



PARK RIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 22, 2021
 Public Started: 6:00 P.M.
 Private Started: 6:05 P.M.
 Public Started: 7:00 P.M.
 Public Ended: 9:45 P.M.

VIDEO CONFERENCE

<https://parkridge.webex.com/meet/ParkRidge>

I. Roll Call

N. Triano J. Pierotti N. Agoos L. Sum D. Clare A. Wagner D. Bradler
 X X X X X X X

Also Present:

R. Gamper R. Wright D. Lopez
 X X X

II. Pledge of Allegiance – was led by Board President David Bradler.

III. Open Public Meetings Statement – was led by Board President David Bradler.

This is to advise the general public and to instruct that it be recorded in the minutes that in compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, entitled the "Open Public Meetings Act," the Park Ridge Board of Education on January 12, 2021 caused to be posted at the Office of the Board of Education located at 85 Pascack Road, Park Ridge, New Jersey and on January 12, 2021 sent to The Record, 1 Garret Mountain Plaza, P.O. Box 471, Woodland Park, NJ 07424-0471 and The Ridgewood News, 41 Oak Street, Ridgewood, NJ 07450-3805 and on January 12, 2021 delivered to the Office of the Municipal Clerk of Park Ridge and the Park Ridge Public Library a meeting notice setting forth the time, date and location of this meeting.

IV. Adjournment to Private Session

Private Closed Session was read by *President Bradler*.

The Park Ridge Board of Education will adjourn into private session to discuss item(s), which fall within specific exceptions contained in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b.

Be it resolved that the Board will now go into private session to discuss matters rendered confidential due to the nature of pending or anticipated litigation, attorney client privilege and personnel – employment matters affecting a specific, prospective or current employee privilege. Any discussion held by the Board, which need not remain confidential, will be made public as soon as practical. Minutes of the private session will not be disclosed until the need for confidentiality no longer exists. All appropriate persons, who may be discussed in private session, have been adequately notified (RICED – in accordance with Policy #0162, Notice of Board Meetings by the Board Secretary/Business Administrator).

Motion, second and vote to enter into private session at 6:00 pm.

M: NT S: JP
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

Private Session Agenda

The Regular Session of the Board of Education was recalled at 7:00 pm.

M :LS S: AW
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

V. Minutes for Approval

Monthly Meeting	January 25, 2021	Board Approved
Private Session Meeting	January 25, 2021	Board Approved

The Board approved the minutes as follows:

M: JP S: AW
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

VI. Special Presentations to the Board

Public comment portion is opportunity to comment and Board has option to respond

VII. Hearing of Citizens - None

Agenda Items Only

Hearing of Citizens will be restricted to three minutes per person for a total of thirty minutes for questions and/or comments on non-agenda items only.

VIII. Student Representative's Report -NONE

IX. President's Report

Mr. Bradler reported that an email went out Saturday regarding the district's reopening plan. The Board of Education and teacher leadership developed a plan to increase in person instruction. The new plan will increase instruction to four hours at East Brook and West Ridge, when the CALI level moves to Yellow. To maintain staff safety, students will still wear masks and plexi-glass will be used on desks. Virtual instruction option will still be an option. The community will receive a notification on when this will be beginning. When all the details are finalized, a meeting will be held to get feedback.

Mr. Bradler was satisfied with the plan. Everyone came together and the district is moving forward. He thanked all the teachers and support staff who have worked harder than ever. Their dedication sustained us. He thanked Gina Demar for working collaboratively to develop a plan. He thanked Dr. Gamper and the administrative team for developing an equitable solution. For the new Board members, they were put to the test right out of the gate. The Board will be working with committees to better advocate for students. He thanked parents for their ideas and support. He also thanked them for their messages of encouragement and gratitude. It uplifted the Boards spirits.

X. Superintendent's Report

HIB Update

Dr. Gamper reported that there were no HIB investigations since the last meeting.

Dr. Gamper reviewed the Student Safety Report. There was one confirmed HIB, and one alleged.

