoom on a computer. For those who disagree, go virtual, but for the majority who wanted in-person, why is that option no longer available to us?

Joshua Schwartz, 16 West Lawn Road, asked if we aren't following science, then what are we following? If you don't feel comfortable sending kids to school, you can keep them remote. If we feel comfortable sending them, we should be able to. What are long term ramifications for this?

Rachel Kemelman, 29 Norman Court, thanked Ms. Messer for conveying the thoughts of 70% of the community and asked the board to reconsider the plans and listen to parents. Those who want to go virtual, have the option to go virtual.

Boris Grushin, 7 North Drive, stated a majority of people want some form of in-person learning and the majority of teachers seemed to agree with in-person learning so given the overlap, why can't something be figured out to provide some form of in-person learning.

Scott Schroeder, 25 South Cedar Parkway, stated he is ashamed and appalled as a teacher and community member that we have failed our students and children. Mr. Schroeder added we

have not listened to the 70% who want to go back for in-person education. Families have the option to go remote but not the option to go back to school. He is on the front lines of summer camps and summer athletics and it is working, kids want to go back to school. Having kids sit in front of a screen all day is detrimental to their mental and physical health. As a teacher, Mr. Schroeder's fear is not going back to school but is not being able to meet the expectations of parents because remote learning is nothing like being taught in-person.

Raphael Rojas, 17 Rockhill Drive, urged the administration to relook at the plan since the majority of parents want their children back in school.

Maureen Biss, 51 North Ashby Avenue, stated it's not that teachers don't want to come back but that this is about the health and safety of the lives of students, their families, teachers and their families.

Dr. Pejman Lavian, 8 Tulane Drive, stated none of the science or recommendations from physicians groups make a difference as this decision was preordained by the board and administration. Dr. Lavian is concerned about the social emotional well being of children sitting in front of a computer all day. Dr. Lavian asked for a concrete parameter for returning to in-person learning.

Dr. Block took a moment to explain that he would like to see kids back in school and that his number one priority is to get our schools open so we can teach our kids somehow on September 8. Dr. Block added we believe we can do something in the next few weeks to get our K-2 kids and special education programs back in person and will work as hard as we can to bring as many students back as possible. Dr. Block also added that because many teachers are content area specialists at the secondary level, he cannot offer a timeline as to when he can bring those students back in person because those positions are more challenging to fill.

Dr. Block added the decision to go fully remote was made because we have 150 staff members who have come forward requesting a leave. Dr. Block added these are not just people saying they aren't comfortable or are afraid but are people who are entitled to a medical leave or child care leave as they may have a family member at home who is particularly high risk or they may have some underlying medical condition of their own. In addition, if their own school district has decided to go fully remote and they have children themselves, they are allowed to take a leave under federal law.

Michele Cohen, 15 Woodland Terrace, stated she is in favor of all remote for her child because the hybrid plan had less hours of instruction. Mrs. Cohen added Dr. Block is trying to show respect to teachers and that you can't have in-person learning without staff to teach students.

Ken Heilpern, 4 Highland Drive, asked if there will there be any parent orientation to help parents help their students remotely? Mr. Heilpern asked if all teachers' contracts allow for them to teach from home on video, if needed? Mr. Heilpern asked if teachers need to teach all day and they have childcare issues, how do they address concerns of taking care of their own kids while they need to be teaching students from home?

Peg Williams 30 Crossbrook Road, expressed disappointment that we will be remote only at the elementary schools and asked why teachers can't teach in their classroom all day and stream to kids at home. Mrs. Williams asked what remediation plans are in place to teach kids reading and math that they might have missed and how will this be accomplished via Zoom?

Mahnaz Shirazi-Whang, 94 Sykes Avenue, expressed teachers are choosing not to come in because of health or child care issues and they have the right to protect their own family just as she has the right to keep her kids fully remote because of health concerns.

Gabriel Seedhom, 21 South Livingston Avenue, stated teachers should not be forced to come back to work.

Priya Deshpande, 705 Binghampton Lane, expressed that remote learning should be more book or worksheet based than online based to ensure students are learning but without a significant amount of screen time.

Anthony Rosamilia, President of the Livingston Education Association, agrees with the educational experts in the State, including the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association and the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, that the safest thing to do is to start remotely, that this is the most educationally sound thing to do at this time. Mr. Rosamilia thanked the administration and Mrs. Burman for her compassion and concern when handling the large number of staff questions. Mr. Rosamilia wants everyone to know that his members do want to return to school when it is safe to do so.

