

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING  
OF THE TENAFLY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 2, 2020  
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

DATE 9/21/20

APPROVED 

**(All Public Board Meetings are Recorded and Posted on the District Website)**

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING  
OF THE TENAFLY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 2, 2020  
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Janet Horan who read the following statement:

“The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right to the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon.”

In accordance with provisions of this act, the Tenafly Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be publicized by having the date, time and place thereof posted at the Borough office, Tenafly Public Library, administrative building, in the local press and on the district’s web site.

On roll call, the following Board members answered present:

Mark Aronson	Paula Newman
Patricia Flynn	Edward J. Salaski
Inbal Israeli Miller	Jocelyn Schwarz
Jane Juhng	Janet I. Horan

The following staff members were present:

Ms. Shauna DeMarco, Superintendent  
Dr. Evelyn Mamman, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction \*  
Ms. Cheryl Nardino, Business Administrator/Board Secretary  
Ms. Danielle Diaz, Human Resources Manager

Also present:

Mr. Rodney Hara, Esq., Fogarty and Hara

A motion was made by Ms. Israeli Miller and seconded by Ms. Flynn that the Board convenes in closed session according to the following:

WHEREAS, the Tenafly Board of Education has been formed pursuant to applicable New Jersey Statutes, and

WHEREAS, the Board is charged with the responsibility of performing all acts and doing all things, consistent with law and the rules of the State Board of Education, necessary for the lawful and proper conduct, equipment and maintenance of the public schools and public school property of the Tenafly Public School District, and

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10-4-12) permits the exclusion of the public ("closed session") from a meeting of the Board in certain circumstances, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that circumstances exist for such a closed session,

WHEREAS, the Board has found the action described below to be necessary and proper,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board on the date indicated above that:

- 1.) The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action on the closed session herein set forth.
- 2.) The confidential subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
  - Legal Matters
  - Personnel Matters
  - Student Matters
- 3.) The Board will return to Open Session at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Formal action will not be taken.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting recessed to closed session at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Salaski and seconded by Ms. Newman that the Board convene from closed session at 7:05 p.m. and go into open session.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Ms. Horan who read the following statement:

"The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right to the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon."

In accordance with provisions of this act, the Tenafly Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be publicized by having the date, time and place thereof posted at the Borough office, Tenafly Public Library, administrative building, in the local press and on the district's web site.

On roll call, the following Board members answered present:

Mark Aronson  
Patricia Flynn  
Inbal Israeli Miller  
Jane Juhng

Paula Newman  
Edward J. Salaski  
Jocelyn Schwarz  
Janet I. Horan

The following staff members were present:

Ms. Shauna DeMarco, Superintendent  
Dr. Evelyn Mamman, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Yas Usami, Business Administrator/Board Secretary  
Ms. Danielle Diaz, Human Resources Manager

Also present:

Mr. Stephen Fogarty, Esq., Fogarty and Hara

Ms. Horan opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Ms. Horan announced that candidate interviews for the Board's vacant seat will take place on September 16 and 17, and more information is forthcoming.

### **BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Ms. Horan read the following statement:**

Thank you for joining us this evening. We are holding this meeting due to the community temperature and all the anger, upset, frustration and disappointment that has been expressed via social media, calls to Board members, organizing community protest, petitions, etc. All of this has been in response to a delay to in person learning. As a Tenafly community member, it saddens me that so much anger is being freely tossed around at fellow community members, teachers, staff and the administration. We understand the upset and we hear you, as our number one priority all summer has been to open school in September with an educationally robust plan that met all state guidelines and mitigated health risks. All of this towards meeting the state mandate to reopen schools for in person learning.

This Board has been unequivocal in our focus to have in person instruction. Have we encountered difficulties...yes we have. Is this still our goal for in person instruction... yes it is. It is also our belief that the majority of our teachers and staff also support that goal. But we need more than the majority in order to safely open our schools. We acknowledge that a portion of our teachers and staff do not feel safe to return to school with in person learning and we need to understand exactly how many cannot return to school so that we can work on replacement hiring. We need to do this to appropriately staff our schools. Many school districts and employers across the country are dealing with this challenge. This is an unprecedented time, and once again, I ask that people approach this with some patience and kindness. Your children will be in classrooms with these teachers. These teachers are not trying to cause disruption, but are doing their best to protect themselves and their families. We can work through this, and we will work through this together.

As you may or may not realize, public school districts are bound by state laws and local policies. Things that are seemingly simple in the private sector, are not that way in a public school district. To that end, this past weekend a few Board members met with Mayor Zinna and Governor Murphy's chief policy advisor on education to discuss things that could possibly be done at the state level to help school districts navigate this unprecedented time, and we will continue to keep in touch. Thank you to Mayor Zinna for making that connection with Governor Murphy's office.

The August 28<sup>th</sup> announcement caused us as much disappointment as it did for all of you. It was on this date that it became clear to the administration that with the total number of leave requests at 81, we would not be able to properly staff our buildings for in person learning on the first day of school on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>. A judgement call was made at that time to tell the community as soon as we knew, thinking you could all have as much time as possible to plan accordingly. We certainly could have waited until Monday, and upon reflection, maybe we should have delayed this announcement. But had we waited, the numbers were likely to grow and the outcome would have been the same. As per the DOE, our superintendent must be able to certify a school's reopening seven days before it opens. There was no way Shauna DeMarco could do that for September 8<sup>th</sup>, given the number of leave requests in hand on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Our administrative team needed time to continue to go through every single leave request, respond, and then find replacements if need be. That simply could not be completed in time for the required 1 week in advance for the regular start of school. This week, they are working closely with our teachers and staff, including those that are medically compromised, to determine what accommodations will help them feel most comfortable coming back to work. For anyone that is unable to come to work, their positions will be posted for a leave replacement or substitute, depending on the situation. As per Ms. DeMarco's announcement on Monday, the phased in approach is scheduled to begin the week of September 14<sup>th</sup>.

**The following are some of the issues that we'd like to clarify:**

1) People have asked that we share the names and details of all teachers and staff leave requests. These are personnel matters and cannot be shared publicly. As of Tuesday, Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, the district has received 85 leave requests in total. 17 at the elementary level, 21 in the high school, 46 in the middle school and 1 district staff member. The leave requests amounted to 17% of our staff and teachers. Again, we understand the need for these requests and the administrative team is working through them to determine the overall staffing gap and fill it.

2) Many parents have offered to come into school, or offered suggestions of others to supervise the students, while the teachers who are unable to come to school teach remotely from their homes. While that sounds like a great idea in theory, the fact is that anyone who enters an educational space to supervise children needs to go through the hiring and vetting process. They need to undergo background checks, fingerprinting, be properly trained on how to oversee a classroom, be familiar with our policies and how they are enforced, and what to do in the event of a safety and security situation (most notable during a pandemic with extra health and safety concerns).

3) Dr. Mamman, our Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, has held optional professional development sessions for our teachers all summer. The 17 different trainings were very well attended by our teachers, who gave up their personal time off to participate. Most of these sessions were recorded and made available to teachers who did not have an opportunity to join previously, and the recordings are available for them to view during the 4 days of professional development scheduled for our teachers.

**Regarding our facilities - there is a lot of information out there that we'd like to clarify:**

1) Our plan and facilities are both compliant with all state guidelines. As with any summer work, preparation for the start of school continues up until the day our students come back to school, but all work will be complete for the start of school.

2) Fresh air is the best thing we can offer as far as ventilation goes for our students. This translates to opening the windows in the classrooms. In August, a team began checking windows in each classroom identifying those that needed repairs, and making those repairs. This window work is nearing completion and all classrooms will have properly functioning windows for the start of school.

3) It is true that our air conditioning project was delayed. We were as shocked and disappointed when we learned this as the community was. We have crews working overtime to complete the project ASAP. That being said, the suggestion from our doctors group was to cool the buildings with the air conditioning running overnight, and then to open the windows when the students are in the building. That is best for air circulation and mitigating health risk, and that will be done with the units that have been installed in each building at the start of school.

Janet Horan

**Ms. Schwarz read the following statement:**

Thank you, Janet.