Dr. Gamper echoed Mr. Bradler's comments on the re-opening. He felt everyone really came together with a plan. The vaccination rollout has been slow, and school employees are still not cleared to get them. He was glad that the district could come together with a plan that is more timely.

Dr. Gamper explained the timing of moving to the four-hour day. It will depend on the level moving to yellow. How fast that happens is not known, but it will not be a forever scenario. Additional training and planning will be needed for staff. The parent reopening committee will meet again when the plan is further along. It will be with the same members. He stated that the Board would be listening to public comment.

XI. BOE Committee Reports

Community Relations – Ms. Sum reported that they discussed communication and transparency with the community. They recommended increased frequency of emails from Dr. Gamper, and updating the district website. They also spoke about making sure all stakeholders are well informed about the reopening plan.

Education /Technology – Ms. Wagner reported that the committee met with Dr. Bernardo and discussed learning loss. They are awaiting data from previous years to get more concrete information. They also spoke about updates to the curriculum standards that will be put into place next year.

Finance – The Finance committee discussed the 2021-22 budget. They reviewed and discussed Salaries, Appropriations and Revenues.

Re-opening Committee – Ms. Wagner reported that the committee discussed the parent concerns that were made at the last meeting, and were received via email. They spoke with Dr. Gamper about the concerns, and are working on the next step.

XII. Supplemental Agenda – None

XIII. Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda. A motion was made to amend the Consent Agenda to remove item E3. The motion was passed as follows:

M: AW S: NT
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

The Board then voted on the revised consent agenda. The revised consent agenda approved as follows:

M: NT S: DC
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

XIV. Hearing of Citizens

*Mr. Bradler – asked people to raise their hand (virtually) if they wanted to speak. If dialing in, press *3 and then *6 to unmute. He reminded the audience to give their name and address. Each person will have three minutes to speak. The Board is here to listen and take account. The Board will respond to the statements at the conclusion of the public comments. He reminded them that this is not a Dialog. Mr. Bradler introduced Mr. Garcia, from the Board Attorney’s office, who is also sitting in on the meeting. He*

also informed the public that the chat feature of the software has been disabled and asked everyone to be respectful. He reminded them that they are all here for the children.

Mr. Kaupas spoke first. He is a parent of students at West Ridge. He referenced a Board email that was dated 2/21. He felt the guidelines given were nebulous and conflicting. He felt that students need more instruction now. They need full school days. He wanted to know how there can be no incremental increase. He also asked why instruction is decreased during snow days. He felt Dr. Gamper's snow related closures are part of a compromise. He also asked about asynchronous teaching and if homework is being counted as school time. He expressed concern about how a year of virtual and asynchronous teaching would impact children. He felt students need to express ideas and receive feedback. He commented that there were private school that were now open full time. He felt the district is resisting. He commented that the district needs to get creative and figure it out, and would be willing to speak to anyone directly.

Ms. Stevens requested that Board and Superintendent remain transparent on a weekly basis on the district's progress. She asked if there would be aftercare. She felt that livestreaming can be difficult and the district should look towards best practices when implementing it. She also expressed concern that teachers are paying more attention to their virtual students than those in the classroom, and felt it was a difficult task for teachers. She did not feel that in person students should be looking at a screen.

Ms. Parks stated that she has two kids in EB, 2nd grade. She commented on the fine print of the email sent to parents. The conditions to be met, where the region was in yellow, and that the schedule was finalized. She wanted to know what the timeline was when we hit yellow, and when kids can go back to school.

Mr. Lau stated he was a father of a 14 yr. old in the High School. He felt there was not a lot of dialogue for High School students and their mental health issues. He feels there is a lack of support going on in school. He felt that this is a problem that is being perpetuated, and needs to be accounted for. He stated that kids are struggling and there are not a lot of resources available. Students are not getting support when they are home. He feels the High School needs to be back. He asked the district to pay more attention to what is happening to kids. He did not want something terrible to happen because we are not paying attention.

Valcake commented that no one has reached out as to what they want. Felt that High School needs to be in person, five days a week. New York schools are in attendance full days, why are we not moving forward. Wanted to know why the Board has not reached out to Middle School and High School parents.

