

## **Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board Meeting Transcript – March 24, 2020**

**Patrick Ziegler:** Welcome everyone. Thank you very much for joining us. This is the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 regular meeting of the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board of Education and, of course, as you can see here this is an unprecedented move here by the administration and the board to actually conduct this meeting virtually. We are, for the most part, all in our own living rooms or offices and family rooms as well so that we can continue to work with the district or in this unprecedented public health crisis. Before we get started, I will ask everyone if you could just kindly put your phones or your computers on mute. It will avoid the background noise and any echoes and then I will kindly ask everyone to please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands one nation under God indivisible with liberty and justice for all. Very good. A little bit of a delay there but if everyone can please bear with us on the technology. Whoever that is please just get your computer, headset, phone, whatever it is on mute if you would please. You've got a television set coming into the background too so. There we go. I think we got it. Alright thanks all. I would again like to welcome everyone to this meeting which will probably be fairly brief but an important meeting for us and, of course, a pretty rare opportunity for us to conduct business via a distance education framework which of course is what our students are now struggling with themselves. You know it occurred to me this past Sunday we're very fortunate and I know some of us here on the call work were with me on Sunday morning as we're very fortunate that our parish was able to run our Sunday Mass streaming through Facebook and it was interesting watching the chat function there on the side of the screen as people were chiming in talking about how wonderful this was. Not during Mass, of course, but before and after about how wonderful it was to have these people around us and to be able to see Father Jerry that morning and to be able to connect with each other hundreds and hundreds of us from across our community because it was something that brought us some peace and some comfort during a time of great trial. And I think if you look at what a lot of adults are going through right now working people and what we're facing how we've lost so many of our routines and there's really comfort in our routine; there's comfort in the people we see every day; there's comfort in seeing the people when we go to get coffee in the morning and you see an old friend or colleague at Stewart's. I know how often I'm at Stewart's and I run into someone from the district typically Phil Poitier and there's comfort in seeing those people particularly during times like this and there's comfort in those routines when you get to a workplace you can gather around the cooler or hit lunch and catch up with some friends and colleagues and commiserate with friends or in this case a part of all of us are together on Sunday fellow parishioners and again that support network that comfort that routine that that brings us and I think when we look at our job here as educators you know we have to think so much about what our students are going through right now in losing those routines and that comfort now trying to work in a completely different environment. I've had colleagues of mine have never worked from home that talked about how

they've never seen their spouses this much outside of their week on the beach during the summer. This is very different for an awful lot of people. That's not to mention those, of course, that are concerned about their jobs or maybe sitting in their homes alone wondering if the jobs will be there for them when all this passes and, of course, those who've lost friends or family members as a result of this health crisis. Of course, their facing a situation that I couldn't possibly imagine that puts my loss of comforting routines to shame, of course. But if students are going through quite a bit as well you know these are students ranging from five years old to 18 or 19 years old with any variety of potentially challenges. Students who are losing out on occupational therapy, speech therapy and physical therapy not to mention the teachers and support staff who are trying to work with them in a completely different environment. I can tell you just sitting here today how different this is looking at a small camera on my laptop in my family room completely alone just talking to the dog. I can't imagine what this is like for teachers trying to stay connected with their students. Parents are trying to be home school teachers as well something that many parents never expected they would have to do and some of those parents are still working from home as well because we see that that here. This is a challenging time for all of us. Unprecedented times in fact and yet we have a lot of people here on this Board among our administration that like to say that It's a Great Day to be a Spartan. We know there have been a lot of great days to be a Spartan in the past couple weeks because from the first day I came to the district for our agenda meeting early on a Thursday morning and saw the response of our senior administrative team absolutely second to none. This was a district team that was already planning for how they're going to clean every corner of this district to ensure that when students came back assuming that they would be sent home which we thought they would. They would be coming back to a clean environment. Even for those people that will be kept in the district that there'd be no concern about the spread of a virus that may or may not have invaded our district already because we really had no idea at the time. We had administrators who are already volunteering to bring meals to the homebound and to students who are part of our free and reduced lunch program because they didn't want a single Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake student to suffer from food insecurity. We've had special education teachers taking evening calls just like this video conferences trying to help students through a very, very difficult situation. Students that had enough challenges academically but now we're trying to struggle perhaps academically without the supports that they so desperately need. And I will tell you that to a person every single member of this district has stepped up to do their part and whether it's a transportation aide who's cleaning buses by hand; whether it's special education teachers holding video conferences at night; whether it's our senior administrative team working ungodly hours right now to make sure that they're up on the absolute latest both from Saratoga County as well as New York State. On behalf of the entire Board of Education, we thank you all for your efforts. This is a time where it really is a Great Day to be a Spartan and I thank everyone for all that they've done and I appreciate everyone tuning in with us tonight. With that said, we'll move to our consent agenda. In case you don't have it in front of you as I typically do, I'll read off the consent agenda for us and this evening team we're going to do a roll call vote to make sure that we can capture all the

votes. I'll be taking that here on Dottie's behalf. So tonight we'll be approving the minutes of the March 10, 2020 regular meeting of the Board of Education, will be approving some personnel changes, the monthly financials, will be approving a resolution regarding BHBL employee status during a disaster emergency in the state of New York related to the Covid-19 virus, will be approving a notice of annual school district meeting and budget vote, approving the lease of land from Morris Ford, approving the health and welfare services for pupils attending school district, approving recommendations from the Committee on Special Education, and we will be approving the disposal of some surplus items. Can I get a motion please? That was Dave with the motion and Lisa Morse for the second. Got it. So one more time, Dottie, that was Dave Versocki with the motion and Lisa Morse with the second. Chris, I'm going to turn it over to you first if you don't mind. I know there were some questions that came in earlier today from one of our board members. Again, if we can stay on mute here, I'll let Chris address the questions as well as any other points of note that he would like to add to from the consent agenda. Chris.

**Chris Abdoo:** Let me pull up the questions you are referring to. Bear with me for just a second.

**Patrick Ziegler:** No problem. Again if everyone could just make sure their phones are on mute once again until we have the all call vote that would be great. Thank you.

**Chris Abdoo:** School lunch financials question: One of the things we'll talk about later today as we go through the forum portion of our meeting is that while we're continuing to serve lunch to our reduced-price lunch students, we are not serving lunch, obviously, to the remainder of our students which is causing a revenue gap for us for the time period that we have had canceled classes. They were canceled during the month of March so we don't and we do anticipate while the month of March isn't over yet at the very earliest the governor has indicated that our students will be returning to school on April 1st so for the month of March we are anticipating that we're going to have a more negative than usual month for school lunch. So we don't know exactly what that's going to be. As far as the question related to April is concerned, if we are back in session on April 1st which right now the information we have is the period of canceled classes ends on March 31<sup>st</sup>, we would anticipate a relatively normal month of April but that remains to be seen with what happens going forward.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Great. Thank you, Chris and anything you'd like to add in terms of personnel or the financials from your perspective.

**Chris Abdoo:** Personnel is nothing of note this week.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Very good. Mr. Collins, anything you'd like to add.

**Dave Collins:** There on the personnel there's nothing of specific note this week as well.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Very Good. Do we have any other board members with any other questions or concerns that you didn't get to raise via email earlier today. Okay hearing none. We'll go with a roll call vote. Please take your phones off mute. I'll just go down the list as I have you written down here in no particular order. Lisa

**Lisa Morse:** Aye

**Peter Sawyer:** Aye

**Dave Versocki:** Aye

**Jen:**

**Patrick Ziegler:** Mrs. Longtin are you still with us? Okay.

**Mr. Blowers:** Yes

**Patrick Ziegler:** Gotcha. Thank you. And Don. There you are Jen.

**Jen Longtin:** Hi

**Patrick Ziegler:** How do you vote?

**Jen Longtin:** Yes

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yes. Beautiful. Thank you and Don. I think we might have lost Don actually. Okay. Well, I'm gonna vote in favor and then if we get a note from him I'm not sure exactly what the Robert's Rules are here in terms of taking an email or a text vote. Don may have dropped off but.

**Don Marshall:** I'm here.

**Patrick Ziegler:** There you go, Don I'm assuming you voted in favor sir.

**Don Marshall:** Yes.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Very good. Okay thanks. All right, sorry for that folks. I know that was a little a little clunky there but it's the best way to get everyone's vote recorded here for posterity. So you can feel free to put your phones on mute again. I'll be doing the same here momentarily because we're gonna be moving to our discussion items here and we're gonna start, of course, with the Covid-19 update and for that we're gonna be turning it back to the school district there to our board room and to Dr. McGrath to give us an update and as some of you may be aware Dr.

McGrath is willing, and we appreciate this, is willing to take questions from the public you can feel free Tara actually. I'm going to ask Tara Mitchell if you are able to chime in on this and make sure I get this right but I believe that wherever you are you will be able to type a question into the chat box there on the right side of the screen perhaps it's still coming through on YouTube so again I'll let Tara clarify that but we will be taking questions from the public and we'll be able to pass those along to Dr. McGrath who's going to take us through this discussion period which we will ask that the cameras stay on for so we can have these questions recorded. Tara, I see that you're off mute so do I have that right in terms of the public asking questions.

**Tara Mitchell:** Yes. They can use the chat feature that's showing up on YouTube as long as they have a Gmail account. When the Gmail. If you don't have a Gmail account we've set up a Google Form which that is also accessible on the website. They can just enter their questions right into the Google Form and I'll make sure that you guys get it. So we have two ways to accept questions: the chat feature or the Google Form.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Outstanding. Thank you very much, Tara. And, of course, this is a tried-and-true piece for us probably the only piece of this technology that's tried and true because Tara captures all these questions during our budget form electronically. For all those good folks that tuned in from home. So thank you very much, Tara. We're in good hands with that Dr. McGrath I'm going to turn it over to you and mute my call and please keep the cameras running through the rest of the Covid-19 discussion before we get to Reports and Communications. We will sign off there. Thank you.

**Patrick McGrath:** Okay. Thank you very much. So we've got a lot of Technology working here tonight because we're not only holding this Google Meet session where we're running the board meeting but then we're streaming all that through YouTube so that people can see it from home ask questions and be part of it that way. So we appreciate people bearing with us on some of the little technical wrinkles but I think we're getting the information out there and that's the important part. So I want to talk a little bit about some of the common questions that people have had and also give both my colleagues, Dave Collins, who is our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and Dr. Chris Abdoo, who is our Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, a chance to give some detail to some of these things. I'm gonna run through a couple of the major things and then we'll jump to them so they can give a little more detail. So you as you know, the classes, all of our classes are canceled through March 31<sup>st</sup>. So we originally started by moving our Professional Development day in March to the 16th of March so that we would have an opportunity to give to do some some collaboration amongst our faculty, our departments and our grade levels in order to prepare for this and that and then really it came very quickly after we made that decision to close the district down from the Tuesday through Friday of last week. And then the Governor very swiftly came in and kind of took over the reins on that whole decision-making process and closed all schools through the end of March 30th

31st with school scheduled to begin two classes again on April 1<sup>st</sup>. It's very fluid and it's changing all the time. We are waiting to hear. He was very clear in his statement that the Governor's Office would be the one that would determine when schools reopened and that once the Governor's Office reopened the schools that we would be expected to be in session and at that point the 180 day waiver that was given for right now would then not mean no longer be in effect. So he basically in that Executive Order sent the message that at this point there's this is going to be directed by the state level when school districts should be open or closed. So as of right now we're closed through the 31<sup>st</sup>. We'll talk a little bit as we go along about what our plans are for preparing for the worst hoping for the best as far as timeline and so we'll talk about that in a few minutes. So we don't know right now all we know is that we are closed through next Tuesday and we also are advocating to get that kind of that input as soon as possible from the Governor and, hopefully, we'll know by the end of this week what our plans will look like for next week. So what does that mean for the status of our buildings? This week we're operating with minimum staffing. When the order came through for 100% reduction in workforce except for essential services, we shrunk our force down to as small as possible in order to accommodate three things are to accommodate meals, to accommodate any kind of childcare needs for first responders, and potential employees and then also for our remote learning our distance learning initiatives. So for this week we're at a very bare minimum staff. Most of our staff is working from home. So onsite we did streamline our telephone line and our email system so that we have a single phone line in everyone who calls into the district at 518-399-9141 goes directly to a message and an inbox for a voicemail. They can leave a voicemail. That voicemail is monitored 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. every day and it could be all the questions that come in on that voicemail or needs will be routed to the right person. So we know how to get a hold of everyone, where they are and how to get the information. Also, we've set up an email address [remoteoperations@bhbl.org](mailto:remoteoperations@bhbl.org) and during this time anyone can email that and again is being monitored from 8 to 8 and will be answered. Both of these lines have been very active and have served us well in the first couple days to in order to gather information and get it to the right people as efficiently as possible so we appreciate that. Now there was some clarification that came out yesterday from the Governor's Office that basically, probably hard to read there, but basically says that all the things that we are doing right now: providing school meals, providing child care, and distance learning, are considered essential services or functions and as we such we can up the number of employees that we have on site up to that 25% if necessary so at the end of this week we will be reassessing and looking at what staff should be on site to help us with those things especially with the with the meal preparation and distribution as well as, of course, our very extensive distance learning work and remote learning operation that we have going on. So there's a lot to do there and so much of it's happening from a remote locations from all over this district but there is a need for some staff on site. So we're evaluating that on a week-by-week basis so so that stay tuned them that we're trying to give information as regularly as possible through the website is our best is the best source of information and then the SNNs going out from the website as well as for staff your internal email. And so we'll be looking

reassessing this at the end of the week and putting out new guidance for next week based upon obviously all the things that are changing whether we'll be back in school next week what the length of any additional closure might be so we'll be in touch with those things. We're going to talk about a little bit about about the education process in the remote learning that are going on and I want to ask Dave to jump in here. I did send a letter out to all parents which kind of helped us to talk about this in three stages: the stage of preparation to get ready to do something like this, then implementation phase or the transition phase, excuse me, the transition phase and then what we would call kind of a full implementation of remote learning. The preparation as it was stated in the letter that I sent out was something that has happened for predominately for years in order to increase the technological capabilities of our district and the capacity of our staff to be able to utilize technology. We never realized we would be utilizing it so much so quickly but we've always used it as a tool to support learning to support with teaching and learning in the process of supporting teaching and learning with technology we built a very solid infrastructure. We also built a solid ecosystem and where all of our computers and our systems for communication worked well together. And we also worked hard to bring all our levels up as staff to a point where we would have proficiency. Little did we know something like this would happen where all those things would really be put to the test and last week, at the end of last week, when we moved into kind of a high-speed operational phase and we started to get Chromebooks out to all of our third through seventh graders who didn't take them home typically. Our eighth through twelfth graders did. That was a scramble but a very, very smooth and efficient process to get those out, letters written to parents. How come my my child is coming home with a laptop in their backpack? You know. What are the rules about? I didn't have to worry about it. The principals were on top of that getting that communication to the parents by the time. When we sent all those things home, we didn't even know that we were going to be closed as of that evening. We didn't know that we were going to be making the decisions we made in the coming weeks but, fortunately, I use the example with the with with the staff you know that we kind of like the castle gates were closing and we were running to get out there all 2,000 Chromebooks out underneath the gates before the gate came down. And so, fortunately, we did that you got that preparation, the preparation of the staff, of the IT department, of our technology teacher leaders, our principals, all those all that preparation over the years got us ready to make that move on a dime and pivot to to the to the learning portion. Now that being said, you know we we do a lot of things and we've drilled a lot of things we haven't drilled remote learning from home. And we spend a lot of time on safety, physical safety in our buildings and doing those kind of drills. This kind of an exercise was something that we're doing in real time for the first time and we're all learning a lot. So that's where the transition phase comes in and I and I recognize that this is an experience that's very different for different people. So I want to say just right up front and we'll end in my next communication with our parents I want to make sure they understand we know that this is stressful. We know that people have a whole variety of things going on in their life outside of their child's education that makes this difficult. And we also know that there's people that are that are seeing tremendous success

given the circumstances. We all want to be back together. We all want to be in class. We all want to be doing the things we normally would be doing on a spring in a spring timeframe. I would have liked to have been up at 4 o'clock wondering whether or not we needed to have a snow day today. That kind of stuff is business as usual and that's what we love and what we value about BHBL is being together in that community. So none of us like this. None of us want it this way. Given that it's this way, we have to figure out a way to during the time period, however long that is support our students and provide some educational opportunities and experiences as much as we can to normal which is again it's a far cry from normal but we have to do our best. We have to acknowledge that we're in a transition phase that while we have the infrastructure we have a lot of work to do to help to take the burden off of the parents and have the burden be on us and on the students as it would be any given day to teach and learn. So so that so that transition phase continues and we continue to learn and find tremendous successes as well as the challenges that I've mentioned. And so it's exciting in that sense that we are we are growing as educators, growing as an educational community and, hopefully, what this would look like if it is a week or two weeks from now will be different than it is in these kind of early tumultuous times. So we'll see how long that goes and I'm gonna ask Dave to talk a little bit about a couple of barriers that we wanted to make sure that we got out of the way in order to make this a process that would work for all kids.

**Dave Collins:** Thank you, Patrick. Patrick McGrath did an excellent job kind of setting the stage so I and I'll highlight a few pieces. Firstly, I wanted to say thank you to the board and Patrick Ziegler for the letter that you read at the beginning that when we got that it just makes you feel feel really great that you have a Board of Education that recognizes what everybody is going through faculty, staff, students in our community for you to recognize things at that level is as a testament to how involved our board is in our daily operations and we very much are thankful for that. And you highlighted a large number of groups who have pulled together. Chris and I had talked tonight to really talk about the way that our teams have pulled together job titles and responsibilities and and just tried to really pitch in and get done what needed to be done to get us through that preparation stage and into this transition stage. There will be a time definitely for many individual thank-yous but for tonight kind of want to characterize in general what the district has done as a whole to get us to the place that we that we have gotten to so. Dr. McGrath mentioned that a few weeks prior to us actually being closed down we had a meeting of our district IT group. In our district we have a unique committee that meets on a monthly basis which is a combination of our district technology leaders from the administrative side, all of our tech across the district, our five teacher leaders across the building as well as a number of other individuals with various job titles who sit and try to guide overarching technological advancements to the district and one of the topics was what would it look like if we had to do both more and that was more of a thought experiment and that thought experiment turned into a real experiment really quickly but in the thought experiment several people in the room thought we have the basic capacity due to a lot of hard work but the logistics and the details is where



ultimately it would come out. And we're realizing that now that the logistics and details would be the lynchpin ultimately to how successful we would be with that transition to remote learning. It's a unique aspect because it's still all about teaching and learning but clearly technology gets thrust even more you know into the limelight than it does in our daily operations. Our teachers and our support staff use a great deal of technology day to day but now it's obviously the conduit to get to our kids it's not only a conduit or a tool to bring some some of the educational aspects to kids. What we noticed on the Monday that we had a Professional Development Day is that immediately individuals with expertise, I mentioned the instructional technology leaders, immediately people with that expertise began just kind of jumping into gear and helping other people curating ideas starting to to guide instructional plans in a way that we could be acceptable to our community and also share best practices with each other and one of those ideas was the landing page that if you go to the District home site website homepage, you'll see our launching page or our learning opportunities up there. And what that is is a single access point that, hopefully, helps parents have you know one place to go to to begin their day or to begin the learning experience for kids while they're on this remote learning platform and on this page is access to nearly all of our instructional individuals and some jumping-off point by which parents and students can get to pages and then it links you maybe to on Google classrooms or other more more intricate methods of delivering instruction but for the most part it gives you a front facing opportunity to see the work that was started on that one day and then ultimately carries on today. And there's there's just an amazing wealth of information. I've been contacted by my colleagues across the region and many of them have asked you know how we got that going and ultimately if there you know there could be things to be modeled after that. There's just so many connections on that page already between between students and parents and and our school community that are heartwarming that are just astounding at the level of really authentic pieces of learning and just and just really cool tips and tricks not only to keep kids connected to content but to keep kids connected to socially one another and teachers. I think mentioned as quickly as we pulled away you know all of that social fabric that school provides was disrupted and you know by the nature of keeping each other safe we aren't having those social connections even outside of school as well. So this is an opportunity to leverage technology and the talents of our teachers and other staff members to keep that connection. So one of the big hurdles we had was how do we make sure as many of our kids, you know, if not all of them, could be connected in that way socially and through teaching and learning. And two barriers we knew were or the physical technology and then, obviously, individual learning needs. So as he mentioned, the Friday before we closed down our our tech individuals our BTCs and building principals and and so many other people work hard to get the technology into the hands of our students in grades three through seven students to mimic the way our eighth through twelfth graders are able to have their one-to-one devices home. Shortly after we went to closing, we also surveyed our k through 2 population to understand individuals in that grade level who needed access to technology and we feel pretty confident now that we're close to do making sure that everybody has some kind of device whether it be at home or through the BHBL one-to-one environment to

try to take down an initial barrier because obviously everything we do has a technology component to it. Then, secondly, a major concern across the region was to make sure that students had access to who individual learning needs to the level that we could reasonably provide without having students in front of us and on the Monday one of the meetings that was held was a meeting of a related service provider, social workers, counselors, special ed teachers, where we started to access the needs of students on a variety of platforms including academic connectivity and very quickly over this transitional week we have been developing stronger and stronger connections for us to be able to access and intervene on individual student learning needs. Our teacher teaching assistants who originally were stepping up to do a number of different logistical health and safety related functions are transitioning more and more to having those individuals do what they do best which is support student learning. And that's along with all our individuals in Special Services and also provides the best that we can for supports for students who are learning at different levels and different ways. We cannot recreate this magic we call public education. We can't recreate that as quickly as a week and a half. We are taking methodical steps over time trying to get as close as we possibly can to that high quality teaching level. And I have been filled with gratitude and just amazement at the way that this has gone over the week and a half. Individuals are coming in and materials are being distributed, all the technology, again the documents from the BTCs and the tech support, accessing individuals who have competence with teaching the technology to get them up to speed. And with all of that though there's challenges that follow the successes there is [inaudible noise] at the creative level, at the faculty and staff level, at the parent and student level. We're trying to respond to those what we should [inaudible noise] when it's a remote day [inaudible noise] where you kind of have to turn off the technology and turn off the teaching and learning aspect so we obviously have a lot of questions left [inaudible] in the realm of you know assessment in the realm of grading and in the realm of accountability on both ends. We continue to have great discussions as a larger group. We're able to meet virtually with our administrative groups, teacher groups, in departments teams are meeting at various levels, grade levels are meeting. Productivity is coming together as we share best practices between administration and faculty and staff. And we have planning to do as we get into implementation to give guidance to our community, our students and our teachers on what level of instruction. How do we keep moving toward expected outcomes. How do we make [inaudible] expectations but again I am so proud. I know the individuals who sit around me at this table are the emails that are coming in are so generally positive and people recognize that we're all in this together. It has just felt that way on the instructional side. From the minute we started making this transition and I expect we will continue on that positive trajectory.

**Patrick McGrath:** Thanks, Dave. So there's a couple of other things that we've been asked to do besides transition to remote for our educational experience. And that is uh provide food services and at least see to it that we are, our community, child care for the children of first responders and essential service workers. So I wanted to ask Chris to just kind of walk us

through a couple of things related to those two areas. Just so that the community can be sure that we are taking care of these responsibilities.

**Chris Abdoo:** Thank you, Patrick. I did want to echo what Dave had said, Patrick McGrath said and Patrick Ziegler said as well. It's one of the things we talk a lot about the Burnt Hills way and the strong culture that we have here at Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake and I need to start off these comments by saying how amazingly impressed I have been by our staff, our faculty, our administrators, everybody that seen the challenge that this has presented before them and basically reinventing the way we do things in a very rapid manner. They've done it in an amazing way in service to our students and in a way that's really putting their needs at the forefront and has addressed them to the greatest extent possible. They say a lot of times in normal times you know how good you are but when times become challenging that's when you discover how great you may be. I think John Blowers said something similar to that recently. It really has been true in the past week and a half. It's been several great days to be a Spartan. And I'm very proud to be a Spartan. I'm very proud of the people that have worked with us to continue providing the best possible environment for our students that we possibly can. One of the obligations that we have in providing that environment is we do have several of our students in this district actually hundreds of our students in this district that rely upon us for two of the three meals of the day, breakfast and lunch. So one of the things that we wanted to make sure of is that during this time that they can't access our school buildings is that we're still taking care of some of those basic needs that they have. And make sure that they have those meals provided for them. So what we have done is we've set up almost a satellite station of our cafeteria outside the high school cafeteria in the student parking lot area where parents can come and pick up lunch for that day and the breakfast for the following day. That's been open between eleven o'clock at one o'clock on a daily basis. So the majority of our parents of students that qualify for the free and reduced price lunches and breakfasts have been coming, picking up those lunches and breakfasts and driving away with them for the rest of that day. There are some parents that have been unable to secure transportation at that time or for other reasons cannot make it to that location at that time. We've enlisted our bus drivers to deliver some of those meals as necessary to different neighborhoods and different locations so those meals can still be accessed by those families who have needs of them. In addition to our daily lunch and breakfast responsibilities, we also have a program here that we partnered with several local churches and other local organizations to provide backpack programs for our students. Meaning for those students that do experience food insecurity on weekends on Fridays they would get a bag or a backpack filled with food that would go home with them for that weekend to make sure that none of our students or their families would go hungry during that timeframe. And again it is all donated food by different organizations that are partnered with us to support uh to support our students. That is continuing as well. We are sending those backpacks home with parents. They come to the high school at the same time that they're picking up a free reduced-price lunch or for those that may get the backpack but not the free lunch in addition to that they'll pull up and get the backpack on Friday and it's with them for the weekend. For those folks that have trouble making it there the same

provision is there. They are being delivered to their homes by some of our transportation employees who have volunteered to be able to take on that duty to make sure that our students and their families continue continuously get the food they need. I have to say that this has been a great team effort. Food services staff, our social workers reaching out to those families, our building principals, our teachers assistants, one of our security monitors and many others have pulled together to make this happen. And again we reinvented how we're delivering school lunch in a very short time period and we think a very effective way for our families. And we do know it is our commitment as a district and all members of our team we never want to see any of our students going hungry. So we're happy to be able to continue that to the greatest extent possible. Another one of the requirements the Governor has put on us during this time of canceled classes is also the need that school districts have to connect parents with child care. The parents of student well students whose parents are deemed essential workers by the state. We have an obligation to connect them with child care opportunities. Right now we have experts in child care, the YMCA runs programs throughout the region. So initially what we've done is we've used our school news notifier system and district website to proactively reach out to the parents that qualify for this daycare to connect them with the YMCA to make sure that had that opportunity to have that daycare available so they can provide the essential services to our state during this time of crisis. So right now that is handled at the YMCA. Any questions about how to access that we'd be happy to connect with the folks at the YMCA that can help do that. We are also prepared to handle that onsite here at Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake here if necessary. If the needs of this program are more than the YMCA can handle at their locations. Again, we would do this under the auspices of the YMCA but we would be able to have it available onsite with support from some of our staff members here if that's necessary. So for right now parents that need this service we connected them to the YMCA in an off-site location if the time becomes necessary we can also make that available here as well for any if they need becomes greater than they can handle. So those are really the two ways we're handling those items and I'll turn it back over to Patrick.

**Patrick McGrath:** Dave is going to update everyone on the testing situation.

**Dave Collins:** Yes and, if appropriate, I see one of our questions that came in is one of our came directly related to this topic so I'll do my best to answer it and we can come back to that but we did receive guidance within the last week in regard to some of the matters specifically related to testing that a number of tests have been cancelled as a result of the extended closure and those are as you can see primarily there the three through eight passed tests in the in the middle level and intermediate level realm those student those tests specifically are cancelled for this year and then you can see two tests at the bottom one also related to our ENL students and one related to our alternately assessed students and that those would also be be on hiatus for this year and we look for guidance as to what that means, obviously, from the school accountability purposes but for the student purposes those those tests would be canceled for this year. That is not the case

currently for Regents exams which is what the question that came in currently is speaking generally to what what is the district's response to the Regents exams at this time? What do we know? How would we respond to them? Right now ultimately we are taking the guidance day by day and we pivot at a moment's notice based on what comes out from State Education Department that Regents exams are still on as scheduled. So we are planning that way. That is one of the things as I was mentioning the implementation stage one of the one of the challenges for teachers of Regents level courses and teachers of other courses that are credit-bearing or result in examinations that that confer credit to various institutions or you know have other merit based [inaudible noise] Our teachers again are trying to balance when we were first at the transition the beginning transition trying to provide that connectivity and opportunities for learning and then we obviously setting that pace for students to be prepared for the examination. So that is a very real area of natural conflict that our teachers have extremely high expectations. They teach you know with with the appropriate amount of rigor pushing pushing students and always asking students to achieve the best that they possibly can. In this situation they're also a balancing understanding that kids and them are in very different places with being able to deliver and receive that instruction. So that's a natural pull and that's creating anxiety we know for everybody involved. And that's again kind of the beautiful professional nature of what we're seeing with people reaching out and staying connected and just recognizing that that we're all in this state of flux [inaudible] Specifically for Regents exams, we are moving forward to this as usual preparing students to the best that we can in the current time. We'll be moving towards those exams. If that changes depending on guidance that we get, then our administrative team will get together with our teacher leaders and others to make the best possible plan and follow the guidance from the state mostly the guidance of what will happen as a result of that. That that will that will come from the state if they give us local autonomy over some decisions, then we'll get together you know make the best decisions for the students of Burnt Hills. Our advanced placement exams we got very recently some guidance on advanced placement exams which will be in a different format this year. They will still exist but they'll be given in a modified fashion and online fashion and similarly to how we will respond to Regents exams is how we're responding to AP exams with our administrative team at the high school getting together with the teachers of those courses and our instructional cabinet and ultimately making the best decision for the administration of those exams. You know and, obviously, we're going to get the feedback of individuals who are in those situations to try to put the best plan together for students in those courses.

**Patrick McGrath:** So there is a lot of unknown for us and we're trying to stay on top of things as best we can. It honestly changes it almost feels like hour by hour. I feel like we could have a meeting right now and we could go back find that there was a press conference or an executive order or something that changed what we just said it or updated what we just said. So I wanted to mention two other things very quickly and then take any questions. The Mr. Brunson and I spoke this morning getting lots of questions about the end-of-the-year events and again you know it's

such a difficult thing to think about the fact at the end of this year is gonna look somewhat different and how different we don't know. We have we do know it's gonna look different and we are committed to doing everything that we can to preserve and and then modify as necessary or as mandated but to preserve those experience those important experiences of senior year. Again, it may look different but they but they but they we will do our absolute best to to honor and celebrate those important milestones and that's a really important thing for our seniors. I know I know that Hannah, one of our senior class members and student member of our Board of Education, is on with us here and a Mr. Brunson I and our whole school is committed to do the best that we possibly can to honor those important events and to in some format celebrate where possible as these things unfold and as these events unfold. So the other thing I wanted to mention was that just to the Board, specifically, and to the public really when it comes to of the budget and the board vote. The May vote. There's a lot of talk about how that's going to look. Whether a board election will take place in May or whether there might be some special legislation that extends the terms of current board members until a future date so that the continuity in the board leadership can stay until things are resolved and then there's also questions about budget vote. What's the most appropriate way to hold a vote? In the midst of all this, we would be having a budget season and a budget forum and we would be and we really are still put it we've done a lot of work on the budget leading up to this this public health crisis hitting and so that's there. It's a little bit on pause as we wait for the governor to give us state aid runs. That's really the last piece of the puzzle. And they're preoccupied, obviously, with this whole crisis. So the budget is something that we need to work on as a board and on that that will you know details to follow as we see where things go in the state at the state level but we just want to remind everyone that those are there. Board members you may be contacted by representatives of the School Boards Association asking for your input or thoughts on how we would resolve this coming board elections and budget vote. So that's something that you might want to talk about a little bit and certainly you know feel free to you know expressed your opinion if you're surveyed or something as board members on that. So those are the last two things I wanted to say. Do we have any questions?

**Patrick Ziegler:** So Patrick, we've got one. Actually, if we could, Don, could you put your phone on mute please? Before we get going, keep going there.

**Don Marshall:** Okay.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Or your computer I'm sorry. Whatever your wherever we're getting your audio. It's picking up a lot of feedback. And while while Don works on that. John Blowers had a comment or a question and as that was the only question I saw in the Google Doc. I wanna make sure I jumped in quickly, Patrick, so I could turn it over to John for his question or commentary. So I'm gonna so if you're still there. John, I've lost your video.

**John Blowers:** I'm here so just.

**Patrick Ziegler:** There you go.

**John Blowers:** Two quick things. One I'm going to tee up Hannah to talk in a second but I just want to get student perspective on you know what she's hearing and experiencing as our student board rep. But as she formulates a response for Dave Collins you mentioned about recreating the magic. On a macro sense how much magic have we recreated if normal school is 100% are we at two percent, five percent, eight percent? I mean I realize it's kind of guesstimate but give us sense if we're half way, a quarter way, a tenth of the way.

**Dave Collins:** Yeah, I would stay away from throwing percentages on it because it would be it wouldn't a very research-based statement at this point but what I can say is when you look at the if you go to the landing pages which are the primary foundation for answering the question. You can see if you just troll through there different kinds of interactions that are happening, levels of synchronous instruction which we call live instruction which is happening primarily through a Google Meet application. Now there were a few others that are out there but we're becoming comfortable with Google Meet. There's a document that's put together by our BTC group that kind of guides some general positive remote learning practices. And we saw within the first day because we happen to get a call that two two teachers were on at the same time. We saw that teachers were diving into that that synchronous type instruction and live interaction and some of that has been for social connectivity. Umm meeting with children in a formal nature from social work and guidance counselors and and meetings of that nature and a more informal way just connecting students with each other and then very much in an instructional way. Secondly, we've seen asynchronous examples being shared with us which again is that blend of of live instruction and a different type technological interaction. Some individuals were videoing themselves with with various levels of reading text or interpreting texts and going through you know in that way. One of one of our teachers actually walked by our window carrying her document camera out to be able to make sure that she was able to broadcast information and notes in that in that asynchronous and synchronous way and then there's a ton of blogging that's taking place. If you saw at all three levels but a really awesome instance about the elementary level with leading questions and and writing prompts and narrative responses. In result of that we have a Go Math which is our primary math instruction. A website that was built by one of our BTCs to allow parents access to those instructional resources. There were examples of links to YouTube and various interfaces where students could go on and see how artists, practitioners, and musicians performing at different levels. We have individuals filling out logs with daily activities, physical activity. So I again I can't give you a percentage but I think great deal of that magic, people are working very, very hard to recreate it. Again we take for granted just the ability to be in the room. Even having Patrick and and Brandon and Chris here is different than me interacting with you. It's it feels different. I'm yelling at you and I don't need to and and those kinds of things. So

I don't want to minimize in any way the difficulty of recreating the nature of having friends be together in the lunchroom, on the athletic playing field, in the classrooms, teachers interacting with students in that way but I think we are doing a very good job. If you are satiated by me answering the question that way. I think we have a long way to go and as we venture into the implementation. It's again I talk about all the anxiety in the unknown part and just a part that people are at different places with technology both the deliverers and the receivers of that instruction. But I think that a big part of it is to try to get to a place where we are moving the way it would be on any given Wednesday. That is something that we really have to talk about because there's different there's different ideas on how we would get there and again keep in mind we have a distance learning program here at school where that is the primary mode by which some of our teachers teach and learn. As a matter of fact, that distance learning program is largely still going currently. So it can be done and we can get there. Like making that transition in the time period that we made it. We certainly have some things that we have to iron out to get to a hundred percent if that's.

**Patrick McGrath:** Yeah, I think it's not our goal right now. None of us wanted this.

**John Blowers:** That's fine, that's fine. So I want to go back to my original question lost in the mix so maybe Hannah can come in and give a little student perspective on how things are going.

**Hannah Shell:** Yeah, I can. Hi. Thank you. Can everybody hear me? Sorry. Um so I think from the student perspective right now I think the school is doing an excellent job of keeping in touch with us. Keeping us informed on everything we do know. Our teachers while they have never taught like this before are doing a really good job of keeping up with us, making Google classrooms, making websites, making screencasts. They're all really doing the best they can which is really appreciated. But I think a lot of students are really struggling right now. And I can't speak elementary school kids. I can't for middle schoolers. Um I can speak for my age group especially the senior class. I think um not only have students been taken out of their routine of day-to-day going to school but they've been take had they've had everything extra taken from them. I girls who have the same dance studio over the past 12 years who've suddenly their senior years is gone. Kids who have played the same spring sport for ten for almost a decade and they can't play that anymore. Um I have friends who bought eight-hundred-dollar prom dresses who all of a sudden are thinking oh my gosh maybe I can't won't have prom. And so I think it's a lot of uncertainty right now and while those seem like little things, they are adding up in kids heads certainly um a lot of kids are getting college acceptances this week a lot of my friends and myself included we're getting our acceptance letters. We're learning about financial aid. We're having conversations with our parents about money and our futures and everything seems so uncertain right now. We can't even visit the colleges that we got into. So that's really it's really weighing on a lot of students I think. And um I'm trying to think of hwo to phrase it. I think as far as the schoolwork portion of it goes, a lot of kids are feeling very



overwhelmed. Our teachers, they're doing a great job keeping in touch, but we're getting 30-plus emails a day from teachers and it's just a lot to keep organized I mean I consider myself a fairly organized person and I still find things are getting lost in the shuffle. And so I do think as time goes on things will certainly get better as far as the organization is concerned but I think we do need to bear in mind that there is so much going on right now with students and the virus itself hasn't even reached our town yet, yet or if it ever will. But that the fact um thinking about Coronavirus itself. The virus itself hasn't even really become a factor yet. The health of people hasn't really um we've done a good job keeping it keeping it clean and keeping ourselves away from it but there's has not been actual influence of it yet. And so I think that's also something that a lot of students are dreading. A lot of anxious students are thinking about that in itself and that is something that I think we forget about getting lost and the oh no school, what's the work going to be like, how is it everything going to go? And so I think students are just kind of struggling with that right now. But I also think the district is doing a really great job. A week and a half ago we were in school. So I think they are doing a really good job transferring to an online education and it's starting to work better already. I mean last week was really stressful but already starting this week we're getting more into the swing of things. So thank you.

**Patrick McGrath:** Thanks, Hannah. There's a question here that kind of relates to what Hannah was just saying from Peter asking what the protocols are for reports on students and who staff who have who test positive for the Coronavirus? So that would be the Department of Health for the county where the person would be contacting us. So as of right now, we haven't received any contacts that any residents of our district or any students in the district or staff members have tested positive. As Hannah said, I'm sure it's just a matter of time before that changes. So we'll we'll just take our lead from the Department of Health in those areas. And, yeah, Hannah, that was a great perspective and I think you captured it like that kind of that angst of, you know, we want to do the best we can for you guys while we're apart but we don't want to be apart, you know. And so that's the that's the the struggle we have and while we are apart every day should be getting smoother and better if we're doing our jobs. All of us together as a as a faculty and staff. And I do think, again, we're only this is only day six, you know, of remote instruction and we basically just all these resources that you see on the landing pages and you know many of those didn't exist until a week ago yesterday. And all of them came together now the Google classrooms been used by high school students at some middle school classes so that was a little bit more ready but a lot of this stuff, especially the elementary stuff, the teachers are just working overtime to get in place and to stay in touch. And then this whole idea distance. This is actually the worst quality Google Meet that I've been on in ten days. I mean, I've been on this non-stop and for some reason whether it's where we are in the building, they haven't been down here or something, we're getting a lot of lag. We've had really high quality conversations and meetings and I've gotten really good reports from teachers that the connections with their students and when they have live classes in live connections are working really well. So that's been an interesting experience tonight because I'm sure some teachers are running into this kind of stuff,

you know, and where Google has a great connection to our ecosystem because it goes in our mail it goes in our calendar it's easy to send the links. It also has this kind of connection has its downsides, too.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Great. Well thank you for that, Patrick. Did we have any more questions, Dave come in from the public?

**Dave Collins:** No, I don't see any.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Alright, very good then. Did we have any other board members and, again, thank you very much, Hannah. I put a comment in the chat box there for you but just whoever knows I think that it's an important perspective for us and we appreciate it and I thank our President Emeritus Mr. Blowers for bringing her in. That was a good thought, John. Thank you. First, do any of the board members have any questions or comments for the team before we close up the public portion of the meeting and go into reports and turn off the cameras.

**Peter Sawyer:** I would just say, Patrick, in terms of the protocols, you know, we need to think about staff too and, you know, remember that once someone is reported, you know, you've got to look at whether or not they're tested. And if they do test positive, you know, they've got the the County Health is going to want to track down where they, if they've been in the building, what contacts they've had, whether it's staff or students or other teachers. So we just need to be able to kind of keep keep track of that and be ready to respond to that should that case occur.

**Patrick McGrath:** Definitely, yup.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Very good, agreed, Peter. Okay so with that I think we're gonna be closing out the public portion of tonight's meeting. So again thank you to everyone who tuned in thank you the Board for being receptive to this. We have many of us got online probably about 6:45 and sat here for about 15 minutes looking at each other and each other's family rooms and back porch and the stream or the creek outside Davis Versocki's place which was nice. We'll be over there in the summer, Dave, that's a great view you got there but thanks administration everyone in IT at the district for putting this together and you know as much as we've thanked all the people who've made this happen for us and for our students, you know, we'd be remiss if we didn't thank all the parents of the district, as well. You know, I'm here at home with a wife who works from home I work from home we're kind of used to this and we're having our challenges but for all those parents who are home with these kids for the first time in many cases trying to play teacher and employee, we really want to thank you for all that you're doing to keep students on point and online. As a quick aside to John's question, I have an elementary school student and I'll give some credit to Megan Bill here. She had a Google chat or Google meet or whatever she called it with the students and I don't know how she did it. I was in the next room. It was

organized chaos. Kind of a little bit of mayhem because all the students don't understand one has to talk at a time. But, somehow, every once in a while Mrs. Bill broke through and it was silence and the class stopped and everyone listened to Mrs. Bill's instructions and then went back at it chattering. And it was a great opportunity for kids to connect a little bit and just about the entire class was on there. So we thank Mrs. Bill and all the teachers doing that, all the parents at home that are supporting it. We appreciate that as well and to all the students, Hannah, you brought some great perspective tonight and I can tell you from the entire Board we certainly wish all of you well and hope that life gets back to normal as soon as possible. As you know, I have a son looking to wrap up the year strong and go to was it Follies and he's got a band he's put together; we've got the prom coming up; we've got athlete looking at their final season and certainly as a board member we do everything we could to support you on that. We wish you all well we know it's tough for you and we appreciate the great work that our great students are doing, Hannah, and thank you for being here to bring the perspective to us. So with that we're gonna close out the public section of the meeting tonight. We'll turn off the cameras for the public obviously members of the board can stay for reports and communications but everyone out there in this great district thank you for all you've done. It's been a difficult couple a couple of weeks but a very good couple of weeks because it shows what this district is capable of doing and more importantly what the people here are willing to do to support our students and support each other. It's a privilege to serve all of you. Thank you very much. Have a good night and God bless.

**Patrick McGrath:** Patrick, I'll just, what I'll do is I'll leave the YouTube stream running just to record the meeting so that we can a with this special situation where we don't have it open to the public to come in we want to make sure that if people are able to see the entirety of the meeting. So we'll just let it roll while we finish up our comments.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Sure. Sure. Unfortunate it ruined that thought was a you know very well put together closing statement here that now was all for naught but that's alright. [inaudible] What was that Pete?

**Peter Sawyer:** It's always better with a second draft.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yes. It's so. We'll run that again in about ten minutes is that it? Hey, so while you're up, Pete, why don't we turn it to you first, sir for our reports and communications. What do you got for us?

**Peter Sawyer:** Nothing, ya know, really. Other than, yeah we've been going through this at Hudson Valley for several weeks now. And, yeah, we've gone entirely to online and for the, you know, for the follow up this year and for next year. You know I had some concerns. There are concerns naturally for particularly for seniors who need to graduate and get classes. I mean at our

level, there's lab and experiential components that are necessary for graduation requirements and I'm not sure how that's going to fit in. And I think the notion of as Patrick mentioned earlier, prepare for the worst and hope for the best, is important and I think, too, that we need to think of communications. The one thing that I think, you know, Hannah, when you were talking it's particularly striking is this notion of routine and I know what we're trying to do is we're trying to replicate because we've we've already committed to going on you know distance learning. And I'm not sure what's gonna happen with the schools but having students still have like my students are still going to go to my class at the same time and we're using Zoom meetings but I think that that notion of having a routine is really important. And think about those communications cause as Hannah presented I thought that was really interesting the idea of everyone trying to make these transitions and students are getting inundated with these you know these messages which is great on behalf the teachers because it shows you the commitment they have which I think is great but I also know that we have to start oh you know how are we gonna help students make any transitions they gotta make, how we're gonna help help our teachers, and how we're gonna help our staff, we really need to think carefully about communication pieces that we need to put together just to help everybody with this.

**Dave Versocki:** You know just. I know it's not my turn but

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yeah, go ahead, Dave.

**Dave Versocki:** Just to piggyback that ya know so much of this is evolving so fast you know getting people comfortable with this. Look what we are doing with this Board Meeting for the first time. Okay. Ya know we talk about a range of learners. We have that all over the place students, staff members, parents, all of it and, you know, as we work on activities, you know. We're gonna have to support not only support teachers but somebody said it you, Patrick, you said about what went in the other room about your what was going on with your elementary school teacher. You know kudos for doing a live a live session absolutely and it's a way to learn right, you know. And it probably didn't take very long for kids to get the idea Hey when my teacher talks I got to kind of settle down, right, and the teacher probably didn't mute everybody's mike they probably just kind of calmed down and you know different grade levels are gonna have different experiences. Teenagers are going to behave differently, you know, and so some of it's informing on best practices in these environments and some of it can only be learned. You have to do it like and so, you know, the fact that we've materials going out. We've got my daughter is upstairs well supposed to be upstairs doing homework when I came home she said she was doing homework that might have been a faux faux statement but it appeared that she was doing work. But she had her physics out. She had a, you know, she had to print some things out so she could do them, you know, because that's just the preferential way to do it. You know, I think she was chatting with schoolwork with a peer or two about how to get through something and that's their way of doing it, right So there's a blend between, you know, synchronous

learning that we talk about with distance learning and asynchronous learning. There's a combo somewhere. And probably to finish the year if we had to say we were going to be gone for the rest of the year out of our classrooms, I would hope that over the next eight to plus weeks we would probably start to evolve some of those home instruction type things into more of a synchronous not every day, not for two hours, but probably in chunks, you know. And in some respects it's the flipped classroom, right. If teachers are recording lessons, students are watching them. Their doing and now what's the feedback mechanism, right. You know I'm turning in something where does the Q&A come from that some students need. You know, others can just go along with that. There's probably some form of somewhere in between right and, David, and your staff I'm sure are getting feedback from people about what that could look like by grade level, by course. You know probably the thing that we're going to miss most is how do we complete labs, right, and science, right, so the hands on activities that have to be completed for a course, right. That's probably a bigger concern, Will the state let us bring kids in to complete those unknown unknown unknown, right, over time. That's a requirement to sit for the Regents. Well, are we even giving the Regents. So I think you know as this evolves there's going to be a lot of different machinations of this conversation, you know. Even if it goes through April break into the end of April even if that's it. There's probably going to be some of this synchronous type of experience somewhere I would imagine.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yeah good. Good thoughts, Dave. And thanks for jumping in there. Just to make sure we don't we don't take any your time, Pete. Did you have anything else, sir? Is that you're on mute, Pete, so if you're speaking looks like give me the thumbs up if you're good there, Not even get that. Maybe we've got a lag here somewhere. Sorry. There you are. You're good. Alright thanks, Pete. And so, Dave, while we got you, sir anything else you want to share.

**Dave Versocki:** Well, I guess you know. I well thank you. Did the chair just yield this time to me? I appreciate that. You know, the other thing I would just say is, you know, to share it's not, you know, the I am absolutely impressed by not only the way Burnt Hills communities, teachers, administration my, you know, the students I, you know, I've talked with a few, have adapted. I work in a, as you all know, in another public sector entity, BOCES. We have the same kind of classroom well different types of classroom but trades to deal with and we're grappling with hey how do we get kids to the end of that game? You know, we we have an obligation, for example, for our Burnt Hills students that attend classes to give them their integration courses which is either going to be their ELA or their their science. David, correct me, right? ELA or science, right.

**Dave Collins:** What are you asking specifically?

**Dave Versocki:** Has the integration our integration is giving ELA or English or ELA or science, correct?

**Dave Collins:** ELA in 12<sup>th</sup> grade or math/science in 11th grade depending upon the program.

**Dave Versocki:** Yeah so you know we have an obligation to finish that education stream so that for Burnt Hills students can graduate. You know and that's that actually presenting a challenge, you know, to us and we sent all those staff members home with devices. We, you know, we want one-to-one. Now we're grappling with which kids didn't have devices. We're not like a Burnt Hills where three through whatever go home with devices. So it's a very challenging situation and not only that, you know, the schools the services that are being delivered. You know, we had to send 450 12-month staff home that were never used to working at home not never not all but, you know, like the business office and stuff like that. And so, you know, those are challenges for everybody. People who never go remote, right, are now remote doing doing some form of their job. And, you know, I work in a huge office building. There's ten of us there on a daily basis. It's really a strange environment um and I'd like to be home in my den like I am and I'd like to spend my time here maybe the rest of the week. So I'm gonna I'm gonna give it a try see if they let me. So I just thought I'd share that with everybody else you know. It's the the entire public sector faces some really interesting challenges, right, because it's not what is perceived to be the normal course of activity whereas more more so in the private sector that's kind of the way in life, you know, in some ways and shapes and forms. So just that I'd share that.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Good thoughts, Dave. I'll tell ya I've worked with some colleagues in the private sector. They were supposed to be onboarding a few folks and they want to fly some people out to Eagan, Minnesota. It would actually be this week and they didn't have a free laptop. They couldn't get somebody on a plane and they sent equipment home with everybody. Well, they said they've got over a hundred people in this little call center that works with people on financial education issues and how to pay credit cards this sort of thing. They'd never worked remotely before. So this meeting might have a little bumps in the road. I can't even imagine it what it's like when they had their first their first Google meet, their first long a video conference like that, so you're right it's a challenge like that across the board. And and so so thank you for the comments, Dave. Of course, Dave, you know, from his background has really been pushing that the district and the board on areas of emergency preparedness and planning and thinking about things that, Dave, I never would have never have crossed my mind. So I always appreciate it. Alright just to keep going down the list. I think I've got you up top, Lisa, just cause you were the first one to sign on. So you still with us and you have anything for our reports and communications?

**Lisa Morse:** I am still with you and the few things that I can add are anecdotal from my own neighborhood and that there are different elementary schools that are supported that our kids all go to but even the elders who are walking around the neighborhood, the seniors are keeping their six-foot distances. They are out every day and just in a chat social media and different chats the

teachers that live in our neighborhood have been putting books out on their lawn. Others have been sharing they may have at home. So it is a great day to be a Spartan.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Great. Thanks, Lisa. and once you've wrapped up with your comments, feel free to go back on mute so we don't have any background noise. I think you might still be on live there too, Dave. Next one I have on the list is Jen. Are you still with us there? Mrs. Longtin.

**Jen Longtin:** Hi guys how are you?

**Patrick Ziegler:** Hi Jen.

**Jen Longtin:** I have three teenagers, one middle schooler and two high schoolers. It's going good. It's going good. I will say the teachers are absolutely positively phenomenal. I think their instruction is really clear. I love the Google classroom. I can navigate in there myself which I've done many times including earlier when I was signed into it for the meeting. But, um, you know, I think the kids I think that routine is just really tough. And we're all just trying to navigate and during this gray time and, you know, but I think we're all doing I think we're all doing the best that we can and just being really supportive so. You know really just kind of taking it one day at a time. I think for the kids that's kind of an important message too because they're getting really they're just they're just unsure so really there's just not gonna be all those answers out there for them right now. But if they do one day at a time and they do what the teachers, you know, ask them to do and ask questions and communicate with the teacher. I think all's gonna be good. Just to help relieve that stress for them.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yeah, I think it's a good point, Jen. Communication is more important now than ever before because now it's not as easy as a passing comment as you walk out the door or come into the class. You really have to take that effort now to shoot an email or shoot a text or to make sure that you're on that Google meet. You know, some of these teachers have been doing optional get-togethers. So it's been nice the students already in my daughter's grade, she's a freshman, in just a week and a half have kind of figured out hey I've got something I want to run by the teacher now so I'm gonna jump on today and some are saying hey I'm getting on as soon as that the timeframe opens up. So a couple others are saying hey I'll wait until a little bit later. Pretty, pretty amazing really. I mean they're dealing with this more maturely than as I mentioned to Dave and more efficiently than some people I've worked with that are trying to master the new technology. They've done nice a job with that communication with the teachers which is absolutely critical.

**Jen Longtin:** Like academics are really important but so is the emotional part and the teachers have been just so kind. Just hey if you can just check in I just want to know how you're doing just to say hi see your smiling face and I'm gonna give you a hundred percent classroom credit

like or attendance credit, you know, and, you know, I think that's that's wonderful. I just want to say hi and and actually see them and I think that really goes to their heart. So yup, great day to be a Spartan for sure.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Good deal. Good. Thank you so much, Jen. Good to see ya. For some reason your picture has not come up with my screen at all. So that's the first time I'm seeing your face there. So good to see ya. Glad you could join us. Alright so just moving down the line here Mr. Blowers. You got anything? I think are you still online? You've disappeared on me here, too, John. Are you still with us?

**John Blowers:** I'm appearing on my own screen so that's a good thing. I can see Jen right now.

**Patrick Ziegler:** You moved though. You got a little more comfortable. We going to long for you tonight?

**John Blowers:** Yeah I had to lose the picture of Mt. Everest behind me and go with the pocket aces.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Good enough.

**John Blowers:** So a few quick things and I'm getting echo here and I don't know if that's my fault or not. Can you guys hear me if I do this?

**Patrick McGrath:** Yeah.

**John Blowers:** Alright. I'm gonna try that. So a couple quick things one is just in my casual, Dave maybe able to comment better about this, but in comparing us to other districts which is what I tend to do a lot, we seem to be out in front of people so as we ask critical questions about how we do it better, faster, stronger, whatever, you know, we want to acknowledge the fact that we, you know, have gotten farther faster than other districts so that's great. I think the thing we do are thinking about is is, I recognize I put Dave on the spot tonight, we do need to start quantifying where we are and it's unfair to know those answers today. But maybe that we should start knowing those answers tomorrow or the end of this week or sometime next week but at some point, we should be able to say we have this many classes, we're reaching this many students, we have this many instructional hours going on, this is how it's looking at a high school, middle school, elementary. I realize it's probably not the main priority at the moment but it needs to become the main priority and some soon to come moment. So I just encourage us to think about ways we can try to capture all this cavalcade of effort and see what it's actually amounting to relative to what we normally do. And do we feel good about it what do we want to do differently. That kind of thing. The last comment I have is we have an opportunity this Friday



to do one of our partners, Junior Achievement, to do their first ever remote delivered class in one of our middle school classes. Kind of exciting. Something new and, apparently, Channel 10 is interested in maybe doing a little story or something so we may get a little press on it. I don't know. It's another chance for us to again try something and see how it works. Then, you know, supplement our effort to continue education as normal as possible.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Good deal. Good luck with that, John. What class are they doing on Friday? What what lesson is it? Er

**John Blowers:** It's a seventh grade class and the lesson. It is

**Patrick Ziegler:** You don't have to go looking for it. That's alright.

**John Blowers:** Global Marketplace.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Well that's a good one isn't it. Because so much of the global marketplace now it composes of work being done just like this with people all over the world. So that's pretty appropriate, isn't it?

**John Blowers:** It is. It's not a COVID-friendly curriculum but I'll certainly supplement it a little bit with what's going on.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Well played, John. Well played. Thanks, John. Thanks again. Don, if you're still there and you can get yourself off mute.

**Don Marshall:** You talking to me?

**Patrick Ziegler:** There you go. Don, you're back, sir. Don, it's all yours.

**Don Marshall:** Hey, I just want to thank the central administration for the great work you're doing. It's really, really, amazing and very impressive. Patrick, nice job running this meeting. You know, this is hard stuff. And I I guess I just want to state what's maybe obvious I think the Burnt Hills School District is gonna be a better district when this is all over than it was when it started. So we're learning a lot and we're making a lot of progress and, you know, and keep up the great work.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Thanks, Don. Thanks for the kind words there. And I appreciate everyone jumping on and being flexible and amenable to this type of a session. In fact, I was thinking about this when I was taking the role there that I'm not sure when the last meeting is we've actually had everyone together in one place but at least it's good to have us maybe seven

different places but all in the same call. It's good to see all of you so I appreciate making the effort there. And last, but certainly not least, because I think you've had some of the best comments of the evening, Ms. Shell. Do you have any other comments or anything else to share for us in reports and communications before I kick it back to the Boardroom?

**Hannah Shell:** I think really just one more thing. The best thing that like as for administration that can be done for students right now it is just kind of really about open communication. As soon as it's decided, how long we're gonna be out of school for, what's happening with these exams, that people let us know. And that everybody is doing such a great job with that over email and I just think that that's something that's really important just for students to really be informed and feel as though they're in the loop with all of these things because it really is affecting us a lot. That's it. Thank you.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Thanks, Hannah. I had a little trouble getting off mute there. Sorry about that. Hey you know this um this might be something that could help the administration. I don't know if it's a big discussion we want to get into now but it's funny because you're absolutely right, Hannah. I know where I think that everyone's trying to balance like the fact that you're getting inundated with information on the one hand and yet there's probably very critical pieces of information that are more important to you than anything else. And and I think you're absolutely right it they don't sound like little things at all, like the senior prom or some of the end of the year activities that you have. You know them better than I would. I don't think those are little things at all and those are the things you're really looking for. I know the administration can't answer to them yet just even having your voice here to work with administration and talk through what the best forms of communication, how often, how much, is good to have. We've said it before and we appreciate the thoughts, Hannah, but with every year we have someone like yourself that just shows more and more why it's so important to have a student on the Board of Education. So thank you for sharing all that.

**Hannah Shell:** Thank you and I just actually have one more thing. I think more than anything students are missing each other. Students are missing being in school. I get messages every day like, "oh my gosh I miss my friends," I miss school." People never thought they would miss school. So I think they do. But I really think it's completely, completely different for us. The whole social distancing concept. The fact that yes I'm home all day you know I I have this work to do and then tonight I have nothing but I can't go anywhere. So I think that's something else that's just really new for these kids and I'm sure it's new for most adults, too, but um so I think it's just good to keep in mind that a lot of kids that everybody's world has completely changed right now.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Yeah, very true and you're absolutely right. We'd never want to make light of some of the things that are at the top of mind for students because I'm quite sure they were top of mind for every one of us when they were your age. And so it's really just that we don't think of those things as much now but you've really put a really great spotlight on them. So again, thanks, Hannah. I'm glad you got the link. Sorry it was so late but glad you could make it. So we appreciate your insight. Good luck to you and the family there. How's everybody else doing? They they dealing with it because you have educators and students all all home in your house, right so.

**Hannah Shell:** Yeah, everybody so. My dad's learning how to use Google classroom, Google meet with the whole phys ed department, going well. I'm seeing every side of it now.

**Patrick Ziegler:** You can tell your dad he's probably got it easiest, right, he just needs to send an email that says go run and keep six feet from everyone and he's fine so. That's that's probably. No, don't tell him that, I don't mean that to pick on him so but but it's probably a good probably a good way to get kids out just get them out doing PE right it's a little bit easier.

**Hannah Shell:** Yes, getting outside is pretty important right now.

**Patrick Ziegler:** I had my kids shovel the driveway today. So all good. Hannah, thanks so much and with that we will go back to the Boardroom for Patrick, Chris or Dave if there is anything else you fine gentlemen want to add to to close us out here.

**Chris Abdoo:** Just as business as usual. You'll see a few items in executive content. I just wanted to give the Board a heads up of what we'll be discussing at future meetings. Other than that we just thank you for all your support. Thank you for your continued leadership with us as we get through this. We appreciate it.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Thank you.

**Dave Collins:** And just a few things from me. Normally, we would go around and talk about the events that just happened or that are going to happen that's that's, obviously, not exactly the same tonight but we do to kind of talk about how somethings are continuing on even though a little differently and we celebrating fellow board members. We did receive an email this week and I think the Board saw this as well congratulating Hannah again for another amazing showing in regard to science research another top three second-place finish. And again just an extremely competitive area so congratulations to her. She and some of her peers will be completing virtually at the the Upstate Symposium which takes place typically at SUNY Albany but now will take place virtually. So congratulations to her and just a little example of while in a completely different format amazing things are still happening holding on to some of those those

fabrics and some of those traditions that we have of excellence and, Hannah, congratulations. I, too, just want to say thank you to everybody who's on the call tonight and to the faculty, staff and community. And just kind of say perspective, too, is important. I know people are being mindful and and we're appreciative of not inundating us with with questions and things as we try to work but it is important for us to continue to have the perspective of the community and the students. So, obviously, our emails are accessible if there are things you're feeling or noticing, please send those those emails because that will help us have that piece to inform the decisions that we're making depending upon how much longer we may be out. So so thank you and and please continue to share your perspective so that we can we can make the best decisions that we can make.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Great. Thanks, Dave.

**Patrick McGrath:** So a couple of quick things. Just, you know, again I want to make sure that we emphasize that we know there's parents out there who are really struggling and we're trying to it it's it's a big enough thing to make a pivot like this in good times but instead we're doing this gigantic change and then on top of it you have just all these crazy pressures that people have outside. We know that there's probably people either listening or I know for a fact from emails that I've gotten that there's people who are really this doesn't hit them as well. They aren't celebrating this. They aren't able to do it. They're struggling. And so we're really conscious of that. We're remobilizing a lot of our support staff to help reach out to those people. I've seen, personally, just situations turn from very difficult to very positive even in the course of a couple days where teachers sort of just smothered people with attention and help and and we so there's just I mean there's story after story that when we're all through this sometime we can put them all in one place and share them and it's gonna be an amazing list of things that people just mobilizing did. So that's a really important thing. And the second thing is I really miss all you guys. Like this is really strange. It's the three of us sitting here in Brandon on the other side of the camera and it just isn't the same as a Board meeting, you know. So well that uh while it's great to see everybody, definitely, I've seen basically the same ten people for the last ten days and no one else. It's weird. The last thing I wanted to say was and I'll just I'll share it up on the screen now. I wanted to, give me one second, I just wanted to recognize the front page of our website and and our our former superintendent Dr. Richard O'Rourke who passed away on Friday at the age of 90. Dr. O'Rourke was an amazing leader here. He was the Superintendent of Schools in the district from 1969 to 1994 for 25 years. And he he was a huge part of getting this district it wasn't called shared decision-making back then it was just basically called respect between the administration and the Teacher's Association. And through some really tumultuous times he helped with the leadership of the Teacher's Association to lay groundwork and I've talked with teachers who are long retired who knew Dr. O'Rourke and worked with him and they have a lot of praise for the way he worked together with them to solve problems and to listen. He was a strong leader. He led the district through, obviously, a quarter of a century in this

role here. I can't imagine to be honest. And that's a long time to be in this this. If you think about through the 60s and the 70s and the 80s into the 90s, what kinds of things were going on in our country then just as they are now. So just uh ask if we could just have a moment of silence um before we close out of respect for Dr. Richard O'Rourke. Thanks, Patrick.

**Patrick Ziegler:** Thank you. Thanks for sharing that and, of course, I would certainly hope with all that we've heard about Dr. O'Rourke and all the wonderful stories that were shared over the past couple of days of the anecdotes from people including our own here in Don Marshall who worked with him closely over at the Charlton School, I certainly hope that when you talk about Dr. O'Rourke's commitment to working with everyone in a respectful and collegial manner, listening to people, working together and solving problems, I certainly hope that we've honored his legacy these past few weeks and even here tonight and testing out this new technology and holding the first long distance Board meeting, I think in the history of our school district, I certainly hope that we're doing a good job as caretakers of living up not only to his reputation and his good name but the good name of this district. And so I will close tonight's meeting by thanking everyone, once again. Thank you, Patrick, for sharing that that little bit of information and insight into Dr. O'Rourke into one of the district's really founding fathers and we hope we're living up to that reputation here now as we work through this public health crisis. Just a reminder to everyone that might be at home all of the contact information for the Board of Education is out on the website. So if there's anything we can do to help you, messages we can pass along senior administration or any challenges you're having you think we might be able to help you push through you know get you in touch with the right people or just act as a sounding board, I want you know that we're all here for you for our parents for our students of course as well as for our teachers and staff and administration. Thank you all for the great work and look forward to seeing you all, hopefully, in person right there in that Boardroom in a few weeks. Thank you all. Have a good night.