

The Board Report

Monday, August 9, 2021



Disclaimer: The Board Report is a synopsis of the Hampton Township School Board meetings and is not intended as a replacement for any official Board minutes.

~ A Tradition of Excellence ~

The Hampton Township Board of School Directors

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Bryant Wesley II, Esq. | Board President |
| Mrs. Jill Hamlin | Board Vice President |
| Ms. Denise Balason | Board Secretary/Facilities Chair |
| Mr. Matt Jarrell** | Transportation Chair |
| Mrs. Joy Midgley | Personnel Chair |
| Mr. Robert Shages | Board Treasurer/Policy & Legislative Affairs Chair |
| Mr. Greg Stein | Technology Chair |
| Mr. Larry Vasko | Finance Chair |
| Mrs. Trisha Webb | Student Affairs Chair |

** absent*

*** attended remotely*

This Hampton Township School Board Meeting was held in the Hampton Middle School Auditorium. The meeting was audio/video simulcast so that community members could watch remotely, and was also audio/video recorded.

Members of Administration in Attendance

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Dr. Michael Loughead | Superintendent of Schools |
| Dr. Rebecca Cunningham | Assistant Superintendent of Schools |
| Mr. Jeff Kline | Director of Administrative Services |
| Dr. Ed McKaveney | Director of Technology |
| Mr. Josh Kellogg | Network Administrator |
| Donald Palmer, Esq. | Solicitor |

August 9, 2021

Voting Meeting

A video recording of the meeting can be viewed [here](#). The time within the video that each section begins is indicated below.

Call to Order

(3:44)

Mr. Wesley called the meeting to order. Ms. Ambrose took roll call; Mr. Jarrell participated remotely. Mr. Wesley explained the rules for public comment, asking the audience to be courteous and respectful of each speaker. He added that there would be an opportunity to address the Board again at the end of the meeting.

Public Comment

(6:04)

Community Member

6:29

A parent of three students in the District said she created a Facebook group calling on the District to make mask-wearing optional. She noted that several families, including her own, are willing to enroll their children in PA Cyber School if mask-wearing is required. Additionally, she expressed concerns about the District possibly having to lay off teachers if many families choose to enroll their children in PA Cyber School. She said that masks are harmful and will not stop the spread of COVID-19 and that only N95 masks will. Lastly, she asked the Board to vote “no” to require mask-wearing and to allow parents to make their own choice.

Student

8:23

A rising 6th grade student said she does not want to wear masks and that it should be the parents’ decision to mask their children or not. She said masks cause her ears to hurt, difficulty breathing, and rashes on her face. This summer, she has not worn masks and no one that she knows has gotten sick. Last year, she said her teachers were upset with her for not properly wearing a mask.

Community Member

9:19

A parent said he and his wife moved from the City of Pittsburgh to the District eleven years ago so their daughters could receive a better education. He said it is disheartening to see children be required to wear masks, as they cause distractions to their education. Also, he noted that children have not worn masks all summer and the survival rate for children with COVID-19 is very high.

Student

11:05

A rising 8th grade student said masks present challenges to learning and socializing in schools. She noted that some younger students have yet to experience a normal school year. Also, she said that common facemasks will not prevent the spread of COVID-19, can cause rashes and other infections, and can restrict oxygen and cause mask-wearing individuals to breathe in carbon dioxide.

Lastly, she said that science is not providing a straightforward answer on the effectiveness of mask-wearing. She echoed previous remarks that the decision for students to wear masks should be up to their parents.

Community Member

13:58

A resident of Hampton for 42 years began by saying she is proud of the District's education system. She recognized the strain the pandemic has had on children and said it is time to stand up for them in exposing the lies and propaganda that is being spread regarding COVID-19. She echoed the previous speaker in stating that cloth masks do not prevent COVID-19 transmission. Further, she cited studies that showed the adverse effects of mask-wearing. She also questioned the guidance of the CDC.

Community Member

21:28

A parent of a rising 2nd grader said her children are not eligible for the vaccine and that masks are their only defense against COVID-19. She said she appreciates the District's handling of the pandemic last year in protecting students and staff. Also, she emphasized that the virus does not care about our differences. As a physician's assistant, she and her colleagues wear masks every day without any problems. She cited rising hospitalizations in children nationwide. Further, she urged the Board to follow the CDC and AAP's advice to protect children. While she acknowledged children do not like wearing masks, she said they are necessary to avoid interruptions to full-time in-person learning.

Community Member

29:27

A parent who moved to Hampton fifteen years ago said the District brings the community together — offering students social, emotional, educational support. He stressed to the Board that it is their duty to keep students safe and provide the best possible education. He echoed the previous speaker in stating mask-wearing, in addition to following ACHD and CDC guidance, is the best way to ensure the safety of students and to avoid interruptions to full-time in-person learning.

Student

32:43

A rising 4th grader said masks should be optional. Also, he said that masks are unsanitary and make it hard for him to breathe.

Community Member

33:27

A community member stated that over two dozen Allegheny County local districts are not requiring masks. She asked why HTSD is requiring masks when the hospitalization rate for children in Allegheny County is extremely low. Noting that the District's teachers are amazing, she also said that teachers do not need to be mask police. Lastly, she said an online petition calling for parental choice when it comes to mask wearing in the District has over 600 signatures.

Community Member

36:51

A parent whose three children attended Hampton Online Academy last year said she is planning to send them to school in-person this year since they are ready to go back. However, her son has congenital heart disease, making him a high risk of COVID-19. She said that masks protect others more than the person wearing the mask, and she is counting on other parents to mask their children to protect her son, as well. Also, she described seeing a child on a ventilator — which she does not want to ever see again. Wearing a mask is simple and safe, she said, and will help to keep students in the classrooms without interruption. She urged the Board to consider all children when making a decision.

Community Member

42:06

A community member thanked the Board and community for attending the meeting, applauding the students who spoke during public comment for using their voice. Also, she emphasized that schools across the country which have already opened without mask requirements have many children in quarantine. She noted that she wants a safe place for students to learn and socialize; but that can go away if a few students become infected.

Bus Driver

44:06

A bus driver offered a different viewpoint, describing how bullying was prevalent on buses among elementary school students last year. She said she would not tolerate that type of behavior this year. Dr. Loughhead interjected that such incidents should be reported to the appropriate building principal and that the District does not accept bullying of any kind.

Community Member

46:51

Echoing previous remarks, a parent of two children thanked the Board for navigating students and staff through the pandemic. He added that he could not be more proud to live in Hampton. Further, he acknowledged that masks are unfavorable, but everyone likes in-person school. He said he stands with the CDC and AAP guidance regarding universal masking indoors.

Student

48:50

A student echoed previous comments in stating that children have participated in activities throughout the summer without wearing masks, and an outbreak has yet to happen. He said not wearing masks enhances socializing. Further, he urged the Board to consider mental health when making a decision and to give families a choice.

Community Member

49:48

A parent of three children in the District told the Board that vaccinated adults have a greater chance of dying from COVID-19 than children. In an ideal world, he said no one would wear masks. He acknowledged that some parents need to protect their children with masking or cyber school. However, he said the District should not make an entire community of students wear masks to protect a few. He noted that more children each year die in car crashes or from pneumonia than from COVID-19. Echoing previous remarks, he said children have not been wearing masks this summer. Further, he suggested that children do not suffer long term effects from COVID-19. He emphasized two points, that vaccines are available for people who want them, and having unvaccinated students wear masks and vaccinate students not wear them would cause a divide among the school. Also, he asked how the District has authority to impose masking mandates. Lastly, he noted that Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf and the CDC are not imposing a masking mandate, adding that the District should not either.

Community Member

59:54

A parent urged the Board to follow the recommendations laid out by public health experts such as the CDC or AAP. These entities have been following the data and doing research, making recommendations accordingly, she said. Lastly, she suggested that the District consider more outdoor schooling so as to reach a compromise regarding mask-wearing.

Community Member

1:01:41

A parent highlighted that parents teach their children to be respectful, proud, good citizens, and to not live in fear. However, for the past 18 months, he said children have become the victims of other adults' fears and that he has had enough.

End Public Comment

(1:02:48)

Mr. Wesley informed the audience that there would be another opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting.

The following items were approved unanimously by the Board:

- Minutes from the June 14, 2021, Board Meeting

Treasurer's Report

1:03:34

Mr. Shages recommended and the Board unanimously approved the following:

- June and July 2021 General Fund 10 disbursements totaling \$10,236.482.48.
- June and July 2021 High School Construction Fund 35 disbursements totaling \$264,135.87.
- June and July 2021 Capital Fund 39 disbursements totaling \$38,629.05.
- June and July 2021 Cafeteria Fund 50 disbursements totaling \$187,008.37.
- May and June 2021 Treasurer's Reports
- May and June 2021 Student Activities Fund Reports

President's Report

1:05:10

Mr. Wesley said the Board held one executive session on August 2, 2021, to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Mr. Stein nominated and the Board unanimously approved Mr. Shages to serve as Board Treasurer for a one-year period from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022.

Mr. Wesley nominated and the Board unanimously approved Ms. Balason to serve as Board Secretary for a four-year term from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2025.

Superintendent's Report

1:08:07

Academics

Dr. Loughead called attention to the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony for the HMS Learning Pavilion on August 17, 2021. The Learning Pavilion committee has worked on the project for over a year, backed by support from HAEE, the Middle School PTO, the Middle School Student Council, and working in concert with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh to design an interactive learning studio that replaced a static exhibit. He complimented Dr. Marylynn Lux, HMS Principal; her team; and Dr. Rebecca Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent, and others involved in making this project possible.

Arts

Dr. Loughead highlighted the High School marching band for their dedication and exemplifying what the arts are about at Hampton. He noted that the band practices multiple times per day, often in hot weather. He encouraged the community to watch them perform this fall at sporting events and in competition. Lastly, Dr. Loughead complimented Mr. Himmler and the parents involved in that effort.

Athletics

As the start of fall sports approaches, Dr. Loughead pointed out that the football team began heat training on Monday, August 9. He is looking forward to fall sports beginning in a few weeks and for the school spirit and camaraderie it inspires. Dr. Loughead encouraged the community to support the District's student athletes this fall.

Educational Programs

Mrs. Hamlin (1:11:04)

Mrs. Hamlin introduced the first action item for approval which was the District's School Reopening Health and Safety Plan.

Dr. Loughead said he wanted to review updates to the Health and Safety Plan that have developed since the meeting on August 2. He emphasized that this has been a challenging decision and recommendation to make — a year and a half long effort to balance the health and safety of the District's students with their academics. He feels the District made positive decisions last year which enabled students to return to in-person learning. The District's goal is to offer five-day-per-week in-person instruction this school year.

Further, Dr. Loughead said educators abide by in loco parentis, which is to care for students as if they were their own children. That is why, he said, decisions surrounding mask-wearing have been so difficult. Ultimately, he said the District will recommend what it thinks is best for the well-being of students.

Dr. Loughead's presentation included the following:

- CDC and AAP guidelines regarding mask-wearing — which have not changed since the August 2 meeting.

CDC Guidance (Update on July 27, 2021)

- Given new evidence on the Delta variant, CDC **recommends** universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status

CDC Guidance (Update on July 9, 2021)

- Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidance (July 19, 2021)

- All students older than 2 years and all school staff should wear masks at school (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use)

- There is still no vaccine available to children under the age of 12.
- The District is fortunate that many community members and students have been vaccinated.
- Allegheny County COVID-19 community transmission update, with new information received Monday afternoon from Dr. Deborah Bogen, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department, and Dr. LuAnn Brink, Chief Epidemiologist of the ACHD.
 - The most recent updates are not encouraging, as cases, incidence rate, hospitalizations and positivity rate are all rising in Allegheny County.

Dr. Loughead provided an update on Allegheny County’s community transmission rate, including the most recent 7-day period (July 30 to August 5) and previous 7-day period (July 23-29), which show that confirmed cases, PCR positivity rate, incidence rate per 100,000, and other factors are all on the rise:

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Confirmed cases | | Incidence rate per 100,000 | |
| Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days | Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days |
| 643 | 372 | 52.9 | 30.6 |
| PCR positivity rate | | Avg. daily hospitalizations | |
| Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days | Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days |
| 4.9% | 3.7% | 77.4 | 58.6 |
| Avg. daily patients on ventilators | | % of emerg. dept. visits due to CLI | |
| Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days | Most recent 7 Days | Previous 7 Days |
| 15.6 | 7.1 | 0.7% | 0.5% |

Dr. Loughead shared that the 7-day rolling average for Allegheny County has reached substantial transmission, with a county case count of 92.68 per 100,000 as of the August 9 meeting, based on the following chart:

| INDICATOR | LOW TRANSMISSION (BLUE) | MODERATE TRANSMISSION (YELLOW) | SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION (ORANGE) | HIGH TRANSMISSION (RED) |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days | 0-9 | 10-49 | 50-99 | ≥100 |

7-day rolling total in Allegheny County - 1,127 cases

92.68 per 100,000 persons (120.55% change)

Source: CDC - data as of August 8, 2021, 6 a.m.

Dr. Loughead said Allegheny County is rapidly approaching high transmission status. He added that a recent conversation he had with Dr. LuAnn Brink, Chief Epidemiologist of the ACHD, revealed

that these trends are discouraging and likely to continue rising. Additionally, Dr. Brink confirmed that hospitalizations in Allegheny County have been increasing due to the spread of the Delta variant.

Recommendations from the Allegheny County Health Department have remained static since last week's meeting. However, Dr. Brink confirmed Monday that ACHD is recommending that districts follow CDC and AAP guidelines. Additionally, a mask mandate has not been ruled out. Transmission rates are increasing in Allegheny County due to the Delta variant, which is highly transmissible and can be spread regardless of vaccination status.

Since the August 2 meeting, the District analyzed the ages of its upcoming 6th-grade students and found that the majority of students are not eligible for the vaccine at the beginning of the school year, and only half are eligible by January 2022. Since 6th-graders are in a cohort, Dr. Loughead said required masking for students and staff is possible and feasible.

At the **Elementary and 6th-grade level**, the following mask-wearing guidelines and COVID-19 mitigation measures were proposed by Dr. Loughead (new updates are bold-faced):

- Students and staff will be required to wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
 - **Should Allegheny County be determined to be in low transmission status the District will consult with ACHD and reevaluate this policy.**
- Students will be spaced at least 3 feet apart to the maximum extent feasible, in all educational and communal environments.
- Universal masking on school district transportation is required for all school levels based on federal law.

Also, Dr. Loughead commented on previous remarks related to bullying. He said the District is proud of its faculty for the way they interact with students in following different rules, including mask requirements last year. He reiterated that bullying is not tolerated in the District for any reason. Moreover, he said the District needs to be notified of bullying incidents so action can be taken to stop them.

For **7th and 8th grade at the Middle School and for the High School**, the following mask-wearing guidelines and COVID-19 mitigation measures were proposed by Dr. Loughead:

- The District is strongly recommending masking for unvaccinated students and staff while indoors.
 - **However, should Allegheny County be determined to be at the high transmission level, masking indoors will be strongly recommended and — if conditions warrant — may be required for both vaccinated and unvaccinated students, staff and visitors.**
- Students will be spaced at least 3 feet apart to the maximum extent feasible, in all educational and communal environments.
- Universal masking on school district transportation is required for all school levels based on federal law.

This proposal was recommended since 7th and 8th grade and high school students are eligible for the vaccine. Dr. Loughead once again emphasized that the District's goal is to keep schools open five days a week with in-person instruction, with limited quarantining of students.

He also presented the following information on contact tracing and quarantining:

- “Close contact” is being within 3 feet of a positive individual for a minimum of 15 minutes.
- Asymptomatic fully-vaccinated individuals or individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior three months should get tested 3-5 days after exposure. They may remain in school as long as they wear a mask indoors, as they await test results and remain asymptomatic.
- Unvaccinated individuals must follow standard testing and quarantine guidelines as per CDC. The standard CDC quarantine is 10 days without testing and 7 days after receiving a negative test which must occur on day 5 or later.
- As per guidance from the ACHD, close contact excludes students in the K-12 indoor classroom setting who correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time of an exposure. This does not include staff or visitors.
- During contact tracing procedures parents and students are not obligated or required to provide information regarding vaccination status or a history of previous COVID-19 infection. However, this information may be provided voluntarily and if obtained by the District it will be handled similarly to other protected health information that the District receives from students and families.
- The Allegheny County Health Department will lead contact tracing in conjunction with the HTSD Health Services Department and will notify families directly of formal quarantine requirements.

Why a change in approach?

Dr. Loughead provided the following reasons:

- Required mask-wearing is a significant change from earlier this summer when community transmission was low and the District was considering a voluntary participation in the CDC’s guidelines.
- The District is emphasizing the safety of its younger students who are not yet eligible for vaccination.
- The District will continue to monitor community transmission in Allegheny County. Currently, there are no plans to close schools or to have mass quarantining of students. The District’s goal is to remain open for in-person instruction — so that students can receive an excellent Hampton education.

In answering several questions from Board members, Dr. Loughead provided the following information:

- If all students and staff are properly wearing masks in the event of an exposure to an individual with COVID-19, even if three feet of physical distance is not maintained, no one who is asymptomatic will need to quarantine. However, those individuals should get tested 3-5 days after exposure. They may remain in school as long as they wear a mask indoors, as they await test results and remain asymptomatic.
- Based on mask-wearing guidance that the District has proposed, K-6 students and staff would not be able to spontaneously remove their masks while seated at their desks. However, frequent mask breaks will once again be encouraged. Additionally, more outdoor instruction would be

encouraged since masks are only required indoors. Mrs. Midgley indicated that she feels parents should be given the choice whether or not to mask their children.

- If a vaccinated High School student who is not wearing a mask faces an exposure, that individual would not be required to quarantine. However, that individuals should get tested 3-5 days after exposure. They may remain in school as long as they wear a mask indoors, as they await test results and remain asymptomatic.
- The ACHD does not advise children to wear an N95 mask. Even if a K-6 student wore an N95 mask, it would not eliminate the need for them to quarantine after exposure to another student who was unmasked with COVID-19.
- Vaccination rate among 7-12 grade students and staff is believed to be very high.
- Students with difficulty wearing masks should contact their building principal, school counselor, or pediatrician. There are many medical barriers to mask-wearing. Last year, the District worked with many families to find solutions for those students, including suitable masks and mask breaks. Also, students with mental or physical issues with mask-wearing have an option to obtain a medical exception to wear them.
- Dr. Loughead will meet weekly with Dr. Bogen and Dr. Brink, along with other regional superintendents, to discuss community transmission in Allegheny County and updated recommendations. The Board will be provided with weekly updates on those meetings.

Comments from Board Members

Mrs. Hamlin echoed previous remarks that nobody wants to be wearing masks at this point. However, the District wants to avoid hybrid/remote learning. For K-6 students who are not eligible for the vaccine, Mrs. Hamlin believes that it would be difficult to avoid outbreaks. While she hopes Allegheny County's community transmission improves over the next few weeks, at this time she feels mask-wearing is the only option.

Ms. Balason echoed Mrs. Hamlin's comments in stating she is in favor of the District's Health and Safety Plan since she wants in-person instruction to continue with limited interruptions.

Mrs. Midgley believes a great number of families would still mask their children regardless if they were required. She emphasized that families should have the choice whether or not to mask their children.

Mr. Wesley expressed concern about quarantining, in addition to frustration with the CDC. However, he said the science has changed regarding the Delta variant, which is why the decision was made to mask students who are not yet eligible for the vaccine. Further, he believes that five-day-per-week in-person instruction is important.

Additionally, Mr. Wesley pointed out that he was disturbed to hear comments about teachers yelling at students for not wearing masks. He said the District's teachers have done an amazing job but that parents should report those instances to their building principal. Likewise, he was disturbed to hear about bullying taking place on school buses; he emphasized the importance of reporting those incidents. Last, he said he is proud of the District and its community members coming together to voice opposing views.

Mr. Jarrell thanked Dr. Loughead and the administration for putting together the updated Health and Safety Plan, which is an extension of what the District had been doing for the past 18 months — taking a thoughtful and reactive approach to new information in modifying its plan. However, he stressed that the District should be clear about what level of community transmission or case count it would take to end mask requirements.

Mr. Wesley agreed, adding that the District needs to be ready to pivot quickly if and when local conditions change.

Ultimately, the Board approved the School Reopening Health and Safety Plan by an 8-1 vote. Mrs. Midgley cast the dissenting vote.

- 2021-22 Hampton Township School District Goals
 - Mr. Vasko recommended that the District establish a committee to determine whether Personal Finance should be a graduation requirement — which is required for graduation or part of the curriculum in 24 states. The course could help students learn about debt, retirement, and other aspects of personal finance, Mr. Vasko said. Dr. Loughead said a formal study would need to be conducted and reported back to the Board with the findings, adding that an online Personal Finance course is a viable option.
- Emergency Instructional Time Plan for the 2021-22 School Year
- AIU Title I Non-public School Agreement

Personnel

Mrs. Midgely (1:59:23)

Mrs. Midgely recommended and the Board unanimously approved the following items:

Resignations

- Resignation of Mrs. Jennifer Matelan who is resigning after four years with the District effective August 4, 2021. Mrs. Matelan was a Class III Paraeducator at Wyland Elementary School.
- Resignation of Ms. Marissa Kealey who is resigning after one year with the District effective August 22, 2021. Ms. Kealey is a Class III Paraeducator at Hampton High School.

Teachers

- Ms. Sydney Funtal as a Long-Term Substitute Reading Teacher at Central Elementary School for the first semester of the 2021-2022 School Year, effective August 23, 2021. Salary is \$33,500, pro-rated. Ms. Funtal is a substitute for Mrs. Kristalyn Bruno.
- Ms. Haylie Rupnow as a Building Substitute at Wyland Elementary School for the 2021-2022 School Year, effective August 23, 2021. Salary is \$22,000. This is an annual position.
- Ms. Alyssa Loannou as a Building Substitute at Central Elementary School for the 2021-2022 School Year, effective August 23, 2021. Salary is \$22,000. This is an annual position.

Other

- A change in status for Mrs. Audrey Sieg, moving from a Class IV Health Office Assistant to a Health Office Nurse position at Hampton Middle School effective August 23, 2021. Salary is \$22.45 per hour. Mrs. Sieg is replacing Ms. Emily Golacinski.

Supplementals

The Administration's recommendation of the following conditional appointments for 2021-2022, each at a rate of \$139 per point, with each such appointment being conditioned on the District making a subsequent determination that the supplementary position and work associated with such position is needed and approved and will continue during the coronavirus pandemic following future guidance from the Commonwealth. Each appointment shall be effective only where the position is approved and operational and where the work associated with such position is actually being performed. This conditional appointment does not obligate the District to approve some, all or any of the supplementary positions for 2021-2022 and does not guarantee any of the persons listed below that his or her supplementary position will be needed and in place, or that it will continue uninterrupted, in 2021-2022:

| NAME | POSITION | BUILDING | POINTS | RANGE | TOTAL STIPEND |
|---------------|--|----------|--------|-------|---------------|
| Whitney Semin | Middle School Musical Assistant Director/Choreographer | HMS | 18 | 18/20 | \$2,502 |
| Emily Milbert | Co-Bus Monitor | Central | 2.27 | 12 | \$316 |
| Dainen Holler | Co-Bus Monitor | Central | 9.73 | 12 | \$1,352 |

Facilities

Ms. Balason (2:02:16)

Ms. Balason recommended and the Board approved the following items:

- Hampton High School Renovation Project Phase I Bid Contracts as follows:
 - General Contractor – R.A. Glancy & Sons, Inc for their base bid with alternates selected in the amount of \$10,660,500
 - Electrical Contractor - Merit Electrical Group for their base bid with alternates selected in the amount of \$2,755,221
 - HVAC Contractor – East West Manufacturing for their base bid in the amount of \$1,494,500
 - Plumbing Contractor – Vrabel Plumbing Company, LLC for their base bid with alternates selected in the amount of \$694,400
- Testing and Inspection Service proposal from Construction Engineering Consultants, in the estimated amount of \$83,000, pending final review and approval by the District Solicitor.

Student Affairs

Mrs. Webb (2:04:18)

Mrs. Webb recommended and the Board unanimously approved the following items:

- November 12, 2021, Act 80 Day for the 2021-2022 school year.

- 2021 – 2022 Handbook for Families with Elementary School Children.
- Student Science Research Club Competition Fund Request not to exceed \$300.
- HHS Boys Soccer Field Trip to Erie Premier Sports Camp in Erie from August 19-21, 2021, at no cost to the District.

Finance

Mr. Vasko (2:06:29)

Mr. Kline reported that on August 5, 2021, taxable refundings of the 2017 and 2018A bond issues were completed, resulting in net present value savings of approximately \$714,000 — primarily through debt service reduction and cash at closing of approximately \$100,000. He said the debt service reduction from this and the previous two refundings will offset future debt service which will be helpful when the District completes its next bond issue for the High School renovation project.

There were no action items this evening.

Technology

Mr. Stein (2:10:54)

There was no report this evening.

Policy and Legislative Affairs

Mr. Shages (2:11:01)

Mr. Shages recommended and the Board unanimously approved the Second Reading and Adoption of Policy #123.2: Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Mr. Shages also recommended that the Board table the first reading of the Threat Assessment policy to enable the District to provide a more streamlined version.

Transportation

Mr. Jarrell (2:12:14)

Mr. Jarrell recommended and the Board unanimously approved the 2021-22 Transportation Routes.

Mr. Kline noted that masks are required on school buses at all grade levels per the federal mandate. Further, due to school start time changes, Mr. Kline said there are six buses and vans going to AM Beattie, as the District has done everything possible to minimize the time it will take students to get from their homes to Beattie — which he said in most cases is 25-30 minutes. Also, the last stop for elementary school students will now be around 4:20-4:25 p.m., whereas the previous goal was to have those students home by 4 p.m.

Additionally, Mr. Kline said families will receive individual bus assignments via Infinite Campus the week of August 16, 2021.

A.W. Beattie Career Center Board Report

Mr. Stein (2:14:56)

Mr. Stein reported that the business manager at A.W. Beattie, who split time with Lenape Technical School, has resigned from the position. He indicated that A.W. Beattie will pursue another business manager to split time with Lenape, while the current business manager will continue in his role until a replacement is found.

HAEE Report

Mrs. Midgley (2:18:30)

Mrs. Midgley reported that the Talbot Tailgate is scheduled for October 2, 2021. Volunteers are needed. The annual 5K race at Hartwood Acres is scheduled for October 9, 2021.

Additionally, HAEE is preparing to launch a new website. HAEE is also looking forward to the HMS Learning Pavilion ribbon cutting on August 17. A \$1,500 grant was approved to install a hydroponic system near the Learning Pavilion.

Public Comment

2:20:20

Mr. Wesley invited members of the audience to make public comment as the Board reached the end of the agenda.

Community Member

2:20:46

A parent said her 3rd-grader was yelled at constantly by teachers for not properly wearing a mask to the point that her child does not like going to school. She informed the Board that after the vote was taken on the Health and Safety Plan she enrolled her daughter in PA Cyber School. Additionally, she said mask breaks did not occur as previous commenters indicated. She thanked Mrs. Midgely for voting against the Health and Safety plan and pledged to campaign against current Board members, whom she said did not listen to their constituents.

Community Member

2:23:20

A parent of a daughter who commented earlier in the evening questioned the Board about N95 masks, suggesting that false information was provided earlier in the meeting.

Community Member

2:26:22

A parent with three elementary students in the District who commented earlier in the evening asked the Board why no surveys were issued to parents prior to approval of the Health and Safety Plan.

Dr. Loughead indicated that the District relied on the guidance from public health experts such as the CDC and ACHD to propose a recommendation to the Board. Also, the parent suggested that students could take their masks off if they were physically distanced by three feet. Meanwhile, he also commended the Board for looking into a Personal Finance requirement so students can learn everyday life skills. Last, he said the group of parents pushing for the choice whether or not to mask their children will continue their effort moving forward.

Community Member

2:30:51

A parent asked Dr. Loughead several questions, to which he provided the following answers:

- If a student needs to quarantine, the District will continue to offer support and remote learning opportunities.
- Any student who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate.
- If a parent tests positive, the decision for their child to quarantine would be left up to the families.
- Unvaccinated students who had COVID-19 within the last three months will follow the same procedure for an exposure as vaccinated students. However, if all individuals exposed were properly wearing masks, there is no requirement to quarantine.
- Middle School teachers and staff are only required to wear masks around 6th-grade students.

Community Member

2:38:09

A parent with four children in the District said the debate over mask-wearing is a positive thing for the District, as community members will now be more engaged with decisions made by the School Board. He also suggested he will be running for a future School Board seat.

Community Member

2:39:34

A community member asked about physical distancing on buses. Dr. Loughead indicated that three feet of physical distancing on buses will be implemented in most cases, adding that updates will be provided to parents if there are any changes to that plan.

Student

2:40:42

The Senior Class President, a drum major and cross-country team member, said he was initially optimistic about the change in school start time for High School students. However, upon further reflection, he said the plan could have a negative effect on A.W. Beattie students, members of the marching band, athletes, and students who work after school jobs. He asked Dr. Loughead if it would be possible to allow extracurricular activities to take place in the morning so students could have more time later in the day. Dr. Loughead said he would be happy to discuss this proposal with the Student Council.

Community Member

2:43:40

A parent who spoke earlier suggested that the government is corrupt and does not serve the best interest of its constituents regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Member

2:46:41

A parent who is new to the District within the past two years said the administration has done an amazing job navigating the pandemic. She wishes the CDC or ACHD would mandate masks instead of leaving up to individual school districts. She urged the Board to consider mask mandates for all students and staff if conditions continue to worsen. As a pediatric nurse practitioner, she said she has seen children suffering from COVID-19. Mask-wearing is not about parental choice, rather it is about the health and safety of children. Further, she said that masks are not harmful. Dr. Loughead answered her question in stating that the District will look into how it can ensure 7-12 grade students will wear masks whose parents want their children wearing masks.

Community Member

2:51:45

A community member asked the Board if the District submitted its Health and Safety Plan by the July 30 deadline to receive ESSER funding. Dr. Loughead indicated the plan was submitted in June, but the revised plan that was just approved would not affect the District's standing to receive funds; updates to the Health and Safety Plan are expected.

Community Member

2:54:00

A parent who spoke earlier against required masking thanked the Board for taking into consideration input from community members on both sides of the issue. Additionally, he said Personal Finance should definitely be a part of the curriculum. Dr. Loughead provided the following answers to his questions:

- Reporting vaccination status will not be required.
- The District will work with families accordingly whose children violate the masking policy to assist them in the need to comply.
- The school code in the State Board of Education regulations permits masking mandates.
- The number of mask breaks depends on the grade level. The expectation is that mask breaks are appropriate and needed. The District trusts that teachers will provide mask breaks when necessary.
- Graduation requirements can be found in the High School Program of Studies.

Bus Driver

2:57:16

The bus driver who spoke earlier said she did not file a written report regarding the bullying incident she previously referred to. Mr. Wesley indicated he believed her story but expressed concern that the bus company did not take appropriate action in notifying the District. Both agreed that this is a serious issue that will not be tolerated.

Mr. Wesley motioned to adjourn the meeting. There was no executive session.