Jodi D has a child in 3rd grade with an IEP. She felt students with IEP's in other school districts are getting more attention. Those schools get more than half days. She felt students are in jeopardy of not being able to catch up. She wanted to see students in school longer. She believes that we are damaging students with the current program. They need more than 2.5 hours of in-person instruction. She wanted to know why we could not have more hours for IEP students. She has another child who is at OLM and going full time.

Lisa Muller commented that in the reopening guidelines, as long as you have Plexiglas you could open. She asked why we are waiting to implement longer days. We are right on the cusp. Waiting will be detrimental. Felt we should be proactive and open quicker.

Ms. Epstein thanked the educators, Board of Education and administration for supporting the students. Everyone has been working hard to bring the district to where it is. She thanked the parents who emailed and lent their support. She said she was speaking as both a parent, and an educator. She is pleased with the quality of education her child is receiving from the teachers. Her child is learning new things like division, playing the recorder, and how to enjoy reading chapter books. These are the same things she would be learning in the classroom. Educators are experts at their craft and are providing a top rated education. She felt the term "reopening" is irksome as we have been open the whole time. The district has been navigating very well although it has been difficult. With the proposed shift to four-hour days, we are asking educators to teach in a brand new way. The district had a phase in plan. That plan has been based on things getting better but they are actually getting worse.

Ms. Riccio commented that she was a public educator and realized this was difficult. She stated that she appreciates the complexity of the issue. She wants everyone to understand the levels. As a scientist and educator, she is encouraged to lead with science. She did not feel that the Board should be using the CALI as the indicator for re-opening schools. Almost 65% of America is ready to return to in-person instruction up to K-12. The district is looking towards data that is out of date. There is a lot of data that shows that adequate masking does prevent transmission. She asked the Board to go with the latest data.

Ms. Covo has two students. She feels the teachers are doing a wonderful job with her kids. She wanted to know why the district is using Yellow as a metric. Wanted to know if there could be an interim step. In addition, is there a plan already in place once we hit yellow? Can we immediately move forward or are there still plans that need to be done?

Gisella thanked all of the staff and Principals. She commented on the tone of the meeting. Parents are just advocating for their children. She asked why the Multi-purpose room is not being used for classrooms. The current situation is hard. She hoped that we move forward. She thank staff for all their hard work. Parents just want the best for students. It is not "us versus you". Knows the district wants that as well.

Ms. Stern commented that the district keeps sending emails and parents get no response, or canned responses. She wants the district to get a plan in place, and feels the district sent out a proposal not a plan. She asked the district to put up guidelines. The District should be surveying now, and get the classes sorted out. She did not feel there is a need for re-opening committees. The last time the committee met was in November, and because it was demanded, not offered. She stated that if the four hours are anything other than core, than the district would have another riot on their hands. She is sick and tired of reading emails. Students are not getting four hours. She stated she would not stay civil.

Ms. Lu stated how disappointing it was to receive another email with an unachievable goal. It started with the vaccine, then switched to tying to an index that includes nursing home numbers. She felt we should not be relying on CALI index. Kids are safer in the classroom. She stated that bringing students back in more would actually bring the infection rates down, as they would have other things to do. She stated she is a teacher and works four full days a week as a Speech therapist. She could not imagine only working with students over a computer. We are asking teachers to go back to the traditional way of teaching. Not asking them to relearn anything. She wants to go back to in-class teaching. She wanted more specific answers. Felt the information provided was ambiguous. By the time the goals are reached, it will be 2022.

Mr. Pais stated that the administration must refine their approach when specific policies do not work. Parents are not made aware of why we are not moving forward. Why are we not basing the decisions on specific cases in Park Ridge? Why are other schools able to move to Phase 2?

Ms. Sachs stated that her son's teacher is out on maternity leave. So far, there has been a student aide and substitute. She has received no response on when a replacement teacher will start.

Ms. O'Reilly thanked everyone. She knows that this has been difficult for everyone. The district has three big campuses. She wanted to know how we do not have enough room to socially distance. The district needs to find a solution. She wished everyone to stay safe.

