

**Fallsburg Central School District
Board of Education Meeting
April 21, 2020**

Transcription

Compiled by: Sarah Satz, District Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 6:20PM

Ms. Barbiani: I'd like to call the meeting to order. May I have a motion to move into executive session, to discuss contract negotiations.

Ms. Rappaport: Motion

Mr. Weiner: Second

Ms. Barbiani: Any discussion? Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee?

Ms. Kates: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

(The meeting resumed public session at 7:07pm.)

Ms. Barbiani: May I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Mr. Weiner: Motion

Mr. Collura: Motion

Ms. Barbiani: Any discussion on the motion?

Mr. Collura: Mike made the motion, me on the 2nd.

Ms. Hussey: I would like just to ask something, can I?

Ms. Barbiani: About the agenda?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Go ahead

Ms. Hussey: Um there's, a uh, i don't remember what the number is off the top of my head. There's a termination and the termination is only with a number. Is there a reason for that?

Dr. Katz: The number is representative of the name of the employee so that their personal information is protected.

Ms. Hussey: Ok and we're not entitled to know who the employee is?

Dr. Katz: Uh that is something that could be discussed in executive session.

Ms. Hussey: Ok

Ms. Barbiani: I'm going to do roll call, Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee? She's not here. Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: I'm a yes. Motion carries. Moving on, down to student board member. I'm not sure if our student member is here.

Ms. Satz: She is

Ms. Patel: Hi I'm here.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok good.

Ms. Patel: Ok, so the SGA put together a folder in Google Drive to help students feel engaged during this time. They are encouraged to send in like pictures and videos of what they're doing during quarantine. So. And we've had a couple meetings with Ms. Adams to come up with other ways to use our social platforms to our advantage to encourage school spirit. So it's in the works right now. We're putting some stuff together and we're trying to get more kids feedback right now, that's our biggest problem right now. Not a lot of feedback from students but we're working on that... so I asked around a few Juniors and Seniors what they thought about it and how every is adjusting and overall most of the teachers are pretty good with communicating through email and there is a mix of just using google classroom and also having video calls. So that's all there really is no one had any major concerns.

Ms. Barbiani: Good. How's it going with yourself, for you?

Ms. Patel: pretty well I'm in BOCES and I'm in New Visions and most of my classes are there anyway I only have one class at Fallsburg but my teacher has been emailing me back and forth

Ms. Barbiani: That's good to hear.

Ms. Barbiani: Any board member questions? Okay. Thank you so much good to hear from you. Ivan public comment? are we?

Dr. Katz: Sarah did we get any request for public comment?

Ms. Satz: I did not receive any in my email

Dr. Katz: The way we do public comments is in the announcement folks are instructed to send us an email with the usual information to Sarah and then, and then you would read it Madam president at the meeting. We haven't gotten any this evening.

Ms. Barbiani: Okay thank you thank you so much. Moving on down, we'll go to the Business Report. Mr. Grecco?

Mr. Collura: Oh, look at that.

Ms. Barbiani: Very low.

Ms. Hussey: I don't hear anything, am I supposed to?

Dr. Katz: Yes, but I don't hear anything either.

Dr. Wall-Carty: I hear static.

Mr. Grecco: How about now?

Dr. Katz: A little better.

Mr. Grecco: Ok, we'll do the best we can.

Dr. Katz: Alright.

Mr. Grecco: Let me go back to my report here. Tonight on the agenda there is a tax certiorari settlement between the town of Fallsburg and the Garden View Estates Condominiums that results in \$173,872 refund. The district will have to refund \$132,289 and the county will refund \$41,582. The reason why the county has to refund a portion of the refund is because some of the taxpayers did not pay their taxes so it was re-levied by the county. The district does have money in the reserve, in the tax certiorari reserve that they could use to partially pay for this refund if they so wish. The building project, all the construction has resumed, the workers are wearing facemasks while on school grounds. We hope to get a jump on summer work. Any questions? Ok, well thank you.

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you Dan. Ok. Moving on to the Minutes. May I have motion to approve.

Ms. Hussey: Motion

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene.

Ms. Reinhardt: Second.

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer. Any discussion on the motion? Hearing none, I'll do the roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee? Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Collura: Unmute Mike.

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Motion carries. Down to Action items. Can I have a motion

Ms. Kates: Hello, it's Renee.

Ms. Barbiani: to approve item 1-13?

Ms. Rappaport: Motion

Dr. Wall-Carty: Second

Ms. Barbiani: Who was the motion?

Ms. Rappaport: Kathy

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy and Sean. Discussion on the motion?

Mr. Weiner: On that item we were talking about, the termination shouldn't we get some background and some information before we vote on it since we don't really know much about it at this point.

Dr. Katz: We have discussed it in the past. It's basically position abandonment.

Mr. Weiner: Okay

Ms. Hussey: It's basically a what?

Dr. Katz: A position abandonment.

Ms. Hussey: Okay.

Ms. Barbiani: Okay. Hearing no other questions. I'll call the roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella? She's there.

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee? Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Collura: Unmute Mike.

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Moving on to other action items.

Ms. Kates: Excuse me Deb. Can you hear me? I'm on the line. I'll vote yes.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok. That was for the action items?

Ms. Kates: Right, exactly. I couldn't get on.

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you. Sarah, may I ask a question, is Fiorella here?

Ms. Satz: I thought she was on the list. It says she's muted right now.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok, cause I can't hear her right now. Alright.

Mr. Collura: Yeah, she's muted. She's on though.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok.

Ms. Hussey: If she's muted she really should hit star 6, cause that's what they told me to do.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok. So we're going to move on to other action items.

Ms. Muscia: Hello? Can you hear me? I voted yes for every one by the way.

Ms. Barbiani: I'm sorry.

Ms. Muscia: I thought you heard me when you called roll call. I'm sorry.

Ms. Barbiani: No, didn't hear you. Sarah, she did. Fiorella voted yes.

Ms. Muscia: I did vote yes for all of them

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you. Thank you for clarifying.

Ms. Hussey: Fiorella, did you just hit star 6 to get on.

Ms. Muscia: Yes, but I did have a mute button.

Ms. Hussey: But you were muted.

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you. Other action items. We have tenure appointment amendments. May I have a motion to approve the amendment?

Ms. Hussey: Motion

Mr. Weiner: Motion

Ms. Barbiani: I have Mike and Arlene. Any discussion on the motion? Hearing none. I'll call the roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee?

Ms. Kates: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Motion carries. We're down to the Sullivan BOCES board member vote. Let me get in there. I'm sorry I'm on my phone, just bear with me.

Ms. Hussey: Why are we having this today instead of tomorrow? Cause of BOCES?

Dr. Katz: Yes.

Ms. Barbiani: The motion is, recommended motion that the board cast one vote as presented. May I have a motion?

Ms. Rappaport: Motion. Kathy

Ms. Barbiani: Second?

Mr. Weiner: Second.

Ms. Barbiani: Mike. Any discussion on the motion? Hearing none. Roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee?

Ms. Kates: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Ok. Thank you. Motion carries. Now we're down to the Sullivan BOCES Administrative budget. Let me get in there.

Dr. Katz: Board members while Debbie's getting in there I sent you a quick email on a detail on that termination you asked about.

Ms. Hussey: Ok. Thank you.

Ms. Barbiani: Recommended motion. The board approves the 2020-2021 Sullivan BOCES administrative budget in the amount of \$3,117,358.00 as presented.

Dr. Wall-Carty: Motion

Mr. Collura: Motion.

Ms. Barbiani: Joe. Any discussion on the motion. Hearing none. I'll do the roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee?

Ms. Kates: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Motion carries. Thank you. We're down to 2nd public recognition. I did not receive any information on that. Down to Board Time and Committee Reports. I'll go around and ask each member. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: No.

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: No

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Well tomorrow morning I don't know if anybody else's is going to tune in. But tomorrow morning at 9:30 there's a wellness committee meeting by phone. So I just wanted to let anybody know, who doesn't know that, and wants to attend. Ok.

Ms. Kates: I got that information. Thank you.

Ms. Hussey: Your welcome.

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you Arlene. Renee?

Ms. Kates: No. I will be at the wellness meeting. That's what I have.

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Say again?

Ms. Barbiani: Do you have any Board Time or Committee reports?

Mr. Collura: No, I do not.

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you. Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Buildings and grounds committee probably got a letter updating us on the building project. Outside it seems like a lot of things are getting closer to completion so that's a good sign and budget on May 1st will probably be having a meeting that day as well.

Ms. Barbiani: Great. Thank you Mike. Jennifer:

Ms. Reinhardt: No, nothing.

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: No

Ms. Barbiani: Okay great thank you. Moving on to the Superintendent's Report

Dr. Katz: Are we up to the superintendent's report?

Ms. Barbiani: Yes, Ivan.

Dr. Katz: Okay great thank you. A couple of things.... am I good now? Am I still frozen? A couple things, one; the Fallsburg team has been working hard in preparing and continuing to provide instruction for students. I continue to be proud of the efforts that are taking place and every day is just another shining example of the great things that are happening. I realize we're not perfect in the roll out of instruction because it was, did occur on the flip of a switch and I really am proud of our staff and the continued efforts moving forward... Mike Wiener briefly mentioned that the budget committee is going to meet on May 1st. We are, as you may know we are in very difficult times. The governor has announced that there might be some significant cuts I've heard anywhere from 20-50% which if either of those are the case, uhh, we have some big challenges in front of us. And unfortunately it's difficult to do any kind of planning between now and when the information is released which is gonne be April 1st we're hopeful that

Ms. Hussey: You mean May 1st?

Dr. Katz: I'm sorry May 1st. We will get updated state aid runs, then the budget committee will meet to look at those but this uh may be the toughest budget committee decision in a very very long time if there are significant cuts which that looks like they're there maybe. I know that the governor is looking for support from the federal government and terms of additional stimulus funds to be able to offset the massive revenue losses in New York but that still remains to be seen more on that as we go beyond May 1st. And now I'd like to give you an update. As you know we're in the midst of an extended school closure and in the beginning of the fourth marking period. The administration and teaching staff have been working together to come up with a temporary grading policy only in place for this marking period to address the long-term

closure and with that I'm going to give Dr. Evans the floor and ask him to go ahead and do his presentation.

Dr. Evans: Thank you Doctor Katz and good evening everyone. Ms. Barbiani, if you would permit I'm going to present my presentation in Google Hangouts if that's ok?

Ms. Barbiani: Yes, thank you.

Dr. Evans: I'm going to be sharing my screen for a bit. My apologies to those of you who are dialing in and won't be able to see this though I suspect that some of you have seen the major parts of this before. So as Dr. Katz mentioned on some different occasions on his lead up to this presentation and we are in the midst of a pretty significant interruption to our learning and to our operations and this is a pretty traumatic time. I don't think I need to overstate that with you. And as many of you know we have many different students who we serve. Students lack internet access and necessary technology though a number of our staff have worked hard to provide those and Ms. Tingley continues to work hard to provide wifi hotspot access for our students. We have students who have everything they need by way of technology or internet access for a productive learning environment. We have students with obstacles in accessing materials, students with learning disabilities, students with limited literacy skills, students who would typically benefit greatly from having live interactions with teachers. We have many students who experience stress, trauma or anxiety in their home and I want to underscore that first point stress because right now everyone in society who is going through some type of lockdown or stay at home or what-have-you is experiencing stress. We are experiencing it at different levels. It manifests itself differently and it's not something that's on a schedule. So we need to be cognizant of how people are handling that stress and being able to roll with that stress as it comes from time to time. And then lastly we do have students who need a fourth quarter, a good fourth quarter grade to pass for the year. We looked at some later earlier today and by my estimate on the spreadsheet that was shared with me, it appeared in the junior senior high school to be a 152 different student courses so they might be a single student with multiple courses but 152 instances where there are students with averages between 61 and 64 in their courses at the end of the third quarter. So keep that in mind as we go through this. I also want to share with you that increased stress impairs student learning. It impairs adult learning, it impairs student behavior, it impairs adult behavior. That's not terribly new but as we are living in an age of increased stress right now again it's something to be mindful of. We also know that and you've seen how increased demand for resources, and thinking in terms of technology, increases and magnifies socio-economic inequities. Those inequities have been there before this public health crisis and now they are being magnified as we try to roll out with distance learning or remote learning initiatives. And lastly most teachers and I would say administrators as well are not adequately skilled in delivering high-quality instruction remotely yet. I want to give props to Dr. Wall-Carty because that is an area he is familiar with, however our teachers and our administrators are not. What we have had experience and training in utilizing technology and Google Classroom, we've only use that through connections with you being in session. And while we initially thought that it's not going to be an easy switch to flip but most teachers and many students are familiar with Google so we should be able to do this. We found out that that switch was not as easy as we had initially anticipated so we are still enhancing your skills there both as teachers and administrators. So knowing all that is the rationale behind these changes

in grading. First and foremost we find it essential that students continue to be motivated to do work during this closure. That this could and will result in some loss of learning just being closed on its own, we're trying to mitigate that loss in as much as possible. The way we do that as we keep kids connect we keep assuring them that they can do it and here's how and here we are to help you do that. Secondly its to hold harmless those students who are unable to complete work or and or return it. The workflow has been significantly hampered because of this closure and what I mean by that, is if you think of the way that schools traditionally operated when they were open and the amount of work and instruction that went on and interactions that went on between staff and students there are still students we have not made connections with yet. There are still packets that have yet to be picked up by families. There are still students who haven't accessed Google classroom for particular teachers but they have for others. So we are three to four weeks into this and there are still students we are not able to connect with despite our best efforts and when I say that I really need to underscore the efforts of our staff, our administrators, Rolling V who are making extra efforts to try to engineer this type of delivery system. And we also don't have a good return system on paper packets yet. We are still in the process of figuring that out. So if we keep in mind the fact that there is stress going on, that there are interruptions to learning, that students who traditionally receive services and need those services to do better with her academic work that all things been interrupted and the return flow is being interrupted, then we know that the quality and the quantity of instruction is being seriously compromised. We certainly will have our work cut out for us when we resume whether that is in the summer or in the fall or when have you and we certainly need to make preparations in advance of that relative to curriculum and programs and so forth. Those budget discussions are worrying because we do recognize those losses as well but we also need to plan ahead for what curriculum, for how curriculum and programs might look differently upon return. And then the last piece of the rationale is there are students and families out there who are working diligently to try to stay current, to keep up with their work to do what's being asked them and we want to be able to acknowledge that work that is completed and returned by those students who can. So I want to jump right into what's going to be changing and what's going to be different. I want to start out with the junior senior high school because that's where most of the significant changes are going to occur . There are some slight changes at the elementary school but they are relatively minor in comparison. So in a pre-closure remodel, many teachers would score individual assignments as they came in and then calculate the results in some grade point average. And for every teacher it was a little bit different. This is kind of one possibility where over the course of say a 5 week interval or marking period, the teacher would give out various assignments, projects, quizzes, worksheets etcetera and they would have different weights. Some teachers would use this type of weighting other teachers would use percentages to say quizzes account for 30% of the grade or between 20 of 40% or whatever the case may be. Students would complete the work and be scored on that work and then based on the formula that the teacher would set and this just a mock up of what a possible scale might be, they would produce an average. And in this example you've seen different assignments, you've seen different weights that I've given and then students' scores that go with that. This would be the average if we're using this scenario presented here. Now keep in mind different teachers have different formulas. Some teachers drop lowest grades, I don't want to say look the other

way but they hold some grades in abeyance, they provide opportunities for kids to make up work. So there's all these variables that go on. But given this closure those are going to be interrupted. The workflow that you see here is going to become intermittent. In other words, we may have some very technologically connected students who seemingly quote-unquote have all of the resources they need but given the stress levels that are out there given the different needs of families right now. Family's lost their jobs families who are required to work, who are essential workers whether it is as law enforcement or healthcare or working at grocery stores where they are required to go into work and then they have to be quarantined because they may have been exposed to a potential carrier, these are all challenges that are going on in the community that we might not be fully aware of but we have to make provisions that they could be happening. So with all that being said, this type of normal cycle is going to be interrupted so what we're establishing in this emergency grading protocol and I want to underscore the fact that this is only for the 4th quarter of this year, that instead of this type of formula based approach on assignments that are turned in, that on the assignments that are turned in the teachers would look at the standards that are aligned to those particular assignments and we've asked teachers to think about three to six standards that they will focus on between now and the end of the year. And we do that for two reasons, one is for this grading method but two is a way of condensing the curriculum to really focus on priority standards. Given the fact that instruction is going to be abbreviated, we really need to take a closer look at what are the priority standards students need to learn right now because we're probably not going to be able to expand summer school. We're probably not going to be able to expand student retention in the following year so let's really identify three to six standards that are essential and then develop assignments around them, activities, assignments and so forth. In the model we're using for particular student assignments, teachers would review student work as it's returned and then students would rate how students did on those standards that were in each assignment. So this is one possible way check check - check plus it could be percentage grade so like for example a quiz if there were 10 questions and the student got a 90 on it that could be a 90%. We are not asking teachers to change the individual ratings on particular assignments. What we are changing though is at the end of 5 weeks and at the end of 10 weeks that given the student work on these assignments and the evidence that they are able to submit, that then ratings be developed on those particular standards. So for example I was a Global Studies 9 teacher when I first started in Fallsburg, when I looked over the Global 9 standards I thought these would be kind of essential skills and standards that students should learn between now and the end of the year. What we're asking teachers to do is to develop assignments and activities that are based around these standards whatever standards they come up with and then using the work that is returned as evidence and not holding assignments against students that aren't returned. So again you, you see that project in here that in my first example the student it is merely not submitted in and that is not held against students because we really can't make accurate determinations right now about the reasons why students might not be returning work. We might make some good guesses but to make sure prior to termination we can't really do that. So around each assignment there are standards that are within them that they are aligned to and teachers are looking at how students perform on those standards within the assignments. They can use whatever methodology they want to use here, but at the end of the five weeks and end

of the marking period they're going to make these ratings holistically based on the evidence presented. We are however also and I'll come back to that with questions at the end, we are implementing many student safeguards in here so that students are not held accountable for factors that are beyond their control during this closure. So some of those safeguards are that at the Junior Senior High School the final course average for the year will be the higher of the first three quarters or given this fourth-quarter methodology all four quarters if it brings the students average up. So in other words if a student had 3 60s the first three quarters and then in the fourth quarter gets this 71 that would be used and that would be applied to the students grade point average for the year for that course. Conversely if the student had 70s in the first three quarters and then got a 60 on the 4th quarter using that methodology, that 60 would not count. We would report it, we would share it with parents and student, however it would not be applied to their course average. Secondly, Regents exams were canceled by the State Education Department. We're also cancelling all local final exams. Any student who fails a course will be allowed to make it up during summer school. So we are suspending a rule in the handbook relative to middle school students in Grades 7 and 8 and that rule is that if students fail four or more content areas they cannot attend summer school. Given this interruption and closure we want to give students the opportunity to make up those courses that they failed should they elect to choose it. Now I say that thinking that there will be a summer school given the building project, given the executive orders on schools, I don't know what summer school will look like yet. I don't know what facilities we will have available but the idea would be to have a summer school at least of comparable size as what we've had in years past however the curricula will be different and then we are also encouraging teachers to consider incompletes but we're asking that they not necessarily expand the use of incompletes. So we're just reminding teachers that that is an option of the caveat that I warned them about is you know if you're, if you're giving an incomplete because you know a student or family members have been sick that that's legitimate and understood. But if we get to the end of June and you're looking to give students an incomplete to turn more work in at the end of June that can be allowed but just consider is the home learning environment at the end of June and July going to be better for students than what it is currently and to use discretion in that. At the elementary school teachers will continue to assess students holistically by the standards listed on student report cards but know that we are narrowing the curricula to again only address 3 to 6 standard in each subject. So what will be seen on elementary report cards is probably 0 for not assessed however that is 0 does not have a numeric value on student report cards. It doesn't get calculated in it. So they are continuing the 1 to 4 on the standard listed however there are probably going to be many fewer standards that are assessed in this 4th quarter. Again just reminding what the Junior Senior High School grading would look like teachers assessing holistically on the standards identified. Those standards than being averaged and then that standard course average would be applied to a 50 to 100 scale. The four point rating is a commonly known one. One of the suggestions that came back from Ms. Adams after meeting with her school leaders in her building was that there be some type of pass-fail passed with honors type scale. One of our concern at the administration level is that what might be unfamiliar to people general terms yes and you know we think we know what fail means and pass. However families and students and teachers have been dealing with some type of four point rating system for a while on state tests so we just

borrowed language from what one two three four meant and that's what those ratings would indicate. So again on the identified standards at the fifth and 10th week only, teachers will rate students on those standards that are taught in that course. So that is a relatively quick overview. I'm sure that you have questions on that and I would be happy to take them.

Mr. Weiner: Can I ask one please?

Dr. Evans: Sure. Deb do you want me to moderate or do you?

Ms. Barbiani: You can Matt, that's fine..

Mr. Weiner: First one, half year courses started at the end of January. We left the second week in March so roughly five to six weeks. That's not a considerable amount of time like a 3/4 for a class. And second AP classes how is that going to work?

Dr. Evans: So AP classes, the AP exam my understanding is typically, typically not used in the students average. So I believe that those AP exams are going to continue but they're in some type of different format. The college board has been putting out different notices on AP and SATs and something just came out last week that gave guidance to that effect and that has been shared with Ms. Adams, guidance counselors and teachers so they are reviewing that. But my understanding is that the College Board is trying to do some type of online test for AP. so those eight week we don't affect that. That's a College Board decision. Students take those on their own. Your question about half year courses. So what I didn't include in that but is in the grading document is how third-quarter grades were to be reported. And basically at the Junior Senior High School and I also believe that the elementary school teachers were only to consider and review assignments that had been assigned and due up to the closure for third quarter. So anything that was post March 13th was not used in the third quarter grades. So that wasn't in my overview here but that is in the guidance document that we are going to publish.

Mr. Weiner: Okay, thank you.

Dr. Evans: You're welcome Mike.

Dr. Wall-Carty: So I have a question to ask. So I guess what I'm trying to understand, I think a majority of the plan sounds really good. I guess what I'm trying to understand is that in your conversation, you mentioned the different stressors, the socio-economic band imbalances and not being able to make a full determination on student learning. So my question is to both Dr. Katz and Dr. Evans, is why would we grade this quarter, and then let me finish this with, with this; my thought process is why not go to a model that is pretty similar to what you have now but the students can show what they know. And so what I mean by that, showing what you know, is when you have students, if you submit work everybody's going to pass so long as you submit work we're going to pass fourth quarter. Because fourth-quarter there's so many challenges and so many reasons why, you really can't make a full determination so we're going to pass everyone as long as you submit work. Now I think going with the model of whatever you have is the highest the highest grade in quarters 1 through 3 makes sense just in terms of you know how do you give a number score where you get the number score. I just, I'm concerned that by creating something new or doing something different adds more pressure on to the system. You know I teach for a living, I teach remotely for a living and I can tell you for me it's a Herculean effort for me and I teach college students every single day but I am brought to my knees when I'm trying to teach my son 4th grade history. I think I'm pretty good at what I do I think I'm pretty smart at what I am that I have to get done but I am brought to my knees when I'm trying to get

my son to understand that you gotta sit-down, we gotta go over this stuff. And then I think to myself you got these parents, you got all this other stuff and changing stuff now is adding another stressor on. So to me, you know when you have school districts like San Francisco, Los Angeles that have removed the grading for the 4th quarter and said look everyone's going to pass. I'm saying we don't...(inaudible)...you have to show some work you have to show what you know. If we go with that type of a model of show what you know it creates less pressure on the system, less pressure on the teachers less pressure on the parents and administration and at the end of the day we can focus on the kids that that are not passing so the time that the teachers will be spending on doing those conversions and working with all the students, now we can work on that 20% by your number of the total population. We can work with that 20% of students who we think are in between that 61 and 64%. And its guided, targeted work with those students and giving them an opportunity to improve their grade and bring the grade up Q1 through Q3. And I think that is an easier to lift and it's a more manageable lift because you don't have to create a new system, you don't have to go through the training and the teaching and all that stuff. It's pass-fail. It's pass as long as you hand in the work. And it's concentrated efforts towards students that; that are at risk. And I; and I just; I just wonder if that could be part of that model, if that can be part of that, because the majority of you guys, I see it you guys and I know what I'm going through and I like to think...(inaudible)... and imagine what some of these other parents are going through I can't even imagine what some of these teachers are going through in their Herculean efforts. I just think it puts more work on the teachers and more stress on people. That's all.

Dr. Evans: So I thank you for that Sean and and a couple things that are, I think the larger issue relative to stressor and schoolwork might be the volume of work being assigned. So we are meeting with FTA leadership tomorrow morning to kind of do a checkup to see how it's going. And when we put out the initial kind of instructional model to say X minutes a day, that was loosely based on what students had been doing during the school day roughly speaking. And one of the things that I assured people of is that that would be revisited and what we are hearing is that there are these other stressors that are out there. So I think that that may speak more towards the volume of work and the newness of the system in terms of teachers trying to figure out how much work do I give to meet this number and keep kids occupied and keep them on the right track. The other thing we're doing is you know kind of condensing the curriculum around those three to six standards in a course. The idea there being giving greater flexibility to what gets assigned and how much of it gets assigned and yes it is show what you know. In the other words giving teachers more flexibility around just general standards do activities that will be engaging that will be fun for kids to lock into and want to do. And then you're just assessing at the end of the marking period or the 5 weeks generally around the standards and not particular....(inaudible)

Dr.Wall-Carty: Right so if it's a general assessment,

Dr. Evans: I beg your pardon?

Dr. Wall-Carty: I agree with you, so if it's a general assessment, the need to have a new grading system the way that it's being implemented or recommended or suggested it it just doesn't make logical sense to me because I keep thinking if it's a general assessment and we can't make a clear full assessment and there's so many different challenges, what makes the most

sense is if a student hands in work and they hand in work and we look at that you're gonna pass this. The students that we know are struggling, students that we know need help that 20% that you identified let's focus on at 20% and get them across the finish line. Basically what you're talking about is a constructor foundation for competency-based education and if we're looking at a competency-based education it is show what you know and okay let's move to the next. And I get we want to try to help all students but it doesn't under that type of a plan and it doesn't adversely affect students who are high performing because we're using the highest marking period. It definitely targets the students that are underperforming because now we have that time to get to those students.

Dr. Evans: Sure but the time to get to the students, I just want to clarify right now, while some teachers are doing live conferencing and live support that is not a requirement. So I really think to do any at-risk student justice under this type of model there would have to be that level of live interaction and I don't know, you know we've struggled mightily just getting to where we are today. I think throwing that wrinkle in would be a challenge as well. Relative to kind of a pass-fail system it's not known and I shared this with the faculty today, it's not really known how that will play it out with school-aged students.

Dr. Wall-Carty: And I want to be really clear, and a lot of folks use that term pass fail that is absolutely not what I'm recommending. What I'm recommending absolutely positively is everyone passes as long as they're submitting work everyone passes Q4. And that's what my suggestion is. All students pass as long as they put in work. We don't give them a freebie.

Dr. Evans: But when you say as long as they do work they will rise to the minimum amount of work that's due to get that pass.

Dr. Wall-Carty: Probably correct and that's what's happening right now but we're grading it under the conditions that we're in. And so that's why I'm saying this is a hot flaming mess and everybody was handed. Right? The hot flaming mess and everybody was handed why are we keeping score at this point we know that learning is jacked up we know education is jacked up, we know everybody's stressed to the max, we get it. So I propose you do a modified of what you have, don't even score the 4th quarter, pass everyone as long as their submitting work because it's evidence of learning and then let's work with those students who we think ok, in that third quarter that their second quarter that needed help to bring up the average. Let's work with those students. That doesn't mean abandon the other students. But it certainly give us more time to focus laser target the students that are failing. And that's all I'm saying. I see what you guys are trying to do and it kinda makes sense but you're at the point where you're, you're, you're trying to change the system when you may not have to. And again I don't know, I don't know if you do but I just feel like you may not have to do that. And I just I just want to put that other option out there that could be a possibility. Why go nuts scoring something that we already know is jacked up.

Dr. Evans: There's there's also a concern about keeping students on board and doing the work.

Dr. Wall-Carty: That's why you you grade, or not grade but as long as it's submitting work they pass.

Dr. Evans: Sure but everybody gets a pass then.

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yeah, as long as it's submitting work.

Dr. Evans: I think

Dr. Wall-Carty: And then

Dr. Evans: Yeah, I understand it and I understand it in being in response to the heightened stress out there. But there is an expectation that there is some level of, of learning that's going on and some of the ways that teachers or students or parents use assignments is as a stick. And that you know you need to do this work and you need to do quality work and you need to do it to the best of your ability. Right?

Dr. Wall-Carty: That's fine. That's right. I agree. But not every parent, not every teacher... (inaudible)...because guess, because it is so messed up that if you're not a parent with all the... (inaudible)...traipings of success, meaning that everybody's working people can work from home, you've got dual parents, dual income no issues, no money things, nothing going on and you're still under stress, that's an issue. And so you start peeling away, peeling back the layers of having all those things that make people quote unquote successful, it's going to be an issue. And so I suggest really looking hard at the I get the honest idea of everyone passes if you're submitting work. Because at least you're giving it a shot. And look there are some parents that are going to be hard and so yeah you know what you got to put in quality work. And some parents may say do what you do and people are going to do bare minimum and that's going to happen... (inaudible) but at the end of the day there is so much out there which I just I just don't see putting stress on the teachers and students with introducing this new thing that doesn't necessarily have to be that way.

Dr. Katz: Sean, thank you. We've had this discussion earlier today so I definitely understand your standpoint and continue to consider it. I think that, and as I shared earlier, we're not really at a crossroads.

Ms. Reinhardt: So just so I get an understanding. How, how would you put the pass grade. Say they're doing the first three quarters right and they're it a 62. How would a passed grade, what number would that be a 65? Like I don't understand the pass into the three quarters and making somebody pass. Because that's what you said right?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Are you talking to me? Or talking to Matt?

Ms. Reinhardt: I'm talking to Matt, Ivan.

Dr. Katz: We're not doing this pass/fail.

Ms. Reinhardt: Because we have a bunch of people that are on the other border. Right? On that border and we want to push them over. So we were going to be grading. So my question is if we have a pass, how could that be graded in into the three quarters. Because I kind of agree with Sean, because you might even get that kid that has a 62 that can hand in work now, do and have a shot.

Dr. Katz: That's why we're moving forward with the process that we have, for the kid that does have a shot they could actually get a grade that could bring them over the line of failing because we have many students who after three marking periods are failing and need that fourth marking period. A pass-fail would not give a student, there really isn't a number. To your point Jennifer, that goes with a pass-fail. Who knows what a pass is. Its, is it 65? Is it 70? It's basically a two point rubric where we have one point of failure and one point of passing. What we're putting forward is a 4 point rubric that has 3 points of passing and one point of failure. So if for the students that need the fourth quarter they have the opportunity to get a score that will get them

over to passing. For students who are working hard and may not have a good fourth quarter, than if that fourth-quarter is less than the 3rd then we will toss away the fourth quarter and their average is based on three quarters. So it's an advantage to all students. Now we may agree to disagree on pass/fail versus others but I can tell you that this is not a discussion that was created in a vacuum. It included administrators, it included teachers and I'll be the first to tell you it's not perfect. I have not yet seen a perfect alternative given our circumstances, but it's one that I feel as superintendent of schools that is in the best interest of students given the work we put into it, the research we've done and the fact that it's just for this quarter. If it doesn't work we have the opportunity to say we tried it and we can go back, hopefully we won't have to, and we'll be back..(inaudible)... we have an experience level to look at it.

Dr. Wall-Carty:I hear all those points and I hear that, but you know what. You're not the one that are teaching their kids at home. You are not the one that are sitting there dealing with stressors of what is going on with the situation. You're dealing with it from a very administrative standpoint, not from a standpoint of being a parent on the frontline. At the end of the day, this is this kind of action, and saying as superintendent I feel that this is the best course of action and then going you involved the administrators, you involved teachers , if you would involve the administration of all teachers but in no part of that conversation did we hear parents were involved in that. You said that it wasn't in a vacuum, but there was no part of that conversation where there was a community involvement or parents involved in it. Hey how do we work this, we get there. You're right it's not going to be perfect and I totally get that but at the end of the day when you're talking about grading people in this type of situation and adding in a new way to grade, it just doesn't make sense. It just doesn't follow the logic and I hear what you guys are saying. And I told again and I think a majority of the stuff that you're saying and putting out, makes sense, except grading. It doesn't make sense. And so I hope that there's a review, I hope there's a look at, we're going to say agree to disagree, I want to be clear, I absolutely positively do not agree with this course of action. I think that that part is not thought out completely. I think all the stakeholders were not involved in that part of the conversation and, and not in, furthermore I think that more discussion should be had in that particular piece of that conversation because they're a lot of students when you start talking about it, and we're not even talking about the parent I talked about, you use the word pass-fail. That is not what I'm saying. I want to be absolutely clear I am not saying pass fail, I am saying pass.

Dr. Evans: So just, my concern with the model you propose Sean, is as soon as we say so you just need to complete the work, and Mike I saw your hand and I will, as soon as we say you just need to complete the work, then what's the motivation to students to really focus on the questions being asked and try to get them right or am I just going to plow through and say true false true-false true-false true-false. Am I just going to fill in the blanks with an answer and, then I turned in the work so I get a pass.

Dr. Wall-Carty: That would be the same thing.

Dr. Evans: It's not the same thing.

Dr. Wall-Carty: So then we're talking about quality of work. So if we're just talking about turning in the work. So are we're talking about turning in ill quality work, absolutely not. Do I have to spell that out too and say ok we have to turn in quality work too that meets the standard, or

quality work that meets the standard of what is required? Absolutely. I wouldn't just say turn in a blank piece of paper. I thought I made that clear

Dr. Evans: No, you said do the work.

Dr. Wall-Carty: So yeah, I said do the work but also got to make sure that you know where we have evidence of learning. I said that.

Dr. Evans: Ok. So we agree there has to be a quality piece to the work then.

Dr. Wall-Carty: We agree, there has to be evidence of learning. I even talked about that this is the foundation of competency-based education so I even talked about that as well. I would never sit back and suggest the idea or, or even subscribe to the idea that we give people a pass and I made that clear too. We would not give people a free pass on grading. They have to show the work.

Dr. Evans: Mike? You had a question?

Mr. Weiner: Yeah I'm just curious about what other districts in Sullivan and Orange are doing in the same predicament.

Dr. Evans: Little bit of everything. Liberty. Liberty is, Liberty is my understanding right now is they are status quo in doing the exact same grading model as they did pre-closure except they're asking people to be more flexible with students s turning in work but it lacks specifics. Sullivan West is doing straight pass-fail but they too have not given any definition to what pass-fail means. The last I heard Tri-Valley and Monticello we're considering a model similar to ours about those I don't think have been fleshed out yet either. I meet once a week every Wednesday morning with my colleagues around the county and there is strong, there's a strong push for pass-fail. That's not only within our county that's for outside too. That's not just something local to Sullivan County. But many districts are wrestling with this and they don't know exactly how it's going to turn out or how it should turn out.

Mr. Weiner: Let me ask one thing? We're giving packets to some kids, and other kids are getting direct contact with teachers. I mean there's gotta be an imbalance with that as well.

Dr. Evans: There's certainly inequity.

Dr. Wall-Carty: So if there's an equity in the system why are we grading? That's the part I don't understand. Like you guys are saying that teachers agreed to this you're saying that administrators agree to that and there's all kinds of meetings something just doesn't feel right and I'm sorry I'm going to keep beating this drum. Something isn't right. Is that what we're saying right now. Are you telling me that teachers agreed to this are you guys saying that teachers and administrators and and and faculty all agreed to this. Dr. Katz: Sean, and this wasn't a negotiation. We....(inaudible)...

Dr. Wall-Carty: (inaudible) Are you saying, right here, right now, Mr. Superintendent that teachers and faculty and administrators all agreed to this.

Dr. Katz: I didn't say anybody agreed to it. I said we worked on it together just like any other grading system that we've had. Whether it was our grading policies we asked for input and and in this situation, as the analogy I've used before, is we're building a plane while it's flying.

Dr. Wall-Carty: Your plane won't fly without the proper engine.

Dr. Katz: Look, Dr. Wall-Carty with all due respect, you are entitled to your opinion, I respect that but I can tell you that this work was not done in a vacuum, as I shared.

Dr. Wall-Carty: But it was. Name the parents that are involved, sir.

Dr. Katz: Parents aren't involved in grading. We never..(inaudible)

Dr. Wall-Carty: But don't you have committees when it comes to grading? In the past when you talked about grading.

Dr. Katz: Grading policy,

Dr. Wall-Carty: Right.

Dr. Katz: That's a grading policy. This is a grading calculation

Dr. Wall-Carty: So

Dr. Katz: That teachers do in keeping a grade book. It's not something that we would involve parents or community members in. It's how teacher's calculate grades in a school district.

Dr. Wall-Carty: So when we're talking about calculating grades in a school district for kids, the people who would be doing, helping with the teaching, the parents, because its homeschool teaching it is okay not to involve them, and that's fine. I just want to be clear, and I want to get it on the record.

Dr. Katz: On the record, I'll tell you that we're doing this on the fly. We won't have..

Dr. Wall-Carty: But I asked a question. I'm asking a specific question, sir.

Dr. Katz: And your specific question again is?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Are you saying that it is okay for the people who are going to be hand-in-hand with the students, the parents, not to be involved in the conversation about grading. They're our kids.

Dr. Katz: I'm not saying that at all. Under normal circumstances you know and we have committees at all levels of the academic realm, grading and otherwise, but this is a situation where we had to come up on the fly with an option for the fourth quarter. This is not a normal circumstance where we have the luxury of time and to involve as many people as we can and we normally do that. And I think our records with our school committee has shown that. But this is, the fourth quarter started now, we've been closed since March 16th, this isn't done to hurt to anyone or to say one person's idea of grading is more valuable than another what we are trying do is have something in place so, so there can be a grading policy temporarily put together for the 4th quarter that gives opportunities to kids. You're suggestion gives opportunities to kids. I don't necessarily agree that all students should pass if they turn in work. I think we're concerned with the quality of work being turned in and the only way to measure quality is to have some kind of an assessment. And we can agree to disagree with that respectively.

Dr. Wall-Carty. I tend to hear that I just think that if we're measuring quality of work and we are admitting from the beginning that our measures are off, something is wrong because everyone is not playing on the same plane and starting at the same level and they're not coming with the same things to bare. So, so there that that's kind of my issue with it, is that if you're socioeconomically challenged that's an issue. If there is focus issues if there's a mental health issues, with all the stress, all those things, all those obstacles. If there's a challenge you're not getting a fair shake and you or it's up to the one individual teacher and its like okay but why do we have to go there. We don't and I and I think there's an easy way to it. That's all and, and, and I think to me I have not yet heard of a legitimate logical excuse or reason why we should grade. That's just me and I am you know, if I have to be alone on that one I'll be alone on that one and that if I respectfully disagree I will absolutely disagree. But I do not agree with this course of

action I think it is not thought out all the way through in terms of the stressors at the end. Ms.

Barbiani: Alright Sean,

Dr. Katz: And Sean, I agree with a great deal of what you're saying. I think we're so close at so many levels. I think there are some details we are a little bit different on but generally speaking, I think we're speaking the same language. I know there's some details you don't agree with and there's some that I don't either. And I'll be the first to say that is far, far, far, from perfect at any level and that's why I think it's so important to remember that this is just for this quarter, for the next few weeks and then we can reassess. And there's nothing to say that we can look at suggestions like yours as we move forward, if we have to, and take all that information because it's not perfect and we're trying to do the best we can with the short time frame that we have. And listening to what you're saying and listening to the other presentation, there's no question that we're all on the same page in terms of wanting to do the best for kids. I appreciate that. and your concerns are not lost, it doesn't fall on dead ears, we're going to look at that because if we have to continue, if the closures continue, we're going to have to have more informed conversations and hopefully we'll have more time than a couple of weeks to try to figure out how to do that. But I do appreciate that.

Ms.Barbiani: Yes thank you. Thank you Sean, thank you Ivan, Matt. Is there anyone else that would like to comment on the grading.

Mr. Weiner: Not directly to grading, but something in anticipation of the next grading session. Can I say something? I hate to say it, but let's say we have to go to social distancing when we return. Could we as a district start talking to other districts to see how they will plan for the social distancing. You're not only going to have it in the classroom, you're going to have it in the cafeterias, you're going to have it on the buses. We really need to start looking at that.

Dr. Katz: There's a couple of issues with that and I've already started having those discussions with the superintendent's in the county, we had that discussion before the Board meeting today. And basically there isn't going to be another switch that has us go directly from being on long-term closure to opening school without, without advance notice. And the as you, as you mentioned Mike, the issues of social distancing, having large numbers of students indoors because schools are not meant for social distancing they're meant for social gathering and you have square footage in rooms and 25 to 28 individuals in the room. We are now going to have to start looking at having plans in place in the event that we do have to open school and social distancing and other health guidelines are in place in terms of how do you clean how does all that work within the coronavirus threat and having kids come in. So there are a lot of issues there. I don't know how much guidance the state is going to give and if they're going to relax or increase or keep standard the the requirements about gatherings of no more than 10, of wearing masks, of having six feet of space. Schools aren't built for that, so none of the schools have, at least in Sullivan county, in our discussion today have any kind of plans but we are going to start looking at different possibilities. Maybe having split sessions or whatever it would take to allow us, if at all, to be able to respect and comply with social distancing, at the same time trying to run, run the school once it's open again.

Mr. Weiner: OK.

Ms. Barbiani: Moving forward a minute Ivan, and Matt, if we could have, I know this is temporary grading changes for the 4th quarter, could you just keep us updated on this, on the status with the Board so we know where we're at.

Dr. Katz: Of course.

Ms. Barbiani: I appreciate that. I appreciate the work that was put in. And Sean I appreciate your comments, Mike, very helpful, insightful for all to hear and we don't know what's going to happen with, we may open up, we may not and have to look at this again in for the fall time. But again as the administration is saying this will be a temporary grading procedure. With that being said is there any other comments for the Superintendent's report presentation.

Dr. Katz: That's the report that was.

Ms. Barbiani: Ok. So then we can move on to an adjournment. Can I have a motion motion?

Mr. Weiner: Motion

Ms. Barbiani: Mike

Mr. Collura: Second.

Mr. Barbiani: Is that Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yup.

Ms. Barbiani: okay thank you Joe. I'm going to call, is there any discussion on the motion? Moving forward for the roll call. Sean?

Dr. Wall-Carty: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Fiorella?

Ms. Muscia: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Arlene?

Ms. Hussey: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Renee?

Ms. Kates: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Joe?

Mr. Collura: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Mike?

Mr. Weiner: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Jennifer?

Ms. Reinhardt: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Kathy?

Ms. Rappaport: Yes

Ms. Barbiani: Thank you all, have a good evening.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26PM