Brian Bradley, 46 Ashwood Drive, thanked Ms. Messer for her comments adding he is frustrated and beyond disappointed that his kindergartener will start school remotely. Mr. Bradley asked when teachers will feel that they can come back? Mr. Bradley asked why we didn't get the HVAC evaluation done sooner? Mr. Bradley asked if the transmission rate is low, why are we ignoring the science and going with feelings over facts?

Sasha Paillet Koff, 13 Rumson Road, asked what steps are being taken to ensure the HVAC systems are appropriately going to be addressed so that all of us can have the understanding, with transparency, as to what has been done so we can make the right calls?

Courtney Tomeo, 47 North Ridge Road, suggested we try to please the majority who want students back in school and has concerns about the long term effects on children being isolated learning at home. Mrs. Tomeo asked if we have surveyed the teachers to see what would make them comfortable. Mrs. Tomeo asked that we use the data and metrics to guide us and also asked what date we would be able to have our children back in school. Mrs. Tomeo encouraged parents and the community to put pressure on the governor to deny requests from districts like Livingston that have the resources to provide in-person education to our children.

Mr. Robinson took a moment to explain that we have an HVAC system in place that meets the guidelines that are in existence today and that we have gone above and beyond what is required for compliance by a school district. In addition, we have purchased Merv 13 filters, portable HEPA machines for nurse's offices and air purifiers for spaces that don't have windows, even though there is ventilation in those spaces, to make those coming back into the spaces comfortable. We had been in discussions with the engineer for quite some time prior to finalizing the contract. Mr. Robinson concluded that there have been people working in the central office over the past few months and consistently over the past two weeks and there haven't been any issues with the air quality.

Beth Zoller, 53 Rumson Road, is an employment lawyer who stated fear of contracting COVID is not a reason not to come back to work and that we need to find a way to get our younger kids back in school.

Priyanka Desai, 4111 Briggs Circle, stated remote learning will be difficult for her and her husband who both work full time so if she has to send her child to the YMCA or JCC, why not have them in school? Why not give the choice of the hybrid plan for those parents who really need it and don't have the resources to pay for a pod?

Shelly Faber, 34 Vanderbilt Drive, personally thinks the remote program with a full day schedule is superior academically to the hybrid model and that teachers at the secondary level are irreplaceable due to their subject matter expertise.

Robin Levine, 12 Clover Lane, asked why we are asking the public's opinion if we aren't doing anything to make a change since 70% said they want their parents to be in school. Mrs. Levine agrees if anyone needs to be in school, it's the elementary kids and those with IEPs.

Stan Siris, 13 Village Drive, expressed frustration that he and his wife both work and his child had a lot of difficulty focusing on Zoom and with learning remotely. Mr. Siris implored the board, if possible, to let the teachers and students who want to come into school for in person learning be able to do so.

Jeff Shulman, 25 Tuxedo Drive, expressed he is on the side of having children return to school and that we have clearly been buying things to make the environment safe for teachers and students. Mr. Shulman asked what our plan is? How are we going to provide teachers for education? How will we provide remote learning for teachers who can't come back? Teachers who want to come back, should teach remotely from their classrooms.

Pam Kalish, 69 Cornell Drive, expressed she is disappointed with this new plan because elementary students and those with special needs and learning disabilities need to be in school. Mrs. Kalish asked what happens to elementary students who won't or can't sit in front of a computer all day? If teachers are not comfortable going into the schools now, what will change between now and two, three or six months that will make them comfortable?

Michael Herskovitz, 88 Palmer Drive, was disappointed with the remote learning in the spring and with this current plan especially after the majority of the community said they want in-person learning. He hopes second thought is given to what the community wants which is for our students to get back in the classroom.

Mike Balter, 54 Wynnwood Road, doesn't understand how the district didn't know we wouldn't have the resources to open schools until this late hour. What happened to the survey that said 70% wanted their kids back in school?

Sam Shainbrown, 2 Mountain Ridge Drive, is going into high school and knows he won't get the same education remotely. He said he would be comfortable going back to school wearing a mask.

Engin Yalt, 51 Elmwood Drive, had a few suggestions. Mr. Yalt asked that the remote work be equal across the district and across each classroom including the amount of classwork, number of Zoom meetings and number of student/teacher interactions; that the coursework be announced ahead of time; that it would be better if we have smaller groups for Zoom meetings; that we provide recorded content and for teachers to coach parents with what they need to do to help teach our kids.