Ms. Giovanni reiterated previous comments about substitutes. She has a child at West Ridge. It is not easy and she appreciates the teachers. The classroom teacher is out, and there is still no replacement. There has been no communication from the school. This is the 4th time since school started that her child has had a substitute. Students are trying their best, but she wants answers on where they are going to be. She feels her child is already falling behind. She wanted to know why we did not do things a different way to ensure the safety of students. What else do teachers need to learn? She appreciated teachers and staff but parents need to protect their students.

Kelly commented about a parent/teacher issue. Teachers are doing best they can with what they have. She is asking for the Board and Dr. Gamper to make the decision to open the school. Since we cannot get answers, she wants the CALI metric drop. At the last meeting, the vaccine was added to moving forward. She wanted to know if that was coming out because it is impossible to achieve. She also asked if plexi-glass was getting put in, and will we start right away.

Mr. Balderama has a child at East Brook. He wanted the Board to know that parents are willing to help the Board get to their goal. He stated that if the needed volunteers to help install plexi-glass, to ask the parents. He also wanted to know if it was possible to find out what Park Ridge received from a federal perspective.

Ms. Giordano thanked the Board and teachers. Everyone is working extra hard and she appreciates their efforts. Many school districts (i.e. Ridgefield Park) are in from 8:30 to 12:30. Emerson is in from 8:45 to 12:15. Washington Township is in from 8:50 – 12:50. This shows that more hours are being done and can be done. When we get to yellow, can we add more hours? She asked why the district can't buy pods and put the furniture in pods so the district can utilize the multi-purpose rooms. She asked the district to look and see where students are with curriculum.

Ms. Markman asked the Board to look at the real data. No one is paying attention to it. She works in medicine and Duke published a study that showed zero transmission of student to teacher. She feels the current situation is infuriating. She is speaking up on behalf of the kids. She feels students should be back in school for the entire day. She wanted to know what the bonus of \$7K to Dr. Gamper was for, and questioned the appropriateness of the goal statement on homework. She mentioned a growing effort to recall or take legal action.

Ms. Burdette mentioned that she had children at West Ridge. She stated that she never questioned the quality of the teaching, just the length. Some kids may be doing fine, many are not. Her kids hate school and do not want to go but love their teachers. Parents are frustrated that students in other districts are getting more opportunities. Two and a half hours not enough. The district is not meeting the four hour guideline. Most parents are not teachers and are struggling. The Board and Superintendent need to take this into consideration.

Ms. Weiss thanked the Board and Teachers. She asked the Board to consider not waiting until the CALI report goes to Yellow. New York is re-opening movie theatres, and the Giants are bringing back fans. She feels schools are safe. It will send a strong message to students that things are getting better. She thanked the Kindergarten teachers for their hard work.

Ms. Boyle mentioned that she has three daughters at East Brook and that she is a Teacher. She feels the Yellow indicator is off. Franklin Lakes has been in school since the middle of September for four hours. Each elementary student goes from 9:20 am to 1:20 pm. This shows it can be done. As a teacher, she sees students are struggling. Unfortunately, they are struggling due to inconsistency. Two and a half hours of instruction is a challenge to cover content. Project based learning is out the window. She sees the light diminishing from kid's eyes. She would like to see more thought and planning go into a longer school day for kids.

Ms. Friedlander commented on teachers changing routine. She is a physical therapist and is constantly changing routine. Each time she does, it feels like a new school year and can cause a lot of stress, which slows you down. She wishes kids could go back to how things were, but thinking that could happen tomorrow is unrealistic. She did get a vaccine as a health care provider and it made her feel more relaxed. She now feels like a different person. She wishes that for our teachers. To feel that relief that you will not bring this virus home to your family. People have to live with this fear and teachers are living with it. She feels we need to think of the community, and teachers are part of that community. It is important to lift each other up so that the teachers can continue to support kids.

