



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORTS

OCTOBER 8, 2020

Culture, Climate & Community Relations

The Culture, Climate & Community Relations Committee met on Tuesday, September 15, 2020, to discuss positive messaging, community partnerships, volunteer outreach, and setting new goals for the 2020-2021 school year.

1. **Positive Messaging:** This goal will continue throughout the 2020-2021 school year throughout all three middle schools. District-wide, positive messaging will focus on Black History Month and Women's History Month. The Committee will plan a K-12 template contest for positive messages on social media.
2. **Community Partnerships:** Partnership building with Rutgers and local businesses continues. The Committee discussed possible creative/family bonding activities that could be undertaken with Rutgers.
3. **Volunteer Outreach:** With a successful partnership developed with Rutgers DICE, this goal has been met.
4. **New Goals:** In addition to continuing positive messaging and building community partnerships, the committee discussed a new wellness goal encompassing both physical and mental health. This will include both highlighting services currently available to the school community as well as community outreach to develop additional services.

Policy/Legislative Committee

The Policy/Legislative Committee met on Thursday, October 1, 2020, to discuss by-laws and policies on Board Attendance as well as legislative updates.

1. **By-Law 0155.1:** The Committee discussed proposed By-Law 0155.1, addressing remote participation by Board members who are unable to attend an in-person meeting and agreed that acceptable categories for remote participation include medical conditions, out-of-State travel, bereavement and unanticipated emergencies. Further discussion touched on notification processes and public session vs executive session attendance. Mr. Rubin will revise the draft for the next meeting.
2. **Attendance Policy:** The Committee discussed whether to adopt a separate policy on the related issue of what constitutes "attendance" at a Board meeting for purposes of invoking the three-consecutive-missed-meetings removal statute. Mr. Rubin was directed to develop a draft policy reflecting the Committee's positions on these matters.
3. **Senate Bill 2401:** Mr. Rubin drew the committee's attention to Senate Bill 2401, which has been referred to the Assembly, requiring students and staff to remain away from school for stipulated periods of time if they have traveled out of the country or to a state on the 14-day quarantine list.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee met on Monday, October 5, 2020, to discuss curriculum revisions, virtual learning, professional development, and more.

1. **Curriculum Revisions:** The committee reviewed curriculum for three high school electives: Graphic Novels, Public Speaking, and Journalism.
2. **Universal Screening:** The committee reviewed the Star Renaissance virtual screening process used to assess students.
3. **Virtual Learning:** The committee discussed the roll out of virtual learning and ways to support teachers through additional training and reliable monitoring. Further discussion was devoted to students adapting to virtual learning, with need to develop further training for parents for online platforms in use by the district. The length of the school day and need for communication was also discussed.
4. **Professional Development:** The Administration shared plans for further professional development, using both outside vendors and virtual teacher's college resources, as well as though tapping our own teaching staff who have particular expertise.

Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee

The Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee met on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, to review budget adjustments, capital projects, and other ongoing projects.

1. **2019-2020 Audit:** PFK O'Connor Davies completed the on-site field work for the 2019-2020 audit.
2. **2021-2022 Budget:** Mr. Oliveira state aid payment amounts for Coronavirus Relief and Extraordinary Aid.
3. **NJ Fiscal Legislation:** The committee discussed the following NJ legislation:
 - **3A. S-2273 (NJ Educators Health Insurance Plan (NJEHP) – law)** – Open enrollment for this new plan runs Oct. 15— Nov. 13. Staff can keep their current health plan, but must put their request in writing. All new employees must enroll in the new NJEHP.
 - **3B. S-2697/A-4178 (Borrow \$9.9 Billion, COVID-19 Emergency Bond Act – proposed)** – The state borrowed \$4.5 billion in emergency funding for their 2020-2021 Budget.
 - **3C. S-2691 (Additional surplus)** – This bill will allow school districts to keep 4% surplus rather than the current 2%, offering school districts greater flexibility.
 - **3D. S-5303 (Subcontracting law)** – This law requires input from the local bargaining units if a district would like to consider the outsourcing of services such as food services and custodial services.
 - **3E. S-864 (Ban on single-use plastic products)** – This ban on single use plastic products could increase the cost for food services.
4. **Facility Capital Projects:** Stadium upgrades will be completed this month. PHS and Middle School Auditoriums/ PHS Family Consumer Science Room upgrades will be completed in November. Piscataway High School Vocal Music Room HVAC upgrades began demolition this week.
7. **Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP) Update** —A contract was awarded to Honeywell and work on this project has already begun.
8. **Food Services:** The District continues to offer of "Grab and Go" non-perishable meals to all students on a twice-weekly schedule with six pick-up locations across the district. The 2020-2021 Free and Reduced Lunch Applications, offered in nine languages, were included on the District website with information sent out to families across the district. Applications are due on October 15.