Siraj Akmal, 8 Heather Lane, is a rising senior who wants to go back to school very badly but does feel Dr. Block has made the right choice to go all remote and keep everyone safe.

Dmitry Petrovski, 21 Boulderwood Drive, asked if parents are being given assignments to do with their kids or will there be a live video conference with the kids?

Abhishek Gangwal, 6 Hazelwood Avenue, stated we are focusing on the 150 teachers while ignoring all the teachers who are committed to come to the school and we are ignoring the 70% of parents who want to send their kids to school. For the 150 teachers who want to stay home, what are the classes that they are teaching and can they teach the classes on Zoom from the school without the students?

Dr. Vishal Lala, 9 Vista Terrace, asked the board and Dr. Block to think hard about how they will do remote education as the skill set for students is different.

Kalpan Doshi, 83 North Mitchell Avenue, stated he is willing to wait and take our time to see what happens before we bring everyone back to school in person.

Joshua Schwartz, 16 West Lawn Road, asked why we can't work with our teachers whose districts are having students go remotely by filtering their children into our school system? Why can't we have a college graduate in the classroom be a liaison while the teacher teaches? Why are we being lectured on the HVAC system? What are those systems like in banks or grocery stores or other places where people are currently back at work?

Toni Rodriguez, 53 Berkeley Place, stated it is difficult to teach a child through a computer screen especially in kindergarten who have never been in a classroom before. How many of the 150 staff members are elementary school teachers? Mrs. Rodriguez hopes the district can find a way to bring back grades K-5 in person as these are critical ages. If it is full remote, what are the options for working parents in the district who have no form of child care?

Dr. Sara Goldstein, 12 Autobahn Road, expressed urgency in getting the children back to school as quickly as possible because it's important for their social, emotional and cognitive development. Dr. Goldstein suggested also looking at outdoor resources and town resources.

Lisa Fried-Grodin, 13 Macopin Drive wrote in for clarification on question/answer #16 on the Q&A page as it does not address the question about why a full day can't be provided with in-person students leaving for lunch and continuing virtually at home.

Jill Levy, 23 Pebble Beach Drive, wrote can you explain further for remote vs. hybrid. Are the teachers the same for both options? Is there more independent learning for hybrid then remote? If your child is home while watching his hybrid class, can he ask a question in live time?

Roberta Misthal, 45 Baker Road, wrote when will the incoming 10th Graders receive their new devices and when will Middle and High School Students receive their schedules?

Jasmine and Sarvesh Naidu, 34 Village Drive, wrote in the event we go all remote, is there a robust plan for effective learning where there is bare minimum actual learning time and a full school day schedule? What are the plans to ensure more teacher-student engagement/interaction? How and how often will the effectiveness of remote-learning be measured?

Cheryl Maiello, 37 Bryant Drive, wrote can you kindly address the topic of children with IEP's having the ability to attend school in person more frequently? I understand that teachers will also have office hours remotely, but can there be open office hours in person as well if a child needs it?

Leah Traub, 8 Lockhern Drive, wrote how do you expect to be able to open in person? Are you going to be able to hire those new teachers in the next month? Fully remote learning at the elementary level is never going to replace in person learning. Will all teachers be forced to teach live all day every day?

Dr. Rosaura Bagolie, 21 Bear Brook Lane, wrote how will Livingston support parents whose children cannot access remote learning without significant support? If a special education student is unwilling or unable to participate how will they receive their free and appropriate education based on individualized needs?

Annie Chan, 96 Vere Terrace, wrote will it be communicated to parents and students what the marking period grading policy will be prior to the new school year? Now that we are going remote learning again, are kids going to be held to the same standard as in-person grading? Last time we didn't find out until the first week in June which i feel should have been communicated ahead of time.

Michael Margolis, 14 Nottingham Road, wrote what criteria are you using to decide and bring the kids back to school? From a HR standpoint, are Livingston teachers who won't go back in the classroom allowed to teach in a pod?

David Bullion, 34 Hazelwood Avenue, wrote when will the incoming 10th graders get their new devices? When will kids get their schedules? What about Orchestra and GT, especially for Heritage Middle School?

Amy Simon, 3 Westminster Drive, wrote thank you for keeping the students and staff safe during this unprecedented time. I'm sure Livingston will rise to give us the best remote learning possible.