Ms. DellaVolpe expressed disappointment that she cannot get questions answered directly. She stated that she has been asking and is unable to get them. All she gets are canned responses. She feels the district needs to step up and respond. She stated that a Yellow CALI index is another goal that is unmeasurable. Community spread is not a good measure. She commented that teachers are already in school for four hours. They are just asking for students to be there for that length as well. She expressed fear for her kids. They are not getting four hours of instruction. She is confused as to where the district is getting that number. The way the plan has been presented, it appears the district will not start planning to open longer until we hit yellow. If that is the case, then we will be done for the school year.

Ms. Svensson added to the sentiment of social loss. She loves her child's teacher but she has had to pay for supplemental education services because his needs are not being met in school. She questioned whether students were getting differentiated education in reading/math. She also asked about whether students are going to get enrichment. She feels her son is suffering. Everyone is making sacrifices. Her husband goes to work at a hospital every day.

Mr. Brown thanked the teachers for their efforts. He has a child at East Brook. He believes it is time to get students in for 4 hours of teaching. With regards to the vaccination, he felt that this is an issue with the union and should not be put upon Park Ridge parents. He would love to see teachers get vaccinated but the Governor has not included them. That should be a State level issue. The area has been in Yellow and Green and none of these conversations were being had. He does think it is time to think about students. He knows what happens to elementary students who do not read at the right level. It is a disaster. We are short of where we need to be with elementary kids. They are getting the short end of the stick. He feels everyone is on the same team and we need to figure this out together. He wants to see elementary students go immediately to four hours of instruction. If his child can't read at a third grade level, it will be a problem.

Mr. Cochrane stated that he has children in both elementary school and Middle school. He commented that there are hundreds of people attending tonight and this is a tight knit and frustrated community. There is not a lot of understanding going on. He mentioned that there is a strong teachers union. He felt parents are not getting questions answered. He referenced South Carolina and Florida, saying they had the same CALI numbers but did not determine opening based on getting the vaccination. They made it work and those kids are doing OK. Parochial schools are open and seeing no spikes. Only recently, has there been any activity by the Board. He is concerned about what is going to happen in the coming months, next year, etc. There is a lack of a definitive timeline. He mentioned that he appreciates the teachers, and does not want to put them or kids in jeopardy. He wants to know what is happening and when it will happen. Kids are getting hurt.

Ms. Aday commented that she drove past the Garden State plaza and it was packed. Her child goes to gymnastics. Her husband coaches indoor basketball. The school she works for moved to four hours of instruction. They are using the library, gym, and steam labs. They moved out tables and put in dividers, put Smart boards on wheels. While it is not ideal, she feels getting more hours in person is worth the compromise. She was originally hesitant of the change but now feels the schedule is better. She stated that she is no longer rushing to get through curriculum and students can socialize more. They are not as rushed. She teaches Kindergarten and feels safe. The transition only took three weeks. She feels the district needs to make concrete plans, train teachers and have it ready once it turns to yellow.

Mr. Friedlander commented that he cannot imagine what teachers are going through and how stressed out they are. He would like to know if there is a way to support the teachers. He suggested speaking to the Mayor and State Officials to get them vaccinated as soon as possible. They should not have to wait. They put themselves on the line every day and always cared about children. He encouraged the Board to speak to local representative to get teachers vaccinated so they can feel safe teaching children.

Ms. DeMar introduced herself as the PREA president, parent and resident of Park Ridge. She thanked the parents for the outpouring of support. She is thankful for the heartfelt appreciation. She stated that she hopes it is not a parent teacher/parent issue. When she reads comments that Park Ridge should be embarrassed about their education it is heartbreaking. She is proud that teachers and staff opened doors in September with in-person learning. There are still over 200 schools in New Jersey that have not opened. We are in the classroom, working full days. Already working 10 minutes past their contracted day. She is proud of what they have accomplished. She feels students are learning and they are receiving more in person instructional time. She is also proud of their alliance with Bergen Mental Health care. The teachers are working full time. They are in and not working from home. The country is still in a global pandemic.

The situation is not ideal but they have been able to keep school open even with setbacks. They are following CDC guidelines and remain committed to providing education to students.

