

**NORTH ARLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
NORTH ARLINGTON, NEW JERSEY**

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

**February 25, 2021**

5:39 p.m.

**High School Gymnasium**

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

II. **ROLL CALL**

Mr. Dorsett	<u>Present</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>Present</u>
Mrs. Gilgallon	<u>Present</u>
Mr. McDermott	<u>Present</u>
Mrs. Higgins	<u>5:55 p.m.</u>

III.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

IV. **STATEMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

This Public Meeting of February 25, 2021, of the Board of Education of the Borough of North Arlington, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, is called pursuant to a schedule of meetings adopted on January 7, 2021 and of notice given to the Clerk of the Borough of North Arlington and to the Librarian of the Free Public Library of North Arlington for posting therein as election notices are posted and of notice given to the Editor of the following newspapers: the Bergen RECORD of Hackensack and the Newark Star Ledger.

1. The Superintendent discussed the EIS (Extended Instructional Support) Program. He said that we had the program structured to begin last year and then school was shut down for in-person instruction. The Superintendent said that we would like to implement the EIS program this year. He said that the program will be funded through the CARES ACT and used on an as needed basis. The Board further discussed the program thoroughly and suggested if the program is successful and continues into the 21/22 school year that we send personalized letters home to the students.
2. The Superintendent and School Business Administrator discussed the ESSER II funds that the district is slotted to receive. He explained the three areas that ESSER II monies are supposed to fund: air quality, learning loss, and PPE for re-opening up the schools.
3. The Superintendent discussed that the new Residency Officer will be sending out letters to out-of-district placements to verify residency, including special education placements since transportation is not taking place in all cases.
4. The Superintendent discussed the return to hybrid learning on Monday, March 1, 2021. He also stated that ELL, self-contained, and PreK would be coming back four days per week. The Superintendent told the Board that there would be another re-opening committee meeting in mid-March to discuss opening four days per week for all students.
5. The Superintendent said that the union inquired if any consideration was given to closing down after Spring break due to potential travel out-of-state. The Superintendent said that as per NJ Guidelines we must quarantine when traveling out of state. The Board also discussed remaining virtual after spring break. Ultimately, this was not something the Superintendent and Board supported at this time.
6. The Superintendent discussed Kindergarten online registration taking place from March 8<sup>th</sup> through March 22<sup>nd</sup> and then again on April 5<sup>th</sup> through April 19<sup>th</sup>.

7. The Superintendent discussed LLI Training and the expansion of the program. The first training just took place and we're continuing to work through rolling it out.
8. The Superintendent discussed CST replacements being in house for evaluations at a rate of \$300/day not to exceed \$10,500 due to a maternity leave and not being able to fill the position. The Board agreed.
9. The Superintendent discussed the substitute pay rates. He said that he will survey Southern Bergen Superintendents on the rates in their districts and will present the numbers at the next Board Meeting.
10. Mr. Smith inquired about the cost of the new flagpole at the High School. The School Business Administrator said that we received quotes and were trying to make sure all schools have a flag pole. Veterans Middle School and Washington School do not. The Superintendent explained the replacement and construction of the flagpole at the High School.
11. Mr. McDermott updated the Board with the decrease in COVID-19 numbers in town.
12. Mr. Smith inquired about the percentages of students returning to in-person learning. The Superintendent said that the numbers have remained consistent with our last implementation of the Hybrid Learning Model.
13. Mr. Smith inquired about another survey being sent out to families regarding returning to school. The Superintendent said that another survey would be sent out.

Auditors, Mauricio Canto and Bobby Bedara, of Donohue, Gironda, Doria, and Tompkins, LLC Accountants entered the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

14. Mr. McDermott inquired about a policy regarding the removal of Board Members due to absences. The Superintendent said that the policy states that a Board Member would need to miss three consecutive meetings without good cause. The Superintendent referred to case law for a further explanation.

The Superintendent left the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

The auditors introduced themselves to the Board and presented the North Arlington 2019-2020 Certified Audited Financial Report (CAFR) to the Board.

The Superintendent returned to the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

The School Business Administrator informed the Board of the trials and tribulations during 2019-2020 due to COVID. She further discussed excess fund balance in regards to maintenance, payroll, and transportation.

The Superintendent said that even with the increase in State Aid that we are receiving, we are still \$2.3M underfunded according to the NJDOE Office of School Finance.

15. Mrs. Higgins inquired about the Capital Reserve money and if needed, could we cover the costs of the roofing repair and boiler costs. The School Business Administrator stated that the roof is going to be budgeted in 21-22 budget, and if we needed to withdraw from capital reserve for an emergency renovation, we would work with our auditors as well as the county to do so.

The auditors continued with their presentation. At the end of their presentation they thanked Mrs. Dembowski and her staff for doing a tremendous job and said that it was not the easiest audit to do during the pandemic. The auditors also thanked the Board Members.

The Superintendent and Board Members thanked Mrs. Dembowski for doing a great job!

16. The School Business Administrator thoroughly discussed key points of the 21-22 budget with the Board. She asked the Board to review the Budget and get back to her with any questions they had. The Superintendent, School Business Administrator and Board further discussed the different uses and programs that the budgeted money would be used for.

17. Mr. Dorsett discussed NJSBA podcasts for outdoor events and how we would handle our outdoor events, such as sports awards, outdoor concerts and prom. The Superintendent stated that he spoke to the Board Attorney who said there is a limit on the number of people for outdoor events. The Board further discussed different outdoor options. The Superintendent also said that he has already met with high school administrators and we are in the process of developing a plan. The Superintendent also stated that they're reviewing information on drama production.
18. Mr. Dorsett discussed his meeting with an NJSIAA representative regarding spring sports season and passed out his notes to the Board to review.
19. Mr. Dorsett discussed the outcome of his meetings with seven other districts regarding using social media for their school district. He reported each of the districts he contacted was handling their social media in all different ways.
20. Mr. Dorsett discussed something he watched regarding vaccines, when they will be released, and if schools were able to mandate them. He passed out his notes to the Board to review.
21. Mr. Dorsett inquired if there were any thoughts regarding a technology coach. The Board had a discussion regarding implementing several stipend-based positions in the 2021-2022 school year for each school building.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:07 p.m. made by Mr. Dorsett, second by Mr. Smith. There was no discussion. On Roll Call all Board Members present voted in the affirmative and none in the negative, it was so ordered.

Respectfully,

Samantha Dembowski  
SD:at