Michelle Lichtstein and Samantha Lichtstein, 46 Heron Road, wrote we are seniors at LHS. With all of the doctors consulted during the last few months, we were under the impression that there were concerns regarding students being online for significant hours per day. It appears from tonight's meeting that you are planning on having all levels of students online virtually for full days. In addition, after the long school day students in secondary schools will have additional hours of screen time due to homework. How will this be addressed? Please provide any feedback regarding this topic as per doctors opinions on this subject and what you plan to do to limit computer time.

Annie Chan, 96 Vere Terrace, wrote she would like the board to communicate to parents and students what the marking period grading policy will be prior to the new school year? Will kids be held to the same standard as in-person grading?

Lindsey Schaffel, 15 Hawthorne Drive, wrote what is the expectation for younger elementary students? How are younger students expected to navigate this on their own? Is the district going to be providing parent training similar to teacher professional development offered by both the district and children's teachers during this remote teaching period or will I be expected to participate in my first graders lessons as well? I would like to know what the expectations are for each assignment as well as how it should be taught since I am going to be the primary teacher.

Cheryl Paredes, 21 Burnet Hill Road, wrote I can only speak as the parent of two high school aged children, but I feel you were left with no choice but to go fully remote at this point. The schedule shared this evening is more academically robust and allows our children to be fully engaged for a lengthier day and more importantly to be instructed by our most talented educators. As an educator myself for over 25 years, of course I understand that nothing replaces in person education but during these unprecedented times, unfortunately I feel you were left with no easy choice.

Amit Sutaria, 3 Morningside Drive, wrote why is the live teaching 10-15 minutes only? What prevents the teachers from having full live lessons as they would in school?

Ally Liebman, 31 Rumson Road, wrote what gets our students, specifically high schoolers, back into LHS this year? Or ever for that matter? Are we looking for no new cases for a certain period of time, are we letting the teachers determine the dates, are we waiting for a vaccine (and will we then debate whether it is effective enough)? What do we need to happen for Livingston schools to reopen?

Jennifer Izen, 255 Beaufort, wrote as I understand it, the State needs to hear a reason why the school cannot open. Did they accept that Livingston's reason is the teachers' childcare and 150 teachers not returning?

Suddho Acharyya, 165 East Cedar Street, wrote I commend Dr. Block and his team for taking a bold albeit unpopular (although this may be just apparent, since the majority may not be the most vocal in this case) decision. The decision is the most pragmatic, practical, and as it will turn out, the right one given the current situation. It is also important to have empathy and respect for the teachers. Without top tier teachers, there is no top tier school. To facilitate the needs of working parents, it would be good if the instructional materials are recorded for viewing later.

Dina Feivelson, 26 Rumson Road, wrote people seem to be missing the point of tonight's announcement, that the teachers were not coming back. Without the LPS teachers, we do not have the LPS quality we all want. People are talking about COVID statistics and their desires for education. Everyone wants their kids to be able to go back to school. But if you don't have teachers, you can't run a school.

Dana Good, 18 Browning Drive, wrote at the elementary school level, will there be efforts made across the teachers and schools to synchronize the workload? I am a working parent and need to go back to work (physically be in an office not just work remotely), I need to know that if I want to socialize my child and have them learn with friends whether I will be stuck trying to find someone in my child's 20 person class, or whether my options for group education are expanded across all the schools in the district?

Fanit Kolchina, 15 Rumson Road, wrote she represents the parents that want remote education for their kids. I am hearing a lot of parents wanting in-person education, who are voicing their concerns quite aggressively, and it is sad to hear the phrase "those who want remote education for their kids can go remote, and for others Livingston must provide in-person education". Unfortunately, in this case those 70% of parents that want in-person education would, in fact, be making a decision for the other 30% who want to go remote, because, as we have seen, in-person education would require tremendous time for implementing the safety measures, and therefore in this case the kids who go remote would only get 4 hours of learning, rather than a full day of learning with the all-remote plan. As a parent of four kids, two of whom are currently in middle and high schools, it is essential that the upper level courses, especially AP courses, are taught in the time frame of a full day, otherwise kids will be left to self-study for the AP exams. I acknowledge that it is different for elementary and special ed kids, but especially for high schoolers, they have to get the full course material, and this can be done only in the fully remote option out of the two currently considered.

Dr. Amy Schecter, 20 Stoneham Drive, wrote I don't think it's fair to be blaming teachers for this decision. This is about not having met the basic safety requirements set forth by Governor Murphy. It seems that the ventilation standards required by the state of NJ have not been met.

Our HVAC systems have not yet been evaluated. It was said two meetings ago that MERV 13 filters were purchased for all units, but it was also said that the high school buildings had not yet been evaluated to see if they could even accommodate them. I'd like to reiterate the fact that the HVAC systems have NOT yet been evaluated. Thus far, we have only a proposal to begin the evaluation process.

For this reason, LPS would not meet the safety guidelines, and it is understandable that teachers and families alike would not feel safe without it being addressed.

I feel very strongly that if our school buildings are deemed unsafe for school to resume in person, it would be entirely inappropriate to organize childcare in these same classrooms and charge families for this service.

Amy Mahoney, 13 Dogwood Terrace, wrote please explain why 150 staff members is such a concern given that 30% of families were planning to opt for remote learning? Also, please explain in detail the plan for return to in person learning. What are the criteria? What is the timing? What specifically are we doing to address the lack of teachers, if in fact that is the reason we are citing in our plan to the state?

Karelyn M Gonzalez-Cruz, Ph.D. and Alex A. Perez, Ph.D., DABT, 38 Mounthaven Drive, wrote please provide more information and specifics about the online learning. Please provide information about how children with difficulties adjusting or struggling can receive additional help and support from the school counselor. Is group therapy available? How would teachers identify, in a remote learning environment, the students that might qualify for additional programs (e.g. Gifted & Talented Program)? Will additional "off-school" enrichment classes offered through the HSA at each school continue to be offered?

Carrey Wong, 8 Millbrook Court, wrote that doing remote with her child in the spring was hard and she is relieved to hear we are going fully remote. We have an elderly grandmother at home, with heart conditions and diabetes. The risk of my children being invisible carriers of the virus to their grandma is too tragic. Being 100% remote means that we stay safe. I imagine many of the teachers are going through the same balance themselves, and should have the choice to do this. The comments tonight disappoint me. It is not teachers vs. parents. Teachers are not the enemy. We should fully support our teachers.

Lara Pollock, 90 Springbrook Road, wrote after five hours on zoom, the board of education seems to be tired and unable to focus.

Mrs. Konner thanked everyone for their comments and concerns adding she realizes many people might be disappointed with the current plan and would prefer to be back for in-person learning; however, we have staffing issues that are a concern for the board. Mrs. Konner added part of the plan is to get children back in school as soon as possible and there will be additional discussions about how that gets accomplished.

Mr. August explained we are trying to get K-2 back as soon as possible and that it is unfair of the governor to put this decision on local districts.

Mr. Cohen thanked the public for their feedback. Mr. Cohen explained although the facts show we should be in school, in an in-person environment with social distancing, in the absence of staff, there is no learning. Mr. Cohen supports this plan contingent upon that we are working in earnest to bring the youngest learners back in person. Mr. Cohen asked that we operate with data guiding us and also contingent upon the final HVAC report.

Mrs. Chirls explained her issues are around ensuring every person who works for us is safe and secure in our buildings and that our ventilation is safe for staff and students who will be in our buildings. Mrs. Chirls agrees with a slowly phased in plan guided by facts.

Aditya Desai, stated he thinks this plan is best for students at the secondary level and requested the length of the school day be reconsidered to be similar to what they had in the spring.

Mrs. Konner explained we need to work together to see how we can accommodate staff as well as use this time to try to resolve some of the issues and questions from the community.

Mrs. Konner called upon the entire community to come together and set a positive tone for our children as we all work to make the best of our current situation.

## **Board Reports**

There were no board reports.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL**

### **PROGRAM/CURRICULUM**

There was no motion.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

There was no motion.

### **BUSINESS**

Mrs. Konner announced the board will be adding another voting meeting through resolution 3.2.

Mr. August moved the following:

#### **3.1 Policies and Regulations**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the following policies for second reading and adoption:

##### **Program**

Policy #2622 - Student Assessment (M) (revised)

#### **3.2 Addition of LBOE Meeting**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the addition of a voting meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. to the board's Annual Meeting Calendar that was previously approved on January 7, 2020.