Ms. Mayo commented that she is confused about statements. Teachers say they are working a full day but students are not getting the full four hours of instruction. If a child logs on too early (i.e. 8:40 am) they are reprimanded. Social development is such a large part of the school year for her daughter. She is confused as to what she sees on a day-to-day basis from Kindergarten. She is confused about the facts being presented. Parents are asking for one four-hour session. Kids should see the same teachers in the morning and afternoon. The people most at risk are the students, not the teachers. She hopes the Board takes into account all that has been said. She said she has wanted to stand outside Dr. Gamper's office and picket until changes are made for her child. She feels teachers should leave if they do not feel comfortable.

XV. Board Comments – New/Unfinished Business

Mr. Bradler thanked everyone for their comments. He knows people are very passionate. He introduced Mr. Garcia from the Board attorney's office. He asked him to comment on safety issues.

Mr. Garcia spoke about the Restart Act. Governor Murphy's Restart and Recovery sets forth health and safety guidelines that have to be met. The bare minimal requirement requires 6 ft. where practical or modifications like barriers. These are not the only factors. There are also CDC and DOH guidelines. That is where CALI ratings come into play. He stated that all these factors need to be considered. Areas such as ventilation, staffing issues, staff size, school size etc. The district has a plan that meets the minimum requirement for restart and recovery. He spoke about the CALI rating. He mentioned that the plan will continue to change. The district will evaluate whether they need to stay with Yellow as a guideline. As of now, it is a solid plan.

Mr. Garcia commented that the role of the Board is to listen to the Community and to the plans of the professionals. The Board should be engaged and decide on plans that are presented to you.

Dr. Gamper mentioned that they have already started the planning for the next phase. They are working on sample schedules. There will be a re-opening committee meeting next week. The district is not waiting to get to yellow to plan. They are also working on plans for the High School. Mr. Lederman is aware that this will shift to him. They are moving forward to getting more time in at the High School. It will not include lunch. With regard to questions on IEP's, he reminded parents that they need to speak to case managers or the school principal. With regards to comments on leave replacement teachers, he is speaking with the building Principal. He stated that vaccinations are now off the table. The State is moving too slow. Additionally, the weather has been a problem. All of the snow decisions are made in conjunction with the rest of Region 2. If the weather warranted closing, the compromise was to revert to an early dismissal schedule. So far there have been four cases where we went with early dismissal for virtual. Next year, we will be going back to snow days.

Ms. Wagner stated there were many questions that were asked tonight. There are a lot of parties that need to be consulted. Ms. Wagner felt that as a liaison, she should reiterate some of the questions asked.

Will Before and after care be offered? Mr. Wright responded that EXTRAS was originally offered but cancelled due to a lack of participation. He felt that EXTRAS could be re-offered especially since the four-hour schedule would make it easier to accommodate.

Ms. Wagner asked what a four hour day would look like.

Dr. Gamper responded that it would look like our current early dismissal schedule except condensed. He pointed out that special areas would be part of the four hours. He did not have information at this time on what the virtual hours would look like.

Ms. Wagner asked when they would know about the HS.

Dr. Gamper responded that the metric used would be when we can we eat in the building with masks off and maintain social distancing. Mr. Lederman is currently looking into this to see how to increase in-person instruction.

Ms. Wagner indicated that she would like to see how many students the cafeteria holds and what would be required to make that shift.

Dr. Gamper said he will work on getting that information.

Mr. Triano stated that he is a father to a Kindergartner. When he asks his daughter the worst part of her day, she says when she it is time to leave school. Kids want more time in school. He stated that the Board does hear the parents and that emails do not go on deaf ears. These are very difficult times and we need strong leadership. The Board needs to increase transparency and keep dialogue open. There are a lot of moving parts. He would like to see four hours in mostly core studies. There is a real concern that students are losing those hours and he would like to see an increase to that time.

Ms. Claire thanked Dr. Gamper and fellow board members. She wanted everyone to know that the Board does care about their kids. There are a lot of variables but Board members and administration met all weekend to put this plan together. The Board is working hard to get schools open.

