

Edwards-Knox Central School District  
Board of Education Meeting April 7, 2020

Stacia Kroniser 0:02

I'm going to call the meeting to order at 609.

Can we stand for the Pledge of Allegiance please?

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

We're gonna start with public participation. Brandi, Do you have anyone that has anything for the public participation section?

Brandi Graham 1:00

I'm looking Just give me a second.

No, I don't have anything.

Stacia Kroniser 1:53

Okay, so we will close down the public participation section and go on to the rest of our regular meeting. I get a motion to approve the minutes of March 10 2020.

Bobbie Trudeau 2:08

I'll give you a motion

Jennifer Hotaling 2:10

I'll second.

Stacia Kroniser 2:13

Okay, so Bobbie,  
and Jen.

Is there any comments or questions on the minutes?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Any opposed?

Motion carried.

Are there any questions on the warrants?

Okay, so can I get a motion to approve accept the claims auditor's report dated March 11. And April 1?

Todd Wells 3:13

I'll move.

Michael White 3:16

I'll Second.

Stacia Kroniser 3:19

Todd and Mike.

Any questions or questions? Any comments or questions on those?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Unknown Speaker 3:37

Aye.

Stacia Kroniser 3:38

Any opposed?

Motion Carried.

Can I get a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report? February 29.

Lynn Coller 3:51

I'll move

Michael White 3:52

I'll second

Stacia Kroniser 3:54

I get a Okay Lynn and Mike.

Questions or comments?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Any opposed?

Motion carried.

Can I get a motion to set the trial balance report revenue status report budget status report and the budgetary transfer reports dated February 29.

Lynn Coller 4:32

I'll move

Stacia Kroniser 4:38

I heard two right at the same time. Sorry. I don't know.

I see Lynn's hand up

Jennifer Hotaling 4:50

I heard Lynn. Okay. I think Lynn was first okay.

Stacia Kroniser 5:04

Questions or comments?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Unknown Speaker 5:10

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Stacia Kroniser 5:14

Any opposed? Motion carried. Can I get a motion to approve and adopt the following resolution regarding the COVID-19, New York State executive order?

Michael White 5:32

Mike

Bobbie Trudeau 5:36

I'll second.

Stacia Kroniser 5:41

Questions or comments on this?

All in favor, Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.. Any opposed?

motion carried.

Can I get a motion to approve the leave of absence of Stephanie Cummings effective April 23 2020 through June 17 2020. I see Lynn. And Penny

questions or comments?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Any opposed?

Motion carried.

Can I get a motion

to approve the long term substitute certified teacher Marcus Frisbee at a step one salary rated to 221.51. Effective On the sixth day from commencement on April 23. through June 17.

Michael White 7:11

Mike

Penny Allen 7:16

Penny

Stacia Kroniser 7:20

questions or comments?

All in favor? Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Any opposed?

Motion carried. Sorry have three dogs.

Okay, can I get a motion to approve the programs recommended by the CSE?

Lynn Coller 7:48

I'll move

Bobbie Trudeau 7:50

I'll second

Stacia Kroniser 7:51

Bobbie.

Questions or comments?

All in favor, aye.

Tom O'Brien 8:00

Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Aye.

Stacia Kroniser 8:04

Any opposed?

Motion carried.

Okay.

Are there any reports or anything that needs to be brought forward? Erin?

Erin Woods 8:25

Yes, we have a budget conversation and update as well as admin reports. Quite a bit has happened since we last met. So I guess I appreciate all of the community support I think we have definitely are on track with hitting our board of education goals, student focus, health and safety and engaged community and fiscal responsibility. Certainly the engaged community piece has been really obvious. I've had a number of volunteers. Our staff has been fantastic managing the constant changes, their patience, their willingness to adapt so quickly to online learning has been amazing. And I really appreciate the leadership from Amy and Lura. They've done a really fantastic job supporting their staff through this process. We've done meals for students for the last three weeks. We started with daily meals at three different locations. We then moved last week to meals on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. And then today was our first curbside pickup of meals and it was fantastic. We had over 300 and about 320 meals meal kits that were picked up by families. And it's for a week of lunches and breakfasts. So our cafeteria staff, custodial staff have been amazing. I can't speak highly enough for all of the work that they've done. Making sure that our students are well cared for and fed. And I want to appreciate our parents for driving to pick up the meals and you know, we've had some Meals on Wheels thanks to Jennifer Hotaling and Rachael, as well. Just lots of really great cooperative efforts. I really can't say how much I appreciate the community for supporting the many, many changes. But first and foremost, we need to remember that we are in a health crisis. So I am happy to announce that there was an executive decision to postpone school again until the 29th. Until the pandemic, we start to see some improvements. As results, some major decisions were made. Regents Exams are not going to happen this year. They've been waived. That came out officially today. We heard about it yesterday. So in addition to that, we know that the budget vote and board elections have been moved to June 1, or at least by June 1 we'll have a better indication of what's going to happen as far as our budget vote goes.

Amy and Lura also have some updates. I think I hit the major pieces. The school

closure period was extended by Governor Cuomo until April 29. I believe I already shared that. But Amy and Lura can talk a little bit more deeply about what's happening instruction wise and all the hard work that they've done to get internet accessibility to our students as well. So I don't know who wants to go first. Go ahead. Okay, Lura.

Lura Hughes 12:38

Okay. So in mid March, when the school closure was announced due to the COVID-19. We immediately right across the board pre K through 12 began working on creating a plan for how our students were going to receive materials and of course, continue to maintain their learning. So teachers and staff worked diligently to create and organize those learn at home materials within the very first week, which were delivered by bus, the beginning of the following week, and of course, the meal pickups. The meal pickups had begun at each of the area fire departments and it was just a number of remarkable things that were put together in just a short amount of time. On the elementary level, pre K through six, we've worked with a number of online platforms over the last few weeks. In addition to the paper packets that were provided, and parents and teachers have been communicating with each other in I would say a number of creative and different ways. The feedback that's been provided to staff, and even the information to parents by staff has led us to be able to consider and continue to provide for our students during what's now our extended school closure. So in the last few weeks last couple weeks actually, we've been able to start compiling some of that information regarding internet access. I know Amy will talk quite a bit more about this. This is definitely impacting the high school end. But we've we've gathered information regarding the internet access devices, which has then allowed us to actually move forward in our I would call it our pursuit of a move to more online platforms for this remote learning. At this point, most of our students in the elementary have access to the internet or hotspots. And for those that really did not have it, many parents have been able to get access with some of the providers that have offered some incentives. And with all this in mind, and with the extension again of the school closure, we've recognized our need for continued hybrid instruction on the elementary end and realize that that's really a necessity for us. So teachers have Grades pre K through six, they've they've actually been working to craft three more weeks of learn at home materials to end approximately May 1, with grades three through six transitioning to mostly online learning with paper packets that will support that work. And since we've been very fortunate at EK to have one device one to one devices across the board, we've decided on the elementary end that our three through six students will be provided their assigned Chromebooks and we'll be able to move forward with access to their device. So actually, we have it set up at this point, that pickup of Chromebooks for grades three through six is tomorrow here at the building. It's a curbside pickup. For those students that don't have internet the teachers have continued to make arrangements as they have previously to communicate with parents. And of course, there's there's paper materials that will show report that continued learning and retention of, of knowledge. So grades pre K through two are being provided paper materials as well, with the teachers and the support staff, continuing to work with our our youngest of our students, through our super supportive help from our parents, teachers of those grade levels will continue as we go forward to encourage the use of online support materials as students are able because we truly recognize that they do not all have access to the internet at this point. I know, I know Erin was talking about this, but I, I can't say enough about how everybody has worked so well together. It's been parents, it's families, it's teachers, it's staff, the community itself. Everybody's been super understanding and supportive. There have been a number of challenges throughout this whole process, but everyone has really worked together to come up with creative ways to address the challenges and we just, we look forward to having our students back in the building again, I keep hearing everybody saying I miss them, want them here. That is where they need to be. So being positive but we do know it's been extended until the end of April. So it's just been really really positive.

Erin Woods 17:39

Can't hear you

Amy Sykes 17:57

then we started to immerse ourselves in preparation For next steps or the education process, high school, we decided to go Virtual Education, seven to 12, which less than 10 families in our community in the high school that are without internet. So over the last several days, I've enlisted the help of a staff members and we are trying to find avenues to provide them with some level of Wi Fi in their community. So it's really better. As far as education goes, these learning packets, we are transitioning right now into a full immersion of online instruction. And by the beginning of the 40 week marking period, staff will be beginning the 40 week marking period with new content. So so far, everyone is on board. Students are ready to go. Like I said, we still have a few small gaps, but I think we're making progress, although it's not as fast as I would like. We are certainly making headway. And again, it's the same message I'm so impressed. I'm been so

very, very impressed with our staff. You know, every person in this building and those people that aren't in this building, stepping up and stretching themselves professionally to do what's right for our students, and really again, maintaining that, you know, their safety, their health and safety is our priority as well as the members of this community. So I've been really impressed with what I've seen.

That's it in the high school.

Oh, and I Erin did mention the think of Regents Exam so of course three eight testing, and Regents Exams for this year are canceled

this rest of the school year

Glenda Morales-Hanley 20:07

Okay, I have nothing new, no. So, obviously, Erin said that budget votes have been moved to June 1. So I think that that moves the the deadlines for all those documents that go out regarding the budget back naturally, a couple weeks, so it gives us a little bit more time to review the budget. Luckily, if you've seen anything in the news, you know that the budget went through, the state budget went through. And aid school aid was one of the areas that he had to had to reduce naturally. I don't, I wasn't surprised, I think it was expected. So to give you an idea, the first couple drafts that you have seen as a board that I've shared Included really slight increase of aid, overall aid of about \$88,000. So those numbers in that budget that was created included that aid increased. Now with the new numbers that have come out, as of now currently, we're looking at a reduction of approximately \$162,000 from this year to next year. So, foundation aid across the board was is even from 19-20 to 20-21 for all the districts. So our decrease is that is all expense based aid, which which means that we're just spending less money are projected to spend less money this year on some expenses. Therefore, we're getting less aid on that for next year. Keeping that in mind, there was also language in the budget that there will be three or three or four periods that the division of budget We'll review the revenues versus the expenses at the state level. And it gives them the authority to reduce the aid that they have projected for the districts to get next year

Which makes it tough to budget. Currently.

As you know, we have, we have a healthy fund balance. And it's situations like this, that we're grateful for it because we're going to be in a much better position than a few other I think a few other districts in the area and across the state. So we do have that strong fund balance that we can we can dip into to cover any losses that we have. But when we look at the expenses, we look at long term, I really want to just be cautious that we don't become dependent on a large appropriation for next year. Who I mean, who we don't really know there's so many unknowns. I was at a webinar earlier today. And I think the quote that he said was There's a lot more unknown questions and there are known answers. And at this time, we really are just unsure what next year is going to bring. So recommendations from NYSSBA NYSCOSS, that I've seen via email is to really wait until that April 30, that first interval, so the first interval that they'll be using to look at state aid for next year and reduction, if necessary, is April 1 to April 30. So they by April 30, or a couple days, two weeks after, we'll have an idea if we're going to have any sort of reduction with our first set of reductions for next year. So they're really recommending for any budgets for any approval budgets within within the board to wait until the April 30 deadline. That's why I know that I sent in the budget and the update last week that I was hoping to get you a budget before the meeting today for you to review. There really is no I didn't want to make any changes didn't want to really look too deeply into it until we really know where we stand when it comes to revenues coming in? Obviously, I've been looking throughout the budget for a few weeks, I knew that I had a feeling obviously, I think we all knew this was coming. So I've been looking at areas that, you know, we had discussed in previous meetings of either including a new, a couple new positions, you know, doing two buses, cash versus one. Health insurance, I'm still waiting on health insurance rates. So I'm really hoping those rates come in lower than I projected. So I'm already eyeing some of the expense lines that we can use as an area to reduce, reduce some expenses to really make up that the gap that we might have. Like one of the positions and I'll just talk about this one, the positions that we had talked about the last meeting that we were really hoping to really push out there was a community school coordinator. Currently it's halftime

in the budget and we were hoping to make it full time and I think a situation The situation that we're in right now is the perfect situation that a community school coordinator would have been really ideal to take down some of these you know some of these things that we have to do. So we'd really like to work really hard to keep that in the budget moving forward that full halftime the full time Community School coordinator.

I have a few notes here. Um,

again, I just want to reiterate how I think we're in a good position, we will be in a better position than other districts.

We're gonna you know, we're going to keep

personnel as is there you know, an existing personnel as is we there's nothing that has to be asked to be done there.

Which I think is the positive.

But another another thing that we really need to we'll need to discuss or contemplate is that is the tax levy increase and I had mentioned in an update, last week's update with the economic situation and the impact that it's going to have on our community, really looking at just as no tax increase for the 20-21 school year. So obviously, that's not a practice that I'd like to that I like to do continue. But this, we understand the impact this is it's going to hit our community extremely hard. So I think it's an obvious and obvious area and obvious the situation that we need to to consider is that zero percent tax increase for next year. Does anybody have any questions as I'm kind of just throwing out all this information that we're still trying to digest? And I'm sure might change tomorrow or by the end of the week. It's kind of a day by day thing. situation in any area. But I don't know if Erin has anything to add from any of her meetings that she's had with CSOs about budget. But I really did. I just I guess the main thing, I didn't want to send something out, when we weren't even really sure where we are right now. So obviously, before our next meeting. And within the, I think within updates, if I can just show you areas and kind of show you what numbers would look like, as we move forward, and some of the areas that we may be able to decrease. But once that April 30, or a couple weeks after that, or you know, the week after, we may have a better idea of what those mid year state aid cuts could look like. And that's the that's the most that's the confusing and the scary part is we really don't know what those what those cuts could be or how much they could be. And I think we're all still waiting on guidance from that across the state

Tom O'Brien 27:54

Resource Officer, you want to keep that one?

Glenda Morales-Hanley 27:57

Well, that is one of the ones that I've been looking at since It is a new position to kind of take that line out. Erin and I spoke kind of briefly earlier today. But that's always if the start of the year, mid year, we realize, okay, our state aid cuts aren't coming to fruition. They aren't as big as we had, you know, had initially thought. That doesn't mean that we can't implement that, you know, and start that in the middle of the year. And I'm not even sure I'm not sure if Erin having conversations with the County, I'm not sure if they have you been moved forward with that on there and because of this situation,

Erin Woods 28:42

that's a that's a good question. That's another unknown at this point. It's a it's a position that requires collaboration with the county and, and at this point, I believe it's on the back burner, but it's definitely something we want to pursue in the future. So once things start to turn around and we can start engaging in those conversations again, I definitely hope that we can pursue it. But again, it's one of those things that we have to at least wait until April 30, to see what our budgets gonna look like what the forecast for budget planning really is when we are going to be able to go out to vote. Lots of different things have been tossed around. As far as the budget vote goes. One of the things that's been out there is the possibility of local school board's adopting the budget so long as we don't exceed the tax cap. I'm not sure if that's going to happen or not. But we'll get more guidance, certainly by April 30.

And that

Tom O'Brien 29:49

and one other question do we have? Wifi on our buses?

Erin Woods 29:54

We do. That's another good question. Tom. We do not but we can install it after we purchase and moving forward, if that's the direction we want to go in, we can purchase bus buses with Wi Fi,

Tom O'Brien 30:10

I think could be a good idea.

Erin Woods 30:12

Yeah. And we now know just how good of an idea that would have been. Yeah, moving forward, we're definitely going to be looking at that.

Tom O'Brien 30:23

Okay, thank you.

Erin Woods 30:25

Yes. We've certainly learned a lot through this process. And the one thing I do want it to take an opportunity of air time and do and hopefully some parents are on watching this is there's been some concern from parents. They're feeling overwhelmed. Many, many parents are home, trying to work from home, our staff are home trying to work from home while also parenting and educating their own children, some of them and that's a real challenge. There is not an expectation on our end, for parents to be teachers. We want and hope that parents can create a structure for their children to have success and routines in place for them to accomplish some of the work that much of the work that's being asked of them, but use our teachers as as, you know, instructors and as a resource and if you're if you're working with your child and they're overwhelmed or you're overwhelmed, put it away, go outside and then regroup or put it away for that day. Call. Anytime I've had to talk to a few parents, and I'm a mom myself, and it really is a challenge. We don't expect them to be teachers. We just want the priority is, is everyone's health first and foremost. And then the we're all here to support you as as parents and to to continue to support your children from a distance, which is a real challenge. We want them here. It's really eerie having empty hallways, and I cannot wait for their return and I know I am saying the same from for staff and Lura and Amy, we want your kids here. And, and we're here as a resource. Please have them reach out to us or you reach out to us as well.

Tom O'Brien 32:45

Sure, and how's this gonna affect the seniors to go on to college the ones that want what's going to happen?

Erin Woods 32:52

Well, fortunately the Regents Exams are not going to negatively impact them. So They are exempt from Regents Exams, we're going to have to creatively look at how to move forward as far as grades and assessment of the work that they do. From here on out, we're hopeful that they'll return to school. So we can kind of play catch up. But we'll be you know, doing what we do when they're in school and evaluating on an individual basis where they're where they are where they need to be, but certainly, they won't be penalized for the situation they're in right now. What we'll do everything we can to support them to make sure that they make it to graduation.

Amy Do you want to add to that?

I miss anything?



Amy, I can't hear you. I don't know if anyone else can? No. No.

I'm sure it was profound.

Stacia Kroniser 34:48

Does anyone have any questions?

Bobbie Trudeau 34:53

I have a quick question.

Erin I know a lot of people have been asking is going to not only about seniors but what how's this going to affect advanced regents diplomas for students that are underclassmen taking regions classes without that exam?

Erin Woods 35:10

Good. Another good question. I'm not sure. I mean, they're exempt from all regents exams at this point. There more guidance has come out. I just was reading it. Let me see if there's anything on it

for anyone in advanced courses in advanced regents, so let me see.

I don't see anything on it yet.

My guess is they'll probably have finals count. It really depends on how long they extend the school closing, but if you have a child has been advanced and is taking the Regents Exam or regents course, then they're exempt from the regents course phase. They've taken up. They're not exempt from the course they're exempt from the Regents Exam

to make that clear,

but will get credit for the course. Does that make sense? Bobbie?

Was that an answer to the question?

Bobbie Trudeau 36:32

You answered the correct credit for the course but

well not looking at their senior year. Are they getting credit credit risk taking that Regents Exam for that diploma? Advanced Diploma?

Erin Woods 36:41

Yes. I don't have any. I don't know yet. guidance. Not yet. No, certainly hope so.

Stacia Kroniser 36:56

That was the only question I had as well was Our seniors. So does anybody else have any questions?

Okay, do we have anything else for this evening's meeting?

Okay, can I get a motion to adjourn?

Lynn Coller 37:29

I'll Move

Michael White 37:30

Mike

I'll second.

Stacia Kroniser 37:38

Okay. Lynn and Mike, all in favor? Aye. Aye.Aye. Aye.Aye. Aye.Aye. Aye.

Any opposed?

Okay, we are out at 6:46pm. Thank you everyone stay safe and healthy.

Erin Woods 37:56

Same to you. Thank you be safe and healthy everybody

Good to see you.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>