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mr. August, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Messer, Mrs. Konner  
Nayes - None

**PERSONNEL**

Mr. August moved the following:

**4.1 Resignations**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education accepts the resignations of:

Name	Position	Reason	Location	Last Day of Employment
<i>Gisela Gugger</i>	Teacher of Spanish	Retirement	LHS	June 30, 2021
<i>Beverly Farrand</i>	Teacher of Science	Retirement	HMS	October 31, 2020
<i>Amanda Piscitelli</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	HMS	August 13, 2020
<i>Laurensa Theodore</i>	ABA Discrete Trial TA	Resignation	HMS	August 11, 2020

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

**4.2 Leaves of Absences**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the leaves of absences of:

Name	Position	Location	LOA w/pay and benefits	LOA w/o pay, but with benefits (if applicable)	Extended LOA w/o pay or benefits	Return Date
<i>Kristy Mullen</i>	Elementary School Teacher	Harrison	NA	NA	9/1/2020-6/30/2021	8/30/2021
<i>Jenna McCarthy*</i>	Teacher of Biology	LHS	9/7/2020-11/3/2020	11/4/2020-1/20/2021**	1/21/2021-1/26/2021	1/27/2021
<i>Sharon Petrillo</i>	PRIDE TA	BHE	NA	9/1/2020-10/12/2020**	NA	10/13/2020
<i>Emily Schulke*</i>	Elementary School Teacher	Harrison	9/1/2020-9/2/2020	9/3/2020-10/30/2020**	11/2/2020-11/15/2020	11/16/2020

*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

*\*\*Designates time counted toward NJFLA/FMLA*

**4.3 Appointments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the applications indicated below (\*) for emergent hiring for the following appointments under the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:16-1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39.17 et. seq.; N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. All appointments are contingent upon reference checks in accordance with P.L. 2018, c.5.

Name	Location	Title	Tenure Track/LOA or LT Replacement	Replacing	Guide	Step	Salary	Effective Date
<i>Laura Coreas</i>	MPMS	School Psychologist	First Year Tenure Track	H. Fersko	MA+32	3**	\$67,029*	9/1/2020

<i>Genevieve Day</i>	Harrison	Elementary School Teacher	One Year Leave Replacement	E. Schulke	BA	2**	\$53,278*	9/1/2020
<i>Ryan Brown*</i>	LHS	Teacher of Health & PE	One Year Leave Replacement	P. Gillen	MA	2**	\$60,462*	9/1/2020
<i>Allison Fedele</i>	Hillside	Elementary School Teacher	One Year Leave Replacement	C. Ebneith	MA	1	\$59,803*	9/1/2020
<i>Dorraine Mansano</i>	LHS	Office Support FT-12	First Year Tenure Track	V. Barboza (transfer)	OS-12	2**	\$48,532*, plus \$1,200 for degree (prorated)	8/24/2020

*\*all salaries after 7/1/2020 may be adjusted in accordance with contract negotiations*

*\*\*will remain at the same step in 2020-2021 in accordance with Article X, Section II.C. of the LEA contract*

*\*\*\*as amended from a previous agenda*

#### **4.4 2020-2021 Re-Appointments**

**Resolved**, that the Livingston Board of Education approves the reappointments of Bus Aides for the 2020-2021 school year as shown on **Attachment A**.

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

Mr. Robinson explained the bus aides being approved tonight will be working on some of the special education runs that we contract out.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mr. August, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Messer, Mrs. Konner  
Nays - None

#### **Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes**

Andrew Miller, 18 Sycamore Terrace, asked if the board will vote on this plan and if so, when?

Dr. Block responded the plan will need to be submitted to the State so based on our staffing situation, it is our plan to open remotely and phase students in beginning with the youngest grades. Dr. Block added there will be a series of policies relating to school opening at the next meeting and the board will vote at that time.

Geoff Hoffmann, 10 Dawson Terrace, is disappointed with the decision and asked what the metric is by which we will make the decision to return to school.

Dr. Block responded that the current decision was made based on staffing and we will work with them to try to assist with their issues so we can get as many students back in the classroom as possible. Dr. Block added he cannot say definitely when the secondary level will be able to return.

Rena Leeds, 56 Stonewall Drive, stated it is sad that with everything we have done, the staff won't come back and asked the board to please listen to their stakeholders.

Eric Littman, 2 Winged Foot Drive, confirmed that Dr. Block said school is not opening due to staffing issues and that these 150 teachers are holding up education for the whole town. Mr. Littman asked how does remote learning fix child care issues if they are teaching full time and taking care of their own children? They won't be able to do their job and help their own children at the same time.

Pam Kalish, 69 Cornell Drive, asked how many of 150 teachers are for medical reasons and how many are for child care reasons? How many are teachers and how many are other staff members?

Dr. Block responded we are working to help those with child care issues.

**Old Business**

There was no old business.

**New Business**

There was no new business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 12:04 a.m., Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Messer seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** - Ayes - Mr. August, Mrs. Chirls, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Messer, Mrs. Konner  
Nayes - None

**Respectfully submitted,**



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**Steven K. Robinson**  
**Board Secretary**

August 19, 2020