Mr. Pierotti thanked the parents who have been reaching out to him. He wanted them to know that he does read the emails. He thanked the teachers and said this was never about teachers not doing their job. It is about getting more instructional hours in a day. He said he also had some questions on the re-opening email and asked Dr. Gamper several questions.

Mr. Pierotti asked what will be the time of a four hour day?

Dr. Gamper indicated that he did not have an exact time yet. It will be similar to an early dismissal. The committee still needs to meet and discuss this. It will be similar to what has been done in the past.

Mr. Pierotti asked when the second survey is coming.

Dr. Gamper stated that they need to know who will be in-person and who will be virtual. The survey may go out as early as next week, maybe in two.

Mr. Pierotti wanted to know when there would be follow up communication.

Dr. Gamper stated that there would be an update sent out sometime next week. The CALI report gets updated every week.

Ms. Agoos commented that many parents brought up mental health support. This was a critical issue before the pandemic. Professionals in the High School are excellent and we need make sure that students receive the support they need. It is important to support our kids. She told the public that their emails are not being ignored.

Dr. Gamper stated that the district has a full complement of school psychologists and Mr. Yeager (SAC). We contract with Bergen Health for two counselors. We have a third counselor just for the elementary schools. They work with students both in the building and virtually. In summary, there are three therapeutic counselors. If anyone has concerns, they can reach out to the counselors or Principals.

Ms. Sum stated that just because there is no email response does not mean that they are being ignored. The Board is working on things behind the scenes. There is a lot going on. As a student, she found it inspiring to see parents advocate for students. Moving forward, there will be increased communication from the Board, especially to the community. She asked Dr. Gamper, regarding mental health issues... how are students being encouraged to reach out to the support systems.

Dr. Gamper responded that most of the contact comes directly from the student to the guidance counselor or Mr. Yeager. They then direct them to the appropriate available person.

Mr. Bradler stated that when we started out, the intention was to improve communications. As they received emails expressing dissatisfaction, they tried to pivot. Board members are doing the best they can. They are receiving texts, calls and emails. Response to any individual must be approved by the full board per their attorney's advice. They felt the best approach was to do one letter to respond as a whole. They want to be forthcoming and transparent. They are trying to do that. By next year, he hopes to have that in place. He mentioned that he has spoken to Dr. Gamper and Board members more than his own family over the past few weeks. He asked the community to bear with them.

Ms. Wagner congratulated Dave as being the President under difficult circumstances. Also want to reiterate that the Board takes this seriously. She welcomed the three new Board members and commented that this was an interesting way to start. Mr. Bradler mentioned that we are a young Board. We are still learning. They want to make sure they are serving the community in the best way possible. It is a very challenging time. They are all on the Board because they are passionate and hope to serve the community. She shared the concerns of parents to have specials continue in a virtual way.

Dr. Gamper responded that they will discuss it and see if it is feasible.

Mr. Bradler stated that he enjoys being home for specials. He can assist and join in. He feels it is rewarding for students in the afternoon. He understands it is a juggle. He trusts that the team will find the best remedy possible.

Ms. Agoos asked if Dr. Bernardo could meet with the full Board.

Dr. Gamper said it would need to be a special meeting. It is something we could plan for the future.

Ms. Agoos commented that sooner would be better.

XVI. Adjournment - 9:45 PM

M: AW S: DC
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB
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Robert Wright
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary

RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSENT AGENDA (XIII)

EDUCATION RESOLUTIONS

Be it resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary that the following actions be taken:

E1. The Park Ridge Board of Education accepts the suspension, truancy and HIB reports from the Superintendent for the month of January with no in-school suspension, and no truanancies to report.

M: S:
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB

E2. The Park Ridge Board of Education reviews and approves the submission of the January 2021 SSDS, (Student Safety Data System) which summarizes the incidents of violence; vandalism; harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB); weapons offenses; substance offenses; and any other incident leading to student removal from school; and HIB trainings and programs for the Park Ridge School District, East Brook, West Ridