



# Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUGUST 13, 2020

## Curriculum Committee

*The Curriculum Committee met on August 3 to discuss curriculum updates and the challenges of remote instruction.*

1. **Curriculum Updates**—The Committee reviewed curriculum updates in all subject areas, including new courses in Musical Theatre, Facing History and Ourselves, Literacy in Music, Physical Science, and Accounting.
2. **Teaching Instrumental Music**— District Administration reviewed opportunities for additional ear training and music theory, as well as small group instruction, to supplement learning in instrumental music.
3. **Science**—Elementary science will shift from a discipline shaped structure to an integrated based structure.
4. **Freshman Seminar**— The Committee reviewed how this seminar assists students’ transition to high school with a culturally responsive curriculum.
5. **Textbook Updates**—New textbooks are ordered for AP Biology, AP History, and Honors History.
6. **Remote Instruction**— The Administration reviewed September professional development to include Zoom and other professional licenses for remote instruction, and internet access for all students.
7. **Questions** — The Committee discussed procedures to assist nursing staff and other areas of concerns for health and wellness. The Administration will offer responses to additional questions at upcoming meetings, including communication expectations for parents, how rigor will be maintained and monitored, social/emotional learning, and COVID-19 testing.

## Policy/Legislative Committee

*The Policy/Legislative Committee met on August 6 to discuss Policy 1648, addressing reopening schools in September 2020.*

1. **Policy 1648:** Reopening of School in September — Mr. Rubin explained the Department of Education directed school districts to develop school reopening plans with input from community stakeholders, and to adopt policies implementing various elements of the plan. The proposed Policy is a customized version of a template from the Strauss Esmay policy service, and incorporates the Road Back Plan issued by the Administration. Committee members acknowledged the hard work by the Administration and members of the committees who participated in the process.
2. **Committee Discussion:** The Committee discussed the need for additional professional development and the adequacy of remote platforms under consideration.
3. **Policy Approval** — With understanding the Administration is addressing the Committee’s concerns, Policy 1648 was approved to move to the full Board for adoption.

## Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee

*The Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee met on August 5, 2020 to review budget adjustments, school reopening plan, capital projects, and other ongoing projects.*

1. **2020 - 2021 Budget/SFRA S2 Piscataway State Aid:** Mr. Oliveira reviewed the State's revised funding that reduced Piscataway's state aid by \$1,066,229, and suggested using reserve money to make up the shortfall.
2. **COVID-19 Expenditures:** The District anticipates spending approximately \$1,000,000 for equipment, supplies and technology including masks, cleaners, hand sanitizer, and iPads. The expenses are being covered by budget reallocations, the Federal CARES Act funding, and possible FEMA reimbursements.
3. **COVID-19 Related Legislation:** The Committee reviewed the following legislation and pending legislation:
  - S2273 NJ Educators Health Insurance Legislation: Establishes new medical plan options for employees at all school districts and will have a significant impact on our self-insured medical plans.
  - A-4175/S-2697 NJ COVID-19 Emergency Bond Act: Authorized additional borrowing to make up for lost revenue in the State budget.
  - A-4509: If passed, this legislation will require school districts to delay the start of in-person instruction to October 31, and to provide virtual or remote instruction.
  - S2676/A4389: This bill was signed into law and it institutes a 2.5% tax on fully insured health insurance plans.
4. **Road Back Reopening Plan**— The District ordered cleaning supplies and HVAC filter replacements and will install hand sanitizer stations across the district. Custodians are completing summer cleaning and have additional instructions for high touch areas.
5. **Food Services:** All meals served to begin this school year will be "Grab & Go" style. Students receiving free/reduced meals will take home meals for days they are not in school. Free/Reduced applications are due on October 15.
6. **Transportation** — A review of new route assignments, bus protocols, and mask procedures will be completed for September.
7. **Facility Capital Projects:** Stadium upgrades are on target to be completed for fall 2020. PHS and Middle School Auditoriums/PHS Family Consumer Science Room upgrades are underway and will continue into November. Contract will be awarded for the Piscataway High School Vocal Music room HVAC upgrades. An ADA compliant entry ramp is being installed at Arbor, and miscellaneous concrete/paving projects will be completed.
8. **Summer Maintenance Projects:** Tile and carpet replacements are taking place in classrooms throughout the district, and gym floors at multiple schools are being refinished. Cleaning and sanitizing is taking place at all schools.
9. **Alyssa's Law** — The District secured a grant for \$399,333 for security upgrades including non-audible signals and silent alarms.
10. **Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP) Committee** —The District put out a RFP for energy conservation companies and opened proposals on August 5, 2020.
11. **District Five Year Capital Projects Plan** — Mr. Oliveira presented the plan to the committee. Next steps include presenting to the full board and discussion of priority projects.
12. **New Jersey Schools Insurance Group (NJSIG) Safety Grant** — The District will apply for expected pandemic related funding as soon as applications become available.