**To continue clarification of our facilities projects:**

4) As per state guidelines, all HVAC systems will have filters maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations. The current MERV ratings of our filters range from 5-10. To enhance ventilation, the district will upgrade to MERV 13 filters in the unit ventilators and rooftop AC systems and install them as they become available.

5) Masks will be and were always required, as per our plan and the DOE guidelines.

6) PPE is in our buildings, with more arriving this week, including N95 masks for our teachers and staff in the most vulnerable situations. We will have 90 days worth of PPE, and will reorder supplies as needed. All desks in classrooms have been placed 6 ft apart in all directions where possible, and plexiglass has been and continues to be installed when 6 feet of social distancing cannot be achieved.

All students will be forward facing. In addition, all students and staff are being provided with face shields to use as a form of a barrier between them and everyone else, if they so choose.

7) Webcams for enhanced video and audio have been ordered and will be installed upon arrival. Until then, the teachers will be using the Chromebook cameras to teach to the at home cohort, while also teaching live. This is not ideal, but can certainly work until the cameras come in.

8) Additional ongoing projects include: tent installations and 6ft markings for students in and outside the buildings.

Regarding the list of TEA wants that is circulating – air quality tests do not address COVID concerns, but conducting one is under consideration. Some of the other items on that list have already been addressed, and others continue to be as already mentioned. Again, our plan is compliant with all state guidelines put forward, as Jackie Wellman (President of the TEA) stated in her statement at our August 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. So not only do we comply with the guidelines put forward by the state health officials, we feel it's also important to note that we

have been given advice by our district physician, Dr. John Owens, along with a large group of parent physicians, who volunteered countless hours of their time, throughout this entire process. They have attended multiple meetings, been in regular contact with our administrative team, and have answered direct questions from the TEA in a specially planned meeting, and they have been a huge asset.

We have heard there is confusion over the schedule. School will still begin next Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, and it will be virtual for our students. You will receive specific details about your respective school schedule in the coming days, if you haven't already. Then, as per Superintendent DeMarco's most recent communication, we are going to phase into our hybrid plan, starting with our youngest learners. We are targeting bringing Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> grade and our Paws and Cubs programs into the buildings for our hybrid model the week of September 14<sup>th</sup>. Grade 2-5 will come back the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>, and grades 6-12 will come back the week of September 29<sup>th</sup>. When we return to in-person learning, we will be starting with phase 1 of our hybrid plan. We need to ease into in-person learning, get everyone comfortable with the new protocols and procedures we need to follow, make sure our numbers aren't increasing, and then build from there.

Our overall goal, as it always was, is to get back to full in classroom teaching. But until then, during this time our students are in the full virtual environment, some of our teachers will be teaching from their classrooms, unless circumstances prevent a teacher from doing so. This will help everyone feel more connected to each other and our schools and will help to make the transition into our hybrid plan smoother. During the full virtual period, as per Dr. Mamman's communication yesterday, there will be direct live instruction/streaming by all teachers during the scheduled class times, and content and expectations will mirror brick and mortar classrooms.

Some of you have been interested in learning how many of our families chose the all virtual option for their children. As of August 21<sup>st</sup>, we had 610 students enrolled in our all virtual option. 304 at the elementary level, 109 at the middle school and 197 at the high school.

Again, we understand all of the anger and frustration. We are aware that there is a parent rally tomorrow evening and we support everyone's ability and desire to express their opinions, however you feel necessary. And we also acknowledge that there are many parents who understand the position we are in and trust in our administrative team and Tenafly teachers and staff to work together to bring our students back to school safely. Whatever your opinion, please know, we are trying to make the best of a very challenging situation. There was no framework or handbook given to any of us on how to respond to a pandemic. We need to take this tough decision that was made on Friday and move forward. This Board and administration has a common goal - to have those students who choose, back in school together and with their teachers. We know how important it is for them, socially, emotionally and academically. And for those that choose all virtual, for them to have a robust educational experience while remaining as connected as possible.

We ask that you treat each other and our teachers, staff and administration with respect and kindness as we all navigate this uncharted territory.

Please continue to look out for more communications from our administrative team in the coming days and weeks to both prepare for our all virtual start, and to transition to our hybrid plan. Thank you. Jocelyn Schwarz

**Ms. Israeli Miller read the following statement:**

We are all living through a very difficult time, one that this country hasn't faced in a century. In times like these, we must all come together and support each other, with respect and compassion to each other's struggles, and patience when our best laid plans encounter some roadblocks that require a detour before we can go back on the highway.

Our community is comprised of parents and residents who elected the Board trustees to represent them, and of teachers and staff that elected their association leadership to represent them. Our two groups are not at war with each other. We do not have conflicting agendas. We all want for our schools to reopen. We all want to go back to some resemblance of normalcy. Our students want to return to school, learn and interact with their friends. Our teachers want to return to school and teach their students. Our teachers love teaching and they love their students, they love their profession. None of our teachers prefer teaching virtually, just like our students, they yearn to go back to school.

We all share the same goal – to safely go back to school. Where we differ is what we consider to be safe enough. When I say differ, I don't mean that the parents differ from the teachers, I mean that we differ within each segment of our community. The state issued safety standards as guiding principles to reopening schools, and many parents, as do many teachers, feel those guidelines are sufficient for a safe return. At the same time, there are parents, as there are teachers, that feel they need additional measures in order to feel safe going back to school, and there are those who do not feel safe going into indoor spaces no matter what safety measures are provided. When someone you love has a high risk of complications due to COVID, the coronavirus's life-threatening implications become very real and no amount of PPE could make you feel comfortable taking continued risks and you would do everything in your power to avoid them. That is why, during this COVID crisis, our state allows every family to make the choice of what they deem to be acceptable risk for themselves, and allows for students to opt for full-virtual studies. The state also allows a similar choice for teachers and staff, and allows them to apply for leave of absence.

We are not at war with our teachers and staff. Those who requested leave did not go on a strike. They originally requested to teach virtually from their homes. Our district's attorney advised us that at this time we could not grant their request, so instead we offered them the highest possible accommodations, including face coverings and masks, face shields, a physical barrier, assignment to a single classroom, no interactions with large groups of students or staff as well as daily cleaning and sanitizing of their classroom. Our administration sent out those replies simultaneously to all who requested leave, and informed them that if they do not intend to accept these accommodations, they may apply for the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which provides paid sick time for employees under certain terms. It is no surprise then that shortly after receipt of this information, those teachers and staff notified administration of their intention to exercise their right to apply for leave and/or use their sick time. This was not an organized strike, but simply a legitimate matter of timing.



I hear people complaining that the Board has not engaged in negotiations with the TEA on the matter of these leave requests. There is no need to negotiate with the TEA on this matter, as this was not an organized strike. Having said that, the district is in constant communication with the TEA regarding improvements to our safety measures, which benefit our entire community, students, teachers and staff alike. We appreciate the safety input provided by our teachers and staff. They are our front-line workers, and as such, they know the condition and limitations of their classrooms better than anyone else. We need all hands on deck to open our schools safely, and we appreciate our teachers and staff's input regarding safety.

Going after our teachers and staff with accusations of organizing to reach a critical mass that would force our schools to close is unfair and simply not true. In fact, the percentage of teachers that requested to be fully virtual is about the same as the percentage of students that requested to be fully virtual. It just so happens that their positions vary in such way that we could not fully operate our schools without them.

When we explain that other towns in our area went fully virtual, it's because this has a domino effect. Teachers and staff who live in those towns will now need to find care for their own children in order to come teach in our schools; and if they cannot find such care, they are entitled for leave under that same Families First Coronavirus Response Act. So you see, teachers' family rights are just as protected as anyone else's, and their requests for leave are not derived from some union protected agreement. You all are protected by the same Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

We are not at war with our teachers and staff. We value them and they value working in our schools. We are all working together in order to find the best solutions to move forward. Even in areas where our hands are tied by current state policies, we work with state policy makers in attempt to change those policies and enable us more flexibility to adjust to the consequences of this new reality.

The BOE is committed to opening our schools to in-person learning. We all know how important it is and we don't take this lightly for a moment. We can still work this out and open our schools, we just need more time. Throughout this all, we ask you to be patient and we ask you to be kind. Be kind to one another even when you have differences of opinions, and be kind to our teachers.

Remember that when all this is over and done, we all need to move forward together as a community. Bridges that are burnt are hard to mend, and words that are written are hard to take back. I implore you to always remember that our children are watching and learning from our example. They learn how to treat one another, they learn how to treat their teachers, and they learn how to cope in uncertain times.

Thank you.

Inbal Israeli Miller

**Mr. Aronson read the following statement:**

I am speaking to you in my capacity as an individual board member. My words are not intended to reflect the view of the Board of Education.

I want to take this occasion to present my views on our current situation.

To start with, the Tenafly Board of Education has met the health and safety standards that have been necessary to open by the NJ Department of Education. This is fact. And, just to be clear, in Jackie's Wellman public statement on August 24th, it states "**Therefore, while we understand that Tenafly is compliant in the state's eyes in regards to meeting the minimum standard**" and yes, the statement does go on to state that the union does not believe the state standards are sufficient. It is interesting to note, however, that the union believes it is safe for the fall coaches to return to the fields and be in an environment that has fewer of the protections than the classrooms do. This support by the union preserves over \$150,000 in stipends to their membership.

We understand that the union does not think the state requirements are stringent enough and we can appreciate that some of the members in the union do not feel safe returning to the classroom. It is no secret to anyone that there are many different views on what is safe these days. We have families that believe we should be open for full days and we have families that have opted to remain home for virtual only learning. This is true not only for our schools but for every aspect of our lives these days. We know this. But, we need to follow the laws of the NJ department of education. Surely, we should all agree that this is reasonable and proper. And, again, let's be clear, there are rules we follow with the NJ Department of Education that perhaps we do not think are fair and reasonable; such as, tenure for educators and the ability to accumulate substantial amounts of paid sick leave. Yet, these are the rules and laws that govern school districts, so we adhere to them.

For the staff that are not comfortable returning to in school instruction, we understand this is your choice. You should be free and entitled to make this choice and avail yourselves of the options not to return, which include taking an unpaid leave of absence, taking family leave or taking your paid sick days. I do believe that union leadership has put pressure on the membership not to make free individual choices but rather has taken the strategic view that if enough of the membership does not return to our schools, we will be forced to remain virtual only. So, yes, I am saying this - I believe the union has engaged in a de facto job action. Here is what I am asking to those members - given that the district and the community want to have in person instruction, can you please make your intentions of not returning known to the administration now so we can properly identify all of the gaps in our staffing and work to resolve them. This approach would be in the best interests of your students, the children of Tenafly, and would enable us to go forward with our plan. We understand you do not endorse our plan and we can respect this. But, please do not hold the district, the community and the children hostage by not being clear with your intentions.

The final point I would like to address is the virtual component of the instruction. The spring had its flaws and there were educators who did not show up and perform the way they should have. I realize this Board and the administration has not acknowledged this. I do. The experience for some of our students was very bad. But, now we are on to the fall plan and that plan is very different from the spring. Most importantly to me, this fall plan has both clear expectations of the classroom teachers and other service providers as well as clear expectations of the administration to how they will be monitored. I realize we have not earned your trust based on the experience in the spring. But, allow us to prove to you this time it will be different. I urge you to follow the chain of command to identify a problem and do not stop until you receive satisfaction and this means going to the Board of Education as the last resort.

We will not stand by and we are committed to making this work.

On your end, I urge you to be patient. There will be mishaps. Technology will fail from time to time and the experience your child will be receiving will not be as good as if they were in the normal environment. We all know that. Be patient. This is new to your teachers and educators as well, and they are trying their best to make it work as we all are. It is the most difficult transition for them, so let's all be patient and understanding.

Continue to express your views and opinions. We read every one of them. Although the outcome may not be what you want, it is not because your comment or view is not being heard and considered. Mark Aronson

**Ms. Newman read the following statement:**

Good evening,

As you are all aware, Tenafly, along with every district in the state, must meet health and safety guidelines issued by the New Jersey Dept. of Education. We must also meet the legal requirement to provide a thorough and efficient education to our students.

As you also know from the information that has been provided to the community over the past few months, we all worked consistently and openly to create multiple options to re-open our schools, each of which allowed for as much in-person learning as possible. These plans were continually revised to incorporate updated state requirements, the most up-to-date scientific and medical data, and, importantly, the concerns that were raised by parents.

Make no mistake, our school buildings were on track to open on September 8<sup>th</sup>: clean, safe, and addressing the multiple health issues that Covid-19 poses. In the limited number of spaces in our buildings where we were not satisfied that the environment would meet our high standards, no one, no student, faculty, or staff, would be physically in those spaces under the hybrid plan.

At our Board meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup>, the hybrid plan was reaffirmed and, subsequently, the building supervisors released class schedules and assignments. Most teachers were willing to return to their classrooms. Unfortunately, by the end of the week, with confirmation that 80+ teachers and staff intended to use their personal leave, we were forced again to change and postpone our hybrid plan. The Administration immediately notified the community we would start 100% virtually.

Now it is our job, as Board members, to support the Administration to fill those vacancies so that we can re-open our buildings and implement our hybrid plan as quickly as possible.

In closing, I want to say to parents – we hear you, we have been listening carefully and consistently over the last many months. Many of us also have children at home who need to return to school.

To the vast majority of our teachers and staff who were ready to return to our buildings on September 8<sup>th</sup> in our safe and clean school buildings, thank you for caring about our children.

Paula Newman

## PUBLIC RECOGNITION-COMMUNITY COMMENTARY

Ms. Horan inquired if there were any guests in the audience who wished to address the Board. Public comments may be shared through the Zoom Q&A feature. Any shared comment must include the person's name and address in order to be recognized. The submitted questions will be read aloud. Guests are allowed 3 minutes per participant.

Caller – Name and Address	Inquiries / Comments	Administration / Board Responses
Maia Dimant, 116 Magnolia Ave.	Concerned about treatment of teachers; and 6 hour daily Zoom time for TMS and THS.	
Sara Levinson, 282 Woodland St.	Hopes union and administration work together for reopening school.	
Meena Dogan, 24 Westervelt Avenue	Asked for clarification of cohort timeline Thanked the BOE and administration for their hard work.	
Lea Goldman, 7 Depyster	Troubled by the state of schools and communication. What is the plan of virtual instruction, and teacher training.	Professional development has been ongoing. Information is on the website. Reach out to your principal for more information about your school.
David Hong, 116 Kent Rd.	What are the costs of new statistic textbooks for curriculum changes. How can parents be involved with renegotiation of the CBA.	Ms. Horan: send me an email and I'll find out the costs. The CBA agreements are posted on the website and the process begins in January and the committee will be made known at board mtg.
Loran Alvator, 142 Windsor Rd.	Have direct communications been made between the TEA committee and the Board.	Mr. Horan: the administration and the TEA communicate directly.
Gus Sheha, 40 Clover St.	Dissatisfied with the Board's handling of the current situation, lack of communication, and lack of trust exists. Suggested all Board give resignations.	
Selina Eizik 225 Buckingham	Would like to hear what the teachers have to say. We don't have a virtual plan. Commented on the 80 staff members who took leave and the lack of communication to the public. Parents have not heard from teachers about the schedules.	Mr. Aronson: we have been prepared for a virtual plan.  Ms. Newman: A new plan could not be made until the documentation from the staff was confirmed.  Ms. DeMarco: teachers just came back and they will be prepared to inform parents of what they need to know.
Nedia Bonilla, 30 Engle St.	Concerns about ventilation system, what student supplies are needed, computers, and communication from the school should be better.	Ms. DeMarco: check the website for District News and there are links containing valuable information.  Ms. Schwarz: a communication went out to the parents yesterday from the MS. This comes from the Genesis program.

Mr. Weinberg-Ofir, 232 Riveredge Rd.	The walk tomorrow is not against the teachers, but is a community walk for the children. Why didn't the opening plan work.	Ms. Horan: explained what caused the delay of the opening of school.
Jackie Vougiatzis, 348 Clinton Ave.	Have administrators given guidance to teachers to inform parents and are any listening tonight to comment. The Board doesn't seem unified with their messages.	Ms. Israeli Miller: The Board has diverse members and different opinions, but work together for a common goal.
Sunil Sabal, 72 Newcomb Rd.	What is the latest school SAT testing info. Would like to know the improvements regarding full virtual learning.	Ms. DeMarco: SAT testing is still on. If there is a change, it will be communicated.  Ms. Horan: the virtual instruction is much different than it was in the spring.
Ayelet Witelson, 25 Grandview Terrace	Compliments for the hard work. Concerns about the 6 hour daily schedule for virtual learning.	Ms. DeMarco: great consideration was given and the 6 hours consists of a variety of tasks, activities, breaks, etc.
Jason Korcak, 94 E. Clinton Ave.	Complaints on communication and lack of taking responsibility. How does a parent get a sample schedule for a Kindergartener.	Ms. DeMarco: the teachers will send out the schedules.  Ms. Horan: the Board has taken responsibility and thought sending the communication out on Friday afternoon about virtual instruction was the right thing to do, and acknowledges this is a big inconvenience for everyone.
Arlene Villa, 116 Newcomb Rd.	Has complaints about the lateness of the virtual plan.	Ms. DeMarco: a principal just emailed that the teachers have the materials and will have videos and letters set to go out on Friday.
Sandra Kingan, 164 W. Clinton Ave.	Supports all virtual learning at this time. It's important to be patient and tolerant at this time.	
Christina Hart, 55 Hillside Ave.	Thanks for your time tonight. There's a lack of information for details on the virtual plan. Why did the district's attorney deny teachers request for remote instruction. Are teachers trained regarding failure of technology, and she has staffing concerns.	Ms. Horan: investments have been made in the infrastructure to try to ensure technology supports the virtual instruction.  Ms. DeMarco: upgrades are being done on both teacher/student sides.  Stephen Fogarty, Esq: an extensive process was done to look at teacher requests; however, at that time there were no remote teaching positions. In person instruction was expected. Other accommodations were offered to the teachers for their comfort level to return to school. We needed to see which teachers were not returning, hiring of replacement teachers and time was needed to review all this causing a delay.

Kayla Yim, 74 Dean Drive	Student with concerns about absences and home internet issues.	Ms. DeMarco: a technology issue will not result in an absence.
Katherine Carlburg, 63 Ivy Lane	Believes there was a miscommunication at the elementary school level, but this seems rectified now. Teachers conduct is governed by contracts. We are going into a negotiating year, and will anticipate now what we have learned. We should try to be patient.	
Michelle Merchant, 130 Columbus	Spoke about the upcoming school opening and are we prepared if we do not open school in-person.	Ms. Horan: we know communication will need to be tightened up if we have to pivot again.  Ms. DeMarco: explained the process and time needed to post positions and hire staff. She said she accepts responsibility for releasing the virtual plan on Friday in an effort to update the community quickly, but in future will consider waiting until she has the details and full scope the community seeks. Also by mid-next week we want to give the precise re-opening schedule, or sooner if we know everything is in place. This is a fluid situation and the info will come from the supt. office .
Miles Florczak, 67 Buff Rd.	Has concerns about COVID-19, and teachers returning to school.	
Carol Lehman, 7 Colonial Rd.	Heard childcare is being explored for teachers.	Ms. DeMarco: the idea was discussed when there were only a few requests, but now the need has grown so large that we are looking at other resources.
Daniel Steinhagen, 53 Oak Ave.	Thank you to the Board and their efforts. He asked for clarification of 2 letters (Friday and Monday) that were communicated to parents.	Ms. DeMarco: new information was presented on Monday that allowed for a new pathway to reopening school.
Jessie Fleischer, 9 Orchard Place	Thanked everyone for all the time and effort at this time. Asked if COVID testing was considered in the reopening plan.	Ms. Horan: testing today does not safeguard for contracting virus tomorrow.  Ms. DeMarco: rapid testing is being explored for cases where symptoms are exhibited.
Heather Schulman, 15 Chestnut St.	TMS parents received detailed information, but elementary communication is lacking.	Mr. Horan: it has been confirmed that the elementary info is going out.
Jason Tuel, 12 Maple St.	Going forward, he suggested parents are kept informed with frequent updates. When is the virtual plan coming. Can students meet teachers in person.	Ms. Horan: school is opening soon.  Dr. Mamman: the virtual plan was outlined yesterday and the teachers will communicate the details.

<p>Kirsten Corio, 105 Magnolia Ave.</p>	<p>Of the 81 leave requests, what is the position breakdown.</p> <p>Has concerns about the delayed start and the dates. Does the TEA agree the plan is achievable.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: we have been advised not to disclose the positions; however, Mr. Fogarty gave the 3 separate categories of requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) sick leave under the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (federal law)</li> <li>2) Child Care Leave under the extension of the Family Medical Leave Act (schools that are closed, and to any teachers who live in communities who start dates have been extended or are on hybrid programs-entitled up to 12 weeks leave)</li> <li>3) requests for accommodations which may or may not lead to a vacancy (requests include ADA).</li> </ol> <p>Applications received include administrators, certified staff, and educational support staff.</p> <p>The information is not shared with the TEA, but we'll be able to see staffing needs going forward after review of all request. There is no deadline for the requests to be made.</p>
<p>Milena Dubov, 27 Ridge Rd.</p>	<p>Referred to Aug 31 letter received. Have all openings been posted.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: requests are still being reviewed. Not all postings have been done. The plan is being fully worked on.</p>
<p>Ana Moura 169 Elm St.</p>	<p>What are the open items in the buildings.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: Staffing is the only open issue. The buildings have been addressed.</p>
<p>Zeev Likwornik, 28 Richard St.</p>	<p>Trust is an issue. Suggests a support line for parents would be helpful. Spoke with Mayor Zinna about communication to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Many professionals in town are willing to help.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: asked Mr. Likwornik to send her an email about the communication idea discussed with the Mayor.</p>
<p>Jill Brahms, 79 Woodland Park Dr.</p>	<p>Concerned about consistency across the district, and are incentives being considered.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: the professional development rolled out has been giving teachers new tools to implement virtual instruction. More questions can be followed with emails.</p>
<p>Naoko Yamaguchi, 3109 The Plaza</p>	<p>Concerns about timeline, hand washing guidelines. Suggests schools create one folder in Google, and return to Orange/Black day system.</p>	<p>Ms. Horan: refer to the FAQ for guidelines.</p>

Eila El On, 280 Tenafly Rd.	Should another delay be expected if 80 positions are not filled. Concerns about technology.	Ms. DeMarco: explained the differences of the camera systems. The web cam style has been picked out and will be put in classrooms when received. The instruction is live streamed.  Ms. Horan: the staffing issue has been addressed several times tonight.
Stephanie Brandt, 66 Sussex Rd.	Can students with IEP's be considered to return to school in the first wave of the plan, and what is the A/C completion date.	Ms. DeMarco: Ms. Bassett and others were consulted on this issue, but we are unable at this point to commit to this.  Ms. Nardino: The completion date of A/C is Oct. 2.
Raquel Bain, 1 Lindley Ave.	Concerns about sp. ed student testing and will this be done in a virtual form. Have not received communication. Has SACC program been considered for child care that is needed by a portion of the community.	Ms. DeMarco: there will be instances where some of the testing will take place before we are fully back in school. This will be communicated to you soon. Child care is being explored for possibilities to help families.
Harris Miller, 361 Leonard Dr.	Mr. Miller's wife is a BOE employee, children attend Mackay. What is the plan for child care and what is the transparency for this issue as he has not had any information for months.	Ms. DeMarco: apologized and said we have explored for a month how to solve this issue, but are now looking at other resources due to the large need.
Yelena Meytes, 11 Jewett Ave.	Concerns of inconsistency and communications. Will the relationship with the safety and rollout committee be continued. Suggests a physician join the BOE mtgs. Mackay's communication has been very good.	Ms. DeMarco: I have been in constant contact with school physician Dr. Owens and working hard with the directors and medical experts of Mid Bergen Regional Health to create increased safety enhancements.

Ms. Horan stated that residents who have questions/comments and did not speak tonight can send the Board an email.

A motion was made by Mr. Aronson and seconded by Ms. Juhng to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl Nardino  
Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary