

NORTH BELLMORE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

December, 2020
VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

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1 (Proceedings began with Pledge of Allegiance)

2 FEMALE: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of
3 the United States of America and to the Republic for
4 which it stands, one nation under god indivisible with
5 liberty and justice for all."

6 MRS. CORLESS: Yeah, and thank you for that
7 [inaudible] thank you.

8 Ms. Malloy, would you please read the mission
9 statement?

10 MS. MALLOY: Our mission is to inspire all
11 students to be confident, passionate learners with the
12 courage and skills to lead their lives with integrity.

13 Welcome to our meeting, to our global community
14 with creativity and compassion.

15 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

16 Before we move on, I would like to let people
17 know that right after we do the next item, we will have
18 public comments for agenda items only. So if you have a
19 public question, agenda items only, please send them in
20 now with your name and address.

21 We, later on in the meeting, will have a public
22 session for any other questions. Okay, so feel free to
23 start sending in agenda items. Thank you.

24 Next. Approval -- I'd like to have a Motion
25 for Approval of the minutes from the business meeting of

1 November 12, 2020.

2 FEMALE: So moved.

3 FEMALE: Second.

4 MRS. CORLESS: Okay, all in favor?

5 FEMALE: Aye.

6 FEMALE: Aye.

7 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

8 Okay, now we're up to our first public comment
9 section or agenda items only. And Mrs. Testa, you'll let
10 us know, do the questions come on this Q & A?

11 MRS. TESTA: Yes.

12 MRS. CORLESS: Okay.

13 MRS. TESTA: I don't have any questions right
14 now for agenda items only.

15 MRS. CORLESS: Okay.

16 MRS. TESTA: I don't see any.

17 MRS. CORLESS: All right. So we'll -- I guess
18 we'll move on then.

19 MRS. TESTA: Yes.

20 MRS. CORLESS: Next we have correspondence. We
21 do have some correspondence that will be discussed in the
22 session.

23 Next, I'd like to have a Motion to approve the
24 treasurer's report.

25 FEMALE: So moved.

1 MRS. TESTA: Second.

2 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

3 FEMALE: Aye.

4 MRS. TESTA: Aye.

5 MRS. CORLESS: Perfect, thank you.

6 Board Committee Report from the High School.

7 Mrs. Lanci.

8 MRS. LANCI: Hi, our last meeting was on
9 December 2nd, we met remotely as a Board. We had just a
10 few items to approve from CPSE/CSE. We approved some
11 policies, some obsolete equipment. We also approved a
12 Change Order from Mepham High School for some work with
13 Land Tech.

14 Our next meeting will be January 6, 2021. We
15 did accept a \$1400 donation from a Boy Scout who's doing
16 an Eagle Scout project outside Merrick Avenue for two
17 benches.

18 Congratulations to Kyle Burberich (phonetic)
19 from Scout Troop 123. That's really a very nice project
20 and we look forward to the results. And again, we will
21 meet on January 6, 2021 at the high school. Thank you.

22 MRS. CORLESS: Next finance 9.1. The Board of
23 Education acknowledges your review of the ones that have
24 been approved by the Claims auditor for the month of
25 November 2020, 9.2.

1 Be it resolved, the Board of Education approved
2 the budgetary transfers dated December 10, 2020.

3 Do I have a Motion?

4 FEMALE: So moved.

5 FEMALE: Second.

6 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

7 FEMALE: Aye.

8 MRS. CORLESS: Next, we have the
9 superintendent's report. Mrs. Testa?

10 MRS. TESTA: Thank you, Mrs. Corless.

11 I'm going to be presenting the Kirk Human
12 Instruction Report this evening as well as the buildings
13 and grounds report and the superintendent's report. So I
14 will do them all at the same time if that's okay.

15 MRS. CORLESS: Yes, thank you.

16 MRS. TESTA: All right. So, I'm happy to start
17 with curriculum and instruction, a personal love of mine,
18 and thank you to Mrs. Pollitt (phonetic) for all the work
19 that she and Mrs. McNamara (phonetic) are doing in this
20 area.

21 Our students have successfully transitioned
22 into our second semester this Wednesday. Our
23 administrators, virtual teachers, in person teachers and
24 support staff all communicated in the weeks leading up to
25 this point to ensure a smooth and seamless transition for

1 students entering a new mode of learning.

2 We have had ten students transition to virtual
3 and 41 students transitioned to the in-person model from
4 virtual. So we welcome our 41 students back in and we
5 wish our ten students the best as they go to virtual.

6 The total virtual population now is currently
7 277 students and 15 virtual classes strong. And just a
8 real thank you to all those parents who are supporting
9 our virtual learners. Of course the parents who are
10 supporting our in-person learners as well.

11 It is extremely challenging in an elementary
12 level to learn virtually. Our virtual teachers have been
13 nothing short of miracle workers they're learning the
14 best strategies and putting in a tremendous amount of
15 time to reach our virtual learners and make them feel
16 connected.

17 I know that our Principals are also working on
18 some different ways to connect with our virtual learners
19 as we welcome the New Year. So, we are fifteen virtual
20 classes strong now.

21 Our report cards did post on the portal on
22 Wednesday. The curriculum and instruction department
23 sent home a parents report guide, as we do every year, to
24 understanding the report card, which speaks really to our
25 District Assessment philosophy.

1 And very importantly, our own belief that
2 children grow at their own rate and that a report card is
3 a snapshot in time. So we also address in our report card
4 guide, the structure and scale of our grading.

5 As our number of quarantine classes increases
6 -- we have had 17 classes quarantine to date. Next week
7 our professional development committee with Mrs. McNamara
8 will conduct 90 minute professional development sessions
9 to continue to really focus on virtual learning so all
10 teachers are prepared. All our teachers, district-wide,
11 are prepared to implement should we go to a full remote
12 plan at any time.

13 Grade level teams and departments will meet via
14 Zoom to share best practices, scheduling protocols and
15 other matters directly related to virtual instruction.

16 I also really think the Park Avenue Principal,
17 Ms. Fidel (phonetic) worked with the Park Avenue faculty
18 at a back O.T. meeting today and they did some
19 brainstorming on what some of our teachers who have gone
20 virtual from being quarantined and those teachers who are
21 already teaching virtually as to what would you tell or
22 advise a colleague on different ingredients to success?

23 And there was quite, I understand, a valuable
24 conversation that occurred and Ms. Fidel is sharing that
25 district-wide. And I thank all the virtual teachers and

1 those who have gone on quarantine and thank them very
2 much for doing so; for helping us to understand the
3 behind the scenes that goes in to affect their virtual
4 teaching.

5 Over the past month, students in grades three
6 through six completed the iReady diagnostics in reading
7 and mathematics. And teachers are currently analyzing the
8 data to inform our instruction over the course of
9 December and January. Teachers in all grades K through
10 six will strategically assess the students in reading
11 using the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessment.

12 This is another teacher tool that is used to
13 inform instruction and set personal reading goals for our
14 individual students.

15 In the area of building and grounds, if you
16 have noticed, we have new lighting. PSEG lighting our
17 own maintenance department did install those lights.
18 They're LED lighting. We did receive funds back from
19 that, a rebate back.

20 They're much brighter lights. Some of the
21 neighbors have called us because when the lights were
22 positioned, some of them are lighting up their homes.
23 I'm sorry for that, but we are going back and making
24 adjustments as we go forward.

25 It does require that you have a special truck

1 with a lift. So we have gone back and adjusted some of
2 those lights. But I spoke to our security personnel who
3 go on our grounds in the evening and it has absolutely
4 helped to deter visitations to our grounds.

5 So we did sixty lights and we're almost
6 complete at Gunther now. So that has -- that was a big
7 project and we're happy to announce that it's coming to a
8 completion and will serve us well.

9 Over at Martin Avenue, we are fencing in the
10 Martin Avenue grounds. Mrs. Malone will be in touch with
11 Martin Avenue parents as we move forward.

12 As the board knows and had requested, we did
13 have a security assessment back a couple of years ago, as
14 you know. That included security vestibules and also
15 fencing.

16 The fencing right now -- still the grant from
17 Senator Brooks -- is still at the state. We have not
18 received that yet. And our security vestibule project
19 has been approved but is still at the state level.

20 I think everything is kind of held up a little
21 bit because of COVID and the funds are being held up.
22 We're hoping that we still do get those funds, but in the
23 mean time, we're assessing each school and we felt that
24 it was very important here at Martin Avenue to move
25 forward and to put gates at Martin Avenue.

1 For example, on the area of Martin where Rutler
2 Street is there's an opening where parents access the
3 grounds and, you know, during the day time to bring their
4 children to and from school.

5 We are going to put a gate there so that at
6 night we can lock that gate and keep the visitations down
7 at our grounds so that the custodial team would open the
8 gate in the morning and close the gate at dusk when there
9 aren't supposed to be anyone on the grounds.

10 And we are going to fence in other areas of the
11 property because what we have noticed is Martin Avenue is
12 used to almost a crossroad for neighbors to come through
13 during the school day and access Bellmore Village or the
14 train station and we have children out playing at those
15 times. We have talked to the different visitors who have
16 come on property but we do really need to put those gates
17 in.

18 If you look around at the other schools, for
19 example, John G. Dinkelmeyer School and if you look at
20 over at Park Avenue, you will see similar gates there.
21 But each of our properties at our school, we have
22 designated spots where we do need to install gates.

23 We cannot spend the money now on all the
24 properties because when we received the grant, then we're
25 not able to access those funds. So we prioritized what

1 we could do now and what we could wait for when we
2 receive those funds.

3 During the second semester, gearing up for the
4 second semester, the custodians were highly involved in
5 this. We received extra barriers. Thank you to Jackie
6 for ordering those and also student desks for those
7 students returning back to school. So our custodial
8 teams had those desks and barriers ready for our students
9 return.

10 Going over to our mission and core values, I
11 want a big shout out thank you to the Bellmore Lion's
12 Club for your annual Polar Express party.

13 We have Nina Lanci, our very own Nina Lanci,
14 who leads that up. And I thank our board for their
15 participation in it. Our PTA coordinating council and
16 our NBTA. And all our parents, thank you to the parents
17 out there.

18 We -- it was a huge success. We collected bags
19 and bags and bags of candy. I think 80 boxes strong. We
20 also collected winter accessories.

21 Thank you to the PTA coordinating council for
22 sponsoring that. Thank you to our very own NBTA for
23 bagging up the candy and the items and for all the
24 donations.

25 The NBTA has been super gracious in also

1 donating money to the Polar Express and the Lions and
2 also, most recently again, to take care of different
3 families and support in our community.

4 So the NBTA every day leads and lives our
5 mission. Thank you. Also, the PTA coordinating council
6 and our own Board of Education and Nina. Thank you to
7 the Lions for always inviting us to come with you on this
8 event and support this event. It is an event not just
9 for our area but for the entire Nassau County families
10 and children who need support at this time.

11 And we're very grateful that our children and
12 our families can support our mission in coming true, and
13 I thank the board members, too. I know each of you, on
14 your own, are involved in gracious endeavors and your
15 support of us is very much appreciated as well.

16 I want to highlight our principals at this
17 time. Always living the mission. You may have heard
18 them on a phone call on Sunday night where they announced
19 that Monday was Generosity Monday. The principals came
20 together and each month of the year we are going to have
21 a special spirit date.

22 Generosity Monday is a collection for John
23 Theesan (phonetic) who you know is a great, a beautiful
24 man who organizes gift giving for students, children and
25 those who are in need of support, whether it's medical

1 support or they're severely ill or they're needy. And
2 John has been doing this for years. The principals in
3 our schools have partnered with John and I understand
4 that there's boxes overflowing.

5 So again, to North Bellmore, I can't thank you
6 enough, the parents out there; the teachers out there.
7 Our very own Trish Graham, a teacher, organizes for the
8 NBTA donations and collections to sponsor many different
9 events and I appreciate that.

10 There's never a shortage of generosity here in
11 North Bellmore, so I understand we have piles and piles
12 of toys, as well, to give to John Theesan.

13 Last month, huge success was our International
14 World Kindness Day. That was one of the days the
15 district organized, our principals organized, and I see
16 this unity how that's formed, an invisible thread that
17 connects our schools and the PTA coordinating council is
18 right along with that.

19 They sponsored an art, trippy, creative trippy
20 artistic opportunity for our children to create and
21 families to create turkeys out of just about anything
22 they could think of and they sent them in. They had a
23 contest for that. They're getting ready to do some
24 creativity based events for December.

25 So with the PTA coordinating council, with our

1 community partners and the Lions, with our NBTA and our
2 board, we're all on the same page when it comes to our
3 mission. And I think that's very important to note
4 because you can have a mission that's just words but then
5 you can have a mission that's action. So thank you very
6 much for the actions on behalf of our beautiful
7 community.

8 I'm very happy to announce that we have a new
9 website. It's going live -- well it's going live today
10 and tomorrow. Right now, you can't access it because
11 it's finishing under construction.

12 Kudos to the entire -- entire central team for
13 working on this with us and to Jason Fischetti
14 (phonetic), in particular, for spearheading it. You're
15 going to see it's a really friendly website.

16 I think parents are going to enjoy it, faculty
17 and staff enjoy it. Very easy to find all our
18 information, our different department pages.

19 So I think Jay, in the next day or two that
20 should be up live for families and faculty to see; am I
21 right?

22 MR. FISCHETTI: Probably tonight at some point.
23 It's still not quite there. If you go to the website you
24 get nothing. It said hopefully by midnight tonight it
25 would be out.

1 MRS. TESTA: It is -- it is -- it is beautiful
2 as far as websites go.

3 MR. FISCHETTI: Yes.

4 MRS. TESTA: So we're -- we're proud of it, you
5 know. And I hope the community enjoys it. We tried to
6 put as much on the website as we send out so you can use
7 it as a tool as well. And each of our schools has a page
8 on that website.

9 I'm going to move and transition over to some
10 COVID related information. My colleagues this evening,
11 who are going to speak, also have a great deal to do with
12 all the COVID management.

13 So I'm going to talk about it and they'll talk
14 about different things that have to do with their
15 departments, but it is a whole team effort with the
16 central team, with the parents, with the board, with our
17 administrators and with our faculty and staff.

18 What is very clear, and what I've written to
19 the families and to our faculty and staff over the last
20 month or so, is the evidence is very, very clear that
21 schools are not the place where initial exposure and
22 spread is occurring. The data in North Bellmore
23 overwhelmingly shows that exposures are coming from
24 outside events.

25 Specifically, we've contact traced back to

1 small gatherings, at homes, at eating establishments,
2 sporting events, carpools, lunch dates. The spread is
3 not here in school.

4 I'm very happy to say that and I know that
5 that's the case across the county. But what we're doing
6 is working -- there is no doubt that the barriers are
7 completely supporting our mitigation of the spread, that
8 the masks are supporting our mitigation of the spread.

9 I just spoke with a doctor from the Department
10 of Health, not 40 minutes ago, to share some of the data
11 with her and she completely agrees that what we have in
12 place with the social distancing, with the masks, with
13 the cleaning and disinfecting of the spaces and the
14 barriers is absolutely helping us mitigate the spread.

15 The reason I can tell you about the data is
16 because we've traced every single case back and we know
17 where it emanated from and we see that there's very
18 little, if any spread once we quarantine a class. It's
19 almost minimal.

20 And those who have become positive after
21 quarantining, it's because they have a relationship with
22 the person who was positive outside of the school
23 district.

24 So that is very clear. I have all that data.
25 So what we're really doing is we're -- We saw a spike

1 come up after Thanksgiving, which we expected.

2 Thank you to the entire community for your
3 support. To my inside community here for the support in
4 contact tracing it. The contact tracing is heavily
5 falling upon the districts.

6 While we have an excellent relationship with
7 the Department of Health, a daily relationship with the
8 Department of Health, the school districts are the ones
9 who are doing the contact tracing, who are reporting the
10 information to the Department of Health because, quite
11 frankly, at this time, a couple of days ago they were up
12 to 500, 600 new cases a day.

13 So they are not able to fully contact trace at
14 all. So they really do spend quite a bit of time on the
15 phone with us as we present our contact tracing findings.
16 And we're going to continue to work and expediently
17 handle all these self reported cases so that we can
18 continue to mitigate the spread here in school.

19 Our goal is to keep our schools open, to have
20 our children in school learning joyfully. And at this
21 time, I -- I would be remiss if I did not look straight
22 out at my North Bellmore faculty and say thank you.

23 We are maintaining as much social distancing as
24 possible. So, these are my opportunities to see
25 everyone. To teach in this manner was to learn something

1 brand new. And we all know when we're learning something
2 brand new, there is a curve and anxiety that comes with
3 it.

4 But when you see and hear what our teachers are
5 doing and how our students are learning and how our
6 teachers are managing each day to figure out how to teach
7 so radically different than what they did before. Where
8 we turn and talk to students. Where we've brought small
9 groups together.

10 I am so proud of our teachers. I see children
11 walking outside. I see children playing at recess. I
12 see teachers bringing children up at desks a certain
13 amount of feet away from them so they can have a private
14 talk.

15 I've watched, I've seen creativity, I've heard
16 it from our principals and I thank the North Bellmore
17 teachers for helping us to rise to the occasion and I
18 sincerely thank the students as well.

19 I think the students have been remarkable.
20 They have been wearing these masks, they have been
21 following these rules; they have been smiling behind the
22 masks and you can still see the joy, you can really see
23 the joy and they've taught us a lot during this time.

24 And I'm really grateful for that and we will
25 continue to work our hardest to keep our schools open; to

1 keep our schools safe and to meet our mission of
2 developing confident, passionate learners.

3 I'd also like to clarify some information and
4 shed some light on some recent correspondence that we
5 have sent out. Particularly, I have sent out information,
6 thank you to Mrs. Rehak (phonetic) who's been very
7 supportive to this end about yellow zones.

8 I know that you're -- we're all hearing about
9 these micro clusters and the governor zones. The
10 governor has announced a color coding system as you know,
11 called Micro Clusters, which include yellow, orange and
12 red clusters for a strategic way to monitor a spread.

13 When these micro clusters I believe were first
14 designed, the governor and many people thought that
15 schools would be the super spreader events -- or places I
16 mean. And they have not become that.

17 And I -- I appreciate we have -- we have
18 medical professionals on our board who I learn a lot
19 from. Roe and Melissa, thank you, because we've had many
20 conversations about this.

21 But we do know that these micro clusters were
22 set up to pretty much look at a geographic area and say,
23 "Okay, the spread is too much in this area so we're going
24 to make a requirement for now schools to do testing."

25 And they're saying that the testing is

1 surveillance type testing not diagnostic testing. They
2 want to get an idea of you testing your community to see
3 where your community shows in terms of the zones.

4 The tricky thing is, is that we're not privy
5 that the school districts are not privy to the algorithm
6 of how the determination is made for these zones.

7 Quite frankly, I was at a conversation at a
8 Zoom within the last week with the governor's office and
9 his representative to the State Education Department and
10 the New York State Department of Health and they're not
11 aware of what the algorithms are.

12 I believe that the algorithms are being changed
13 so that we don't have as many schools going into these
14 zones because again, they were set up because they
15 thought that there was going to be super spreading in the
16 schools and now they're seeing that perhaps, this is not
17 the way to go because the idea is to keep schools open.

18 You know, so we're going to test in schools,
19 we're required to test in schools first, if we go into
20 what's called a yellow zone. So I recently sent out
21 correspondence to parents about this.

22 Each school in the district, or the district as
23 a whole, we're going to clarify that has to test twenty
24 percent of their in-person students, faculty and staff
25 over two weeks should they be designated in a yellow

1 zone.

2 I would like the board to know that I have
3 found out that recently Massapequa and Great Neck both
4 were designated as yellow zones. They did not -- they
5 were not the first to learn that they were in the yellow
6 zone.

7 It is -- we should be prepared to know that we
8 may hear online that our district is in a yellow zone.
9 We may not get a phone call until later on in the day.
10 So I have confirmed that -- that they can't tell us when
11 we would hear. We're not going to get a lot of advance
12 notice, if any. So that's why we wanted to put out the
13 survey to see how many parents would be amenable to
14 having their children tested on, you know, the school
15 site. So let me -- let me say a little bit about that
16 now.

17 If we were to go into a yellow zone, we sent
18 out a survey to find out how many parents would even be
19 amenable to having their child tested in school. At
20 North Bellmore fifty percent of our parents were amenable
21 to testing.

22 The next step would be to reach out to those
23 parents and get consent for the testing. So should we go
24 into a yellow zone, we would -- we would know that these
25 are parents that are willing to have their children

1 tested at school.

2 If a parent decides not to have their child
3 tested, that's -- that's fine with us. That's okay.
4 We're not going to cherry-pick children. This is a
5 voluntary experience.

6 And also, with our North Bellmore Teachers
7 Association, our North Bellmore Parents Association, our
8 faculty and staff, the administration team with the board
9 has said that we will request volunteers.

10 We're going to ask our faculty and staff,
11 please -- our parents, please help us. Our
12 administrators, please help us get to the twenty percent
13 so that we're not designating who has to test.

14 We have little children here. We're -- I don't
15 want to be in the place of saying, "This person has to
16 test; you have to test," I know that this can be a
17 source. You have to be comfortable with it, so I'm going
18 to hope that if we are designated that we will be able to
19 pull these volunteers together.

20 So if you're a parent who said that you would
21 be amenable, we will send you something in an email to
22 say are you willing to consent if we do indeed become a
23 yellow zone?

24 If you say that you would consent, we'll put
25 you on a list as the parents that are open to

1 volunteering.

2 If at the time that it comes and you think you
3 don't want to do it, that's okay, we just won't schedule
4 you. But we will -- we will have to know if we're near
5 that twenty percent because if we don't get to twenty
6 percent, then we can't open.

7 Within three days of being designated as yellow
8 zone, that's when we have to start testing and then we
9 have a two-week time period.

10 After the two-week time period is at its
11 completion, the -- I guess the New York State Department
12 of Health will look at our numbers and tell us if we can
13 continue to stay open, or do we not, or are we exceeding
14 the seven day rolling average for the region, which we
15 will not know, at the time, what it is.

16 Even now, the two districts that are in yellow
17 zone, there are other districts with the same numbers
18 that haven't been put in yellow zone.

19 The Department of Health, the Commissioner did
20 tell us that the Bellmore Merrick area right now is not
21 near the yellow zone, so that's -- that's a positive for
22 us at the moment, but North Bellmore will be ready in
23 terms of if we have to go.

24 We do have a very good company, nationally
25 known company, that we're working with now, to come to a

1 contract with. Should we go into the yellow zone, we
2 would call upon them.

3 They have done this type of testing nationally
4 now. They have also completed testing at two local
5 districts and the districts speak very highly, gave them
6 glowing reviews.

7 Some of our colleagues in the Bellmore Merrick
8 are looking at them as well. The only difference with
9 this particular lab, this laboratory service is that this
10 service requires that you provide your insurance card.
11 It's completely 100 percent covered but you would have to
12 provide your insurance. If you don't have insurance and
13 you give your social security number, it's covered.

14 Some labs -- the one that we were previously
15 looking at and I indicated in a letter, we would be
16 paying for that, the district would pay for that.

17 It doesn't go through insurance. Some of them
18 are quite costly, \$45,000, \$80,000. Some of them are
19 less, depending on the number of days.

20 So Ms. Rehak and I worked with the Central
21 District and I know that they're going -- they're looking
22 at this particular company, too.

23 We will continue to look to see about other
24 companies should several districts go into yellow zone at
25 the same time. We don't want to be without an option.

1 So those are -- those are things we're looking at now.

2 So, quickly, just to sum up, if we go into
3 yellow zone we will be ready, we will seek volunteers.
4 We will not just randomly test children or adults.

5 We will set up convenient times for the
6 testing. We will let people know in advance what type of
7 testing it is so that they're aware. Parents may
8 accompany their children to come for the testing, that's
9 totally fine. That's something that we would work out.

10 And then the orange and the red zones are the
11 next steps in the zones. We're really not talking so
12 much about them, they're a little bit different.

13 The orange zone is where each school must test
14 twenty percent of in-person students and faculty and
15 staff over the course of a month. And then the red zone
16 is each school must test thirty percent of in-person
17 students, faculty and staff, over the course of the
18 month. That's only correspondence that we sent out on
19 December 1st. So we are in good shape. We are moving
20 forward; we will be ready.

21 We have the companies take care of any type of
22 medical waste, which is very minimal. They -- we only
23 have to provide, you know -- we'll provide our staff to
24 over-view, oversee it but they have administrators that
25 oversee it and they hire medical professionals, EMT's,

1 former doctors, and so forth, and they are trained.

2 And it's -- one of the companies we're looking
3 at is a PCR test. It's not the fully evasive swab, it's
4 more of a nasal pharyngeal type swab. Yes, that we would
5 -- we would look at -- but I will keep everyone up to
6 date, you know, as -- as we go forward with the -- with
7 the testing.

8 And I would like to thank the parents at this
9 time. I know it's been very difficult when you're a
10 parent and your little one is sniffing and is it COVID
11 is it not COVID? You know, there are so many of the
12 symptoms that overlap with the flu or the common cold.

13 The rule of thumb is that if you've taken your
14 child for a test and you think your child is sick or may
15 have been exposed, please keep your child home until you
16 have those results of that test so that we're completely
17 safe and sound with everything, and please keep children
18 home if they're sick. We talked to, you know, our
19 faculty and staff about that as well.

20 The Department of Health again has recognized
21 and thanked us for continuing to be rigorous mask
22 wearers. We know that that is helping us with the -- the
23 mitigation of it.

24 We know that the barriers are helping, we know
25 the social distancing, the cleaning of hands is helping

1 us because we're also seeing in the data that the
2 sickness rate is lower than it was at this time like last
3 year in comparison to how many children were getting
4 sick.

5 So that's something that I thought would -- is
6 very important to share with the -- with the board.
7 That's really -- that is my report. If you have any
8 questions you'd like to ask me now, I would be more than
9 happy to answer them.

10 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you. Any questions from
11 the board?

12 MRS. TESTA: I do see some -- there's questions
13 in, in the chat. Okay, thank you. I do -- I would like
14 to maybe answer a couple of these in the chat right now.

15 There is a question -- thank you, Mrs. Spagnola
16 (phonetic) -- that Mrs. Spagnola says that fifty -- fifty
17 percent said yes to in-school testing. What about those
18 who will get their child tested on their own? Thank you
19 for that.

20 We were told in the beginning, Mrs. Spagnola,
21 that the children that get tested, outside or faculty and
22 staff, that get tested outside, are permitted to do so
23 and that you could give that information to the district.

24 However, what we have learned now, this week,
25 is that the district would then have to upload that

1 information to a state website. And we can't do that
2 unless we're an LSL, and we're not an LSL, but if we hire
3 an LSL, which we're -- we're going to do -- the LSL
4 cannot upload those voluntary tests; they don't have a
5 way to do it.

6 So right now, we really do -- we did learn,
7 just yesterday, that we have to go with doing our
8 volunteers and getting it accomplished inside.

9 In terms of twenty percent; is it twenty
10 percent of each building or is it twenty percent
11 district-wide?

12 So the districts were told by the Department of
13 Health, and by the governor's office, that it's twenty
14 percent in each building. However, I know that in
15 Massapequa, when they did the testing, that Massapequa
16 was told that you needed twenty percent district-wide.

17 So today, I did ask to speak with someone from
18 the Department of Health again and also from the
19 governor's office to clarify that so that when we go in
20 we know. So I will have both numbers figured out and
21 know how to meet those numbers.

22 But we were told, for example, Great Neck
23 tested twenty percent in each of their buildings and
24 Massapequa just had to do twenty percent district-wide.

25 It's been very challenging because there's been

1 different information out there. So Chris, I just have
2 to -- our attorney -- I just have to go and find out
3 which one it actually is, Chris, because the
4 Superintendent's Association was told two different
5 things within a week.

6 If parents will be present, will testing be
7 done inside or outside? Right now, we are preparing to
8 test inside the school to give a room in the school.

9 I -- I say that right now because if it's a
10 different company that they have and they set up outside,
11 then we would do that. But I anticipate really that it
12 would be inside the school and that we would -- we would
13 schedule a certain number of people at a time to maintain
14 social distancing.

15 So we do have plans that it would be inside the
16 school in either a cafeteria or a gymnasium and the
17 parents would be permitted to come right in to the
18 testing site with their child or their children.

19 What are the costs to do the testing and who is
20 responsible? Is this coming out of district budget?
21 Thank you. Depending on which LSL we're able to get at
22 the time, we are looking at two different types of LSLs.

23 One LSL does it through insurance, which is
24 covered by the person's insurance -- by your insurance.
25 If you do not have insurance, your social security number

1 will suffice and the Care's Act will pay for your -- for
2 your testing.

3 If we go with the company that charges the
4 district, which -- which we would be more than willing to
5 do if that's the company that's available when we go into
6 the yellow zone, the district would be paying for those
7 tests.

8 Let me explain that in either situation, the
9 LSL that you get, the district does have to apply to the
10 state. If we -- if we get -- I'm sorry, if we get an
11 LSL, where the district is paying for that, we go outside
12 to New York State and New York State gives us the test.
13 Other LSLs provide the test.

14 So right now, what the Board of Education is
15 doing is we're going to get a couple of contracts with
16 different LSLs so that the time -- when the time comes,
17 that we're not left without an LSL, especially if
18 surrounding districts go at the same time.

19 If Bellmore Merrick were to go at the same
20 time, I would be working with my colleagues to set up
21 different testing times. So as soon as we're designated,
22 I'll be able to go to one of our companies and I'll get
23 that information right out to the parents the -- the
24 parents and the faculty and staff.

25 So, one of the questions has to do with if the

1 building administrators are acting as the primary contact
2 tracers, have they been trained by the Nassau County
3 Department of Health? And can we really, definitely say
4 spread does not occur in the schools? Please consider a
5 precautionary shutdown after the holiday break. Thank
6 you, Mr. Schmidt.

7 No, we're not trained medical professionals,
8 Mr. Schmidt, but we do the contact tracing, and by that I
9 mean, we look when we hear that there's a positive and
10 we're told that there's a positive, we have to trace back
11 where that child or adult has been for the 48 hours
12 preceding the onset of symptoms.

13 So if a child -- if a family was to call me
14 tonight and say their child tested positive and the
15 positive results came back tonight, I would ask that
16 parent when did the symptoms -- if there were symptoms --
17 when did the symptoms begin?

18 If the child was asymptomatic, I would take
19 that information down. I'd work directly with our
20 principals. Our principals take and look at that child's
21 schedule for 48 hours, because you go back 48 hours from
22 the onset of symptoms.

23 We collect all the data and we provide the data
24 to the Nassau County Department of Health and we review,
25 at length, all the data. We look to see if that child

1 went to any specials, was that child at any specific
2 services; reading, O.T., et cetera.

3 We also do the same thing for our teachers;
4 where were they? We have contact logs that individuals
5 sign in and out of in our school district. The teacher
6 eats in the faculty room, the teacher signs a contact
7 log.

8 If another professional has to go into a
9 classroom, that's not his or her own, they sign a contact
10 log. The principals pull all those logs. We take 48
11 hours of time and we contact trace and see exactly how
12 many people the person who is positive came in contact
13 with. For how long they came in contact with and what
14 was their role during that time.

15 And then we provide all the data to the
16 Department of Health and then the Department of Health
17 determines if there's a close contact, if there needs to
18 be a quarantine, if they're -- and so on. So we do not
19 make those types of decisions. We provide all the data.

20 In the beginning, when this all started, the
21 Department of Health was going to be taking all that data
22 and analyzing the data.

23 When I say that we're the contact tracers, it
24 means that we're responsible for getting all this
25 information and giving it to parents -- I mean giving it

1 to the DOH.

2 This also includes, which has been -- which has
3 been the most challenging part of this, is when children
4 or adults are part of outside teams.

5 So for example, I can do all the contact
6 tracing here. My principals ask all the questions, and
7 then another question the principal will ask is, "During
8 this 48 hours of time, does your child belong to a team,
9 and if so, what team is that?"

10 And we have actually worked to try to support
11 the Department of Health and coaches in contact tracing
12 teams as well. So we are -- no, we do not have a
13 background in epidemiology -- I'm sorry, say it Roe.

14 MRS. CORLESS: Epidemiology.

15 MRS. TESTA: Yes, epidemiology, thank you. But
16 we do have -- we are very, very adept at contact tracing,
17 and we have -- and that is part of our requirement from
18 the New York State Department of Health and our reopening
19 plan that we need to contact trace.

20 And yes, I can definitely say that the spread
21 is not occurring in our schools because I have the data
22 on where the spread is emanating from, because part of
23 that is to identify the close contact of the person who
24 has been positive. And then, I can look at the data of
25 the children in the school and see that it's not going

1 through the classes.

2 And I have showed and presented that data and
3 talked to the Department of Health and actually, the
4 Department of Health has been able to unequivocally state
5 that. That they see that the schools are the safest
6 place for the people to be.

7 Also, we did talk to the board, the board will
8 keep a very close eye on the holiday break and after.
9 But I do caution people with that in terms of us shutting
10 down. We've heard from many parents. It's harder for
11 the elementary schools because children can't be home
12 alone and we need to try to keep them in school.

13 But yes, there was an uptick after
14 Thanksgiving, for sure, from all Thanksgiving events that
15 occurred. So we will keep a very close eye on the
16 numbers.

17 One of the things we're looking at very closely
18 is our staffing, as well, as we see staff members who are
19 close contacts.

20 Right now, the close contacts and the
21 quarantines far outweigh any positives that we have and
22 there is a sense of a misunderstanding on the part of
23 some, which is understandable that if you -- if you stay
24 -- if you close for fourteen days and come back on the
25 fifteenth day, you're avoiding a lot.

1 But, what we're seeing is people that have been
2 exposed, you know, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen --
3 fourteen days they're getting sick. So that's why we've
4 been really working with everyone and take a look at
5 their -- their symptoms. But we are talking and we watch
6 the data all the time.

7 I can't answer any live questions. Someone
8 said can I answer the question live? It says you would
9 like to answer this question live but I don't see a
10 question.

11 What is the district's policy with children
12 consistently not complying with mask rules? We do have
13 some children that medically have different
14 accommodations regarding masks. But if there's a child
15 that has a situation with the mask, the building
16 principal and the teacher -- the teacher is reporting
17 that to the building principal and the building principal
18 is working with that and taking care of those situations
19 if and when they occur.

20 District staff members will absolutely be
21 present when the children are tested. Be sure of that.
22 We would never just bring in a company. Please be sure
23 that the district administration, including myself, will
24 be visiting the testing and my central administration
25 teachers as well.

1 This is a question Mrs. Ralston asked about
2 children during the holiday break, having children come
3 back and be virtual instead of going -- going to school.

4 I think that the district coming in person, the
5 Board of Education is looking at that and we'll monitor
6 where we are and the number of cases and so forth. And
7 taking a look at that right now that is not the plan but
8 look, we speak daily and we talk daily with one another.

9 We do have data about the percentage of parents
10 who said yes in each building. I see Jackie nodding her
11 head. Would you like to answer that, Jack?

12 MS. REHAK: Sure. Yes, we are well over twenty
13 percent in each individual building. Most buildings were
14 over thirty percent. Keep in mind of all the people that
15 responded, we didn't get a hundred percent responses to
16 the survey from our parents, but even with the yeses we
17 did get well over thirty percent from students alone in
18 each building.

19 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you, Jackie.

20 MRS. TESTA: I have a question from Mrs.
21 Powell. Social and emotional well-being was addressed in
22 September and was about adjusting to school and distance
23 [inaudible] as well as social, emotional is being
24 addressed currently based on validating students'
25 feelings and experiences.

1 If schools are being found to not being made
2 sites for COVID transmission, what legal reason does the
3 district have to agree to testing children at school
4 without more district feedback stated? Thank you for
5 that.

6 Does Nassau County counsel of school
7 superintendents has -- has emphatically stated their
8 feelings about testing in schools and is advocating that
9 -- that schools are not the place where there is a spread
10 and why is it that we're being required to be the people
11 to test? Because there's many holes in this.

12 For example, if your geographic area is
13 designated as a yellow zone, and you're testing 20
14 percent of your faculty and staff and your students, part
15 of our faculty and staff don't even live in the yellow
16 zone and we're not getting the whole community.

17 So, unfortunately, Mrs. Carol, the New York
18 State Department of Health and the governor's office
19 through his executive order have directed us. We have
20 absolutely -- have no legal leg to stand on to say no.
21 We are -- we are not permitted; we are not permitted to
22 do so.

23 Mrs., I can get back to you on some of the
24 information on what our health and wellness block is
25 covering to help students to adjust.

1 I know we're talking a lot about social and
2 emotional feelings about; I know we're a lot with our
3 teachers and our staff about reading into students'
4 behaviors and looking at antecedents to behaviors. Does
5 it have to do with any type of COVID trauma? I can get
6 you some more actual topics for you, Mrs. Carol and get
7 them out to you about our -- our health and wellness
8 block.

9 But, please, know that the block is going very
10 well and our prevention department is in there. In fact,
11 we have -- we have an entire year planned with the
12 prevention classes and they're going very well in each of
13 our schools.

14 So a lot of what we have to do, some of it is,
15 has to do with requirements with teaching different
16 coping strategies and how to say no strategies. How to
17 recognize if someone is in -- in a place where
18 emotionally fragile. How to express your feelings. How
19 to talk to others if you're feeling angry or upset; how
20 do you express that?

21 So those are just some of the topics that I
22 know that we're working on, but I'd be glad to get back
23 to you just to give you some more specifics.

24 I have a couple of anonymous attendees, I'm not
25 permitted to answer those. I'm sorry. If you'd like to

1 resubmit your question, you may.

2 Part of the board policy and the requirement
3 for the board is that we have to have the name.

4 We're supposed to have the address as well, but
5 we can look that up. But we do -- we do have to have the
6 name in order for me to speak about a -- to speak to me
7 about a question.

8 Thank you to those who are writing in that we
9 think that you think we're doing a great job. We're
10 doing a great job because I'm not -- I'm not just saying
11 this -- there's pure, pure love for the kids that we have
12 here. It's a special place to be and it's our job to
13 keep them as safe as possible.

14 And I -- I really want to be able to know that
15 at end of the day, our faculty -- that we kept our
16 faculty and staff and students as safe as can be and did
17 everything possible. And we continue -- we continue to
18 learn.

19 So those are -- those are -- when we say that
20 health and safety comes first, this board has always made
21 that very clear. And I -- I not only talk about health-
22 wide safety, there is -- there is a question in the chat
23 that says, "Is yelling at a child ever an appropriate
24 response?"

25 No, no. I say that straight out to you; no,

1 unless a child is in -- in the -- unless a child is at a
2 place of getting hurt, then I would see that someone
3 could raise their voice.

4 So I would say to that parent to -- if you
5 haven't followed up with the school, please follow-up
6 with the school and then, if after -- if after, you
7 follow-up with the school. If you'd like to speak to me,
8 I'm always available to speak to you.

9 I think I -- I actually answered every question
10 that I had, but I would like to address something that I
11 believe I did not address in my -- in my report. And
12 that is outside of the school, there seems to be some
13 questions about outside school.

14 Do you have to wear masks on school property?
15 Yes. The school property is an extension of the inside
16 of the building. The district administrators are
17 responsible for the behavior on school grounds both by
18 visitors, adults and children, even after school. One,
19 in the morning, we're still responsible -- I'm still
20 responsible. Something happens on the ground, it's my
21 responsibility to respond to that.

22 So what we have been asking of our families is
23 to please respect everyone by wearing a mask up to the
24 school because that's what we wear in school.

25 I know that outside six to twelve feet apart,

1 you really can be without a mask, but I think what is
2 happening is some parents are -- and adults are --
3 medically excused from wearing masks. I'm totally aware
4 of that, so we just ask that those individuals -- and we
5 know of some in our district that they just say, "Six to
6 twelve feet apart from others."

7 That is what we're required to do, that's what
8 the best practice is, that's what we've been asked by the
9 CDC and the New York State Department of Health to do.

10 We don't want to be police officers, we want
11 everyone to get along. We were one of the first
12 districts we started right off with our -- with our
13 playgrounds open, and I thank all the parents for your
14 help with that. We never closed our playground; we never
15 stopped recess, and I'm proud of that. So I hope that --
16 I hope that answers that question.

17 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you very much.

18 Thank you very much, Mrs. Testa for that very
19 informative update.

20 I would absolutely like to thank everybody who
21 donated to -- for our holiday spirit. It really is
22 impressive to see the North Bellmore community come
23 together to help make other people's holidays special.

24 So I wanted to thank everybody to see the --
25 the mission going, people living there. It's very, very

1 impressive to me. Thank you again. Every -- every
2 single month I thank the administrators for all their
3 hard work with COCOVID.

4 I'd like to thank all the staff, faculty, all
5 the parents and the students for all their hard work to
6 help keep the schools safe, especially during these tough
7 times.

8 MRS. TESTA: Thank you.

9 MRS. CORLESS: And it impresses me that the
10 kids are still learning and enjoying their education.
11 And so, if you had asked me in September if we'd still be
12 doing this today? Are the kids coming in? I wasn't so
13 sure. I'm so happy to see that we're going strong. So
14 thank you to everyone.

15 MRS. TESTA: Oh, Mrs. Mrs. Corless, just want
16 to take a moment again to just thank the re-opening team
17 who did so much hard work in the beginning. Because
18 everything they worked on, you know, we're -- we're going
19 to get back together with them, we thought after the New
20 Year would be a good time.

21 But we had terrific families, parents,
22 community members and teachers on that, board members,
23 too, who just -- administrators who just really put in
24 the time and effort, and you know, looked at every, every
25 single little solitary piece of research and information

1 to help us.

2 And we really -- the health protocols that we
3 -- that we have developed have really been a guiding
4 light for us. So, we'll take --

5 MALE: And very impressive.

6 MRS. TESTA: (Continuing) --Kudos to those --
7 to that reopening team.

8 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

9 Okay, moving on. 10.1 be it resolved that the
10 North Bellmore Board of Education approve the
11 superintendent's recommendation to increase the
12 [inaudible] special education staff by one position
13 effective December 11, 2020.

14 FEMALE: So moved.

15 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

16 FEMALE: Aye.

17 MRS. CORLESS: 10.2, be it resolve the Board of
18 Education approved the personnel report - dated
19 December 10th, 2020. Have a Motion?

20 FEMALE: So moved.

21 FEMALE: Second.

22 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

23 FEMALE: Aye.

24 FEMALE: Aye.

25 MRS. CORLESS: 10.3, be it resolved the Board

1 of Education approve the staff development report dated
2 December 10, 2020.

3 FEMALE: Motion.

4 FEMALE: Second.

5 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

6 FEMALE: Aye.

7 FEMALE: Aye.

8 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

9 Next we have a business department update by
10 Mrs. Rehak.

11 MS. REHAK: Yes, good evening.

12 As Mrs. Testa mentioned, we have a lot going on
13 related to COVID-19 right now, the pandemic. So I'm not
14 going to be repetitive in my report and go over
15 everything she just covered in such great detail.

16 But I -- I want to talk about last month. I
17 mentioned the last couple of months, I talked about us
18 possibly needing a tan [phonetic] to go out and borrow.
19 We were watching cash flow very closely. This is because
20 school districts, we rely on funding from property taxes
21 and state aid. And with recent cuts in state aid and the
22 property taxes being pushed back, it was extended the
23 deadline for property taxes a month. So was all our
24 funding.

25 So we were watching cash flow. We were looking

1 at it on a daily basis, and at this time, I'm very happy
2 to report that we did not need to take out a tan. We did
3 start receiving the tax levy funds in December that we
4 were -- and we were able to meet our con-cash flow needs.

5 So we're going to continue to keep an eye on
6 cash flow should we need to borrow later in the year. As
7 you know, property taxes come in twice a year, so now we
8 have it in December, most of our funding, and then we'll
9 see more of our funding in the spring.

10 So, now this, these funds we watch closely to
11 see that they carry us through to the spring. So that's
12 something we're constantly doing.

13 But, you know, like I said, we were watching it
14 daily and I'm happy to say we did not need to go take out
15 a tan and borrow at this time.

16 I'm also -- I started working on the '21-'22
17 budget, and for this I'm going to focus a lot on our fund
18 balance productions, and I'm hoping that next month, in
19 January, we get a more clear picture of state aid, which
20 we've been so anxiously awaiting. And at that point,
21 have a better idea of where we'll stand at the end of
22 this year and what affect that will have on our '21-'22
23 budget.

24 We did get the tax based growth factor that
25 came in, and for North Bellmore it's 1.0018, which

1 compared to last year's factor of 1.0064. So this is
2 considerably lower and it will have an effect on our
3 overall tax cap calculation.

4 Right now that looks like it could be about a
5 \$200,000 decrease in the tax levy cap calculation and
6 we'll have a better picture on what that will have on our
7 total tax levy once we get the allowable levy growth rate
8 factor, which has not come in yet. But based on what
9 we're seeing so far, it does look like it's going to be a
10 much lower tax cap for '21-'22.

11 We also did recently receive the health
12 insurance rates for 2021. They came in -- it looks on
13 average like it's about a four percent increase in cost,
14 which is a pretty modest increase. So that's good news
15 we received right now.

16 The other thing we have going on this month is
17 Essa reporting and it is due by the end of December, so
18 we are almost done with it and we'll work on finalizing
19 it next week.

20 And that is my report for the night. If you
21 have any questions...

22 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you very much.

23 Any questions?

24 Okay, perfect. We'll move on to the technology
25 report. Mr. Fischetti?

1 MR. FISCHETTI: Sure. Good evening everyone.
2 I'll start with just a little bit more about the website
3 that we're moving over to.

4 One thing that we found to be really important
5 this time around was to make the website completely ADA
6 handicapped accessible.

7 So what people will see when they go on to this
8 new website is in the upper right hand corner there's a
9 little figure that you click on and it will change font
10 size, it will change contrast, it will change background
11 colors. It will do all of those things that the old site
12 was not able to do.

13 So that was just one little note about the new
14 site that we're really happy about so that people that
15 potentially need a screen reader or need to have text
16 read to them, it's all built into this site. So we're
17 really happy about that.

18 And yesterday, report cards posted in the
19 portal. So today is the first day of our second
20 trimester. We have successfully rostered -- made all of
21 our changes from virtual to in-person. That process
22 takes three days, basically, to replicate in our systems
23 so that all of the rosters are correct for attendance
24 purposes. So that's been a success so far.

25 Tomorrow is day three. So, hopefully,

1 everything appears as it should. And if it doesn't, I
2 know that I'll hear from everyone.

3 I just wanted to go back for one minute -- I
4 had something last month that I wanted to mention. We
5 had about sixty-five families opt out of taking home
6 iPads.

7 So we have over 800 families that accepted
8 those devices to travel with the students every single
9 day and we did have about sixty-five families opt out.
10 Meaning, they only want a device used in school or they
11 didn't want to be responsible for breakage.

12 I did create a technology device lending
13 agreement -- that families needed to agree to and sign.
14 It did give them the opportunity to choose not to take
15 the device home.

16 And I also offered a standard type insurance
17 that they could take out on the device to cover for their
18 own child, with unlimited breakage, spills; things like
19 that. And that would be on the families to take that
20 insurance. We kind of followed suit with what every
21 other district does and I had a very positive response
22 for that.

23 And one of the things we're working on right
24 now is we had to make some -- some changes to the network
25 because suddenly we put 1600 devices on the network and

1 when Apple pushes an update to 1600 devices that can be a
2 little problematic.

3 So we've been tweaking that and we managed to
4 get that all squared away. And we are getting a very
5 positive response to the use of the devices not only in
6 school but the fact that the students can take them home,
7 especially if they end up in a quarantine situation.

8 And just one last thing, we're working on some
9 PB opportunities for teachers. Now that they have their
10 iPads, we want to do some -- some in depth office 365
11 type professional development because using the iPad off
12 of the network does not allow them to access their
13 finals.

14 So if we can do a good training with 365, which
15 is web-based, that'll kind of bridge the gap between all
16 of their classroom materials and files and their iPads.
17 So that's something that we're working on with the
18 curriculum department.

19 And that is my report.

20 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

21 MR. FISCHETTI: Sure.

22 MRS. CORLESS: Any questions?

23 Perfect, we'll move on to special education
24 Update. Ms. Eskew?

25 MS. ESKEW: Just very quickly. I only have a

1 couple of items. I just wanted to let you know, which
2 you probably have heard through other means, that the --
3 that New York State extended its deadline for allowing
4 students to participate in virtual classes who have not
5 had all of their immunizations up to date.

6 So the deadline for prohibiting that those
7 children from participating in virtual school as well as
8 in person was November 11th and it was extended to
9 December 11th.

10 So as of Friday -- after Friday, students who
11 have not had their immunizations up to date will not be
12 permitted to even participate in virtual learning.

13 So we have communicated very aggressively
14 through the nurses and myself trying to notify parents
15 of, you know, reminding them that they had to do this.
16 And we were working finally with two students.

17 One student did -- a parent opted to home
18 school in lieu of getting the TDAP immunization and we
19 now have one other student that I'm working with the
20 Department of Health on who has medical issues along with
21 immunization issues.

22 Otherwise, all of our students now are fully
23 immunized and up to date. So we don't have a problem in
24 that area any longer.

25 But I did make a final push to notify people,

1 as of yesterday, to let them know that this was happening
2 at the end of this week and they should be prepared for
3 the fact that they're now going to have to go home school
4 and contact Mrs. Pollard to make those arrangements. The
5 second thing is that we have been very aggressively
6 trying to recruit and hire paraprofessionals.

7 Although we usually have a very low turnover
8 rate among our teachers and paraprofessionals in this
9 district, this year has been particularly difficult
10 because many of our senior, very experienced people have
11 either resigned or retired, and many due to COVID related
12 circumstances either personal ones, there being their own
13 health risks. And also family issues that require them
14 to care for elderly people or people with significant
15 medical conditions in their homes.

16 And so, we're having a very difficult time
17 trying to hire people. And we're also experiencing the
18 same thing in the teacher area, and I think that's really
19 across all districts on Long Island for some reason.

20 It's worse now during COVID. It was always
21 difficult to get substitute teachers but now there seems
22 to be a real dearth of personnel that are available to
23 us. So a lot of our staff are having to work double
24 shifts in order to provide coverage for the para-
25 professionals and other personnel that -- that we

1 currently don't have on staff.

2 And that's my report.

3 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

4 Any questions?

5 Thank you for the update.

6 14.1 be it resolved that the Board of Education
7 approved the CPSE and CSE reports that are dated
8 December 2nd, 2020.

9 FEMALE: So moved.

10 FEMALE: Second.

11 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

12 FEMALE: Aye.

13 FEMALE: Aye.

14 MRS. CORLESS: At this time, if people have any
15 other questions to send in for the second public hearing
16 with questions, please include your name and if you can,
17 your address and start sending them in and we'll be doing
18 questions again soon.

19 New business. I'm going to ask for a consent
20 agenda for items 15.1 through 15.6.

21 FEMALE: So moved.

22 FEMALE: Second.

23 MRS. CORLESS: Any questions?

24 FEMALE: No questions.

25 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

1 FEMALE: Aye.

2 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

3 That brings us to our next public comment
4 section. Mrs. Testa, do you want to?

5 MRS. TESTA: Yes, I do see a few more
6 questions. I'm just going to take a look.

7 Okay, we got some very good questions. Mrs.
8 Radigan (phonetic) asks if you consent to your child
9 being tested, will they be the only ones to test
10 everyone? No. No, Mrs. Radigan, we would go out for
11 other volunteers if we had to test again.

12 Someone -- thank you -- there's a comment in
13 there about doing a great job to everyone. Thank you for
14 answering questions. You're very welcome.

15 We do have a question with the new trimester.
16 Did you see an increase or decrease or were the numbers
17 about the same for remote learners?

18 So we did have 41 students transfer from
19 virtual to in-person. So we're now at 277 students
20 virtually and we did have ten students move from virtual
21 model -- I'm sorry, we had ten students transition to
22 virtual model and 41 students transition to the in-person
23 model.

24 So it wasn't a huge difference. We're pretty
25 -- pretty close to where we were. So we have 277

1 students in fifteen classes. And then, there is one for
2 Mr. Fischetti. Mr. Fischetti, can you resend the
3 insurance information for the iPads?

4 MR. FISCHETTI: Sure. The information was on
5 -- on the lending form but the company is called Worth
6 Avenue W-O-R-T-H Avenue and they're pretty much the
7 standard for all school districts just because they cover
8 loss, damage, broken screens; you name it. It's about
9 sixty dollars for one year of coverage and that also
10 includes replacement if the device disappears.

11 MRS. TESTA: Okay so it would maybe consider
12 sending out the Lending Agreement again so that people
13 have --

14 MR. FISCHETTI: Yeah, I can send out a Connect-
15 ed message with insurance information so that people
16 don't accidentally fill out the form again.

17 MRS. TESTA: Okay, all right.

18 FEMALE: Put it up on the web, Jason. Can we
19 put it up on the website?

20 MR. FISCHETTI: Sure. Sure, as soon as that
21 site is up, we'll put it up there.

22 MRS. TESTA: Yes, and we have one more.
23 There's a question that I understand that due to COVID
24 plans -- due to COVID that there's been plans to
25 mainstream children. Some of those plans have been

1 delayed.

2 Is there any plan to begin mainstreaming
3 students? Ms. Eskew would you like to address that
4 question?

5 MS. ESKEW: Right now, we don't have any plans
6 to begin mainstreaming children again because of our
7 cohorting practice in the district. And all of the
8 precautions that we've taken thus far have proven to be
9 very beneficial, as you've heard, as everyone has heard
10 throughout the night.

11 And what we would then be doing, would be
12 moving students around the building and that would impact
13 our contact tracing and also the potential for increased
14 spread in the district if we were to do that.

15 We do have opportunities for the students for
16 mainstreaming. We were using -- it'll become a little
17 more difficult now as the weather changes, but students
18 were having classes outside who were mainstreaming for
19 things like physical education. The arts are being
20 pushed into the classrooms.

21 So for right now, and probably through the
22 holiday season, since this is going to be a very
23 difficult time, or at least we're anticipating that it
24 could be, we will not be doing anything with
25 mainstreaming right now.

1 And how we constantly talk about these things
2 and consider making changes, but right now with the
3 impact of the Thanksgiving uptick and the potential for
4 the holiday break coming up to also be an uptick, we're
5 not thinking of changing what we're doing right now.

6 We could consider that, as the year goes on,
7 the weather gets warmer. You know, there may be an
8 opportunity to do that, but right now, the answer is
9 we're not doing it.

10 MRS. TESTA: Thank you, Ms. Eskew. And I do
11 know, as you mentioned, we can't really in the
12 classrooms, because of the space, to do it safely.

13 But as Ms. Eskew mentioned, we are -- we do
14 have our PE opportunities that have been mostly outside
15 and also grade level colleagues. Thank you for the grade
16 level colleagues who are setting opportunities outside
17 for outdoor learning with their students who are
18 mainstreaming.

19 And continue with the parents' thank you for
20 dressing your children in the appropriate clothing to go
21 outside because we are going out as much as possible and
22 it is that it's highly still recommended.

23 I do see that some more questions have come in
24 so I'll take a look at that and maybe Mrs. Rehak, if you
25 just take a look in case I don't see some.

1 MS. REHAK: Sure.

2 MRS. TESTA: Mrs. Pascali [phonetic] is asking
3 Mr. Fischetti can chargers be sent home with students so
4 they can charge their iPads at home?

5 MR. FISCHETTI: Yeah, I do see that question.
6 I'll just -- to give -- unfortunately, the way the laptop
7 carts, the iPad carts are built, the chargers and cables
8 are routed through the inside of the cart. So once
9 they're mounted to the cart, we really can't take the
10 chargers out.

11 We're required to use Apple brand charging
12 blocks and lightening cables and it's \$50 per set. So it
13 would cost us \$80,000 to provide a second charger to send
14 home to every family and we kind of made an assumption
15 that almost every household would have an Apple charger
16 of some sort for an iPhone let's say, it's the same
17 charger.

18 We do have a supply. If there is a family that
19 does not have one, they just have to contact my office
20 and we will lend that out if you don't have one at home.

21 MRS. TESTA: Thank you, Mr. Fischetti.

22 MR. FISCHETTI: Yeah.

23 MRS. TESTA: This is a very good idea. Mrs.
24 Caraballo (phonetic) thank you.

25 Have you considered -- look at Mrs. Rehak,

1 she's our -- she is our texter. Have you considered
2 implementing text messages during school lock out
3 situations?

4 You recently did a great job notifying parents
5 at Martin Avenue but for those who were unable to access
6 email or not working at home, they may not be able to
7 receive the information.

8 Yes, I wrote it down when I saw it. We will --
9 we will -- we do have that capacity to send the text
10 messages and we will do that. Thank you for bringing
11 that up to us for sure.

12 And then we have from Mary, a thank you and
13 wishes for a happy holiday season. So I know Roe that I
14 know you always do those, those wishes to everyone. I
15 know that I wish everyone happy safe, joyful and hope-
16 filled holiday.

17 May you -- may you enjoy being with those
18 closest to you whether it's through Zoom or in person
19 with those that have been your pod. Miss -- Mrs. Rehak
20 and I, we were all talking today about who's your pod?
21 Who do you know that, you know, you can be with?

22 So I know that it's so hard. You know, the --
23 so the lack of a social interaction is, I think, the
24 hardest challenge for all of us. But we do wish you a
25 hope filled holiday season.

1 MRS. CORLESS: Thank you.

2 Seeing no further questions, before I adjourn
3 it, like you just said, I would like to wish
4 everybody a healthy and happy holiday season. It
5 will seem different this year I'm sure, but the
6 traditions that we keep as families will help to
7 make the holidays stay special for all. And I'd
8 like to wish everybody a happy new year.

9 So, can I have a Motion to Adjourn?

10 FEMALE: So moved.

11 FEMALE: Second.

12 MRS. CORLESS: All in favor?

13 FEMALE: AYE.

14 FEMALE: AYE.

15 MRS. CORLESS: Happy holidays everyone. Thank
16 you for coming, we appreciate it.

17 FEMALE: Thanks for the support.

18 MALE: Stay safe.

19 FEMALE: I thank you.

20 (WHEREUPON, this audio was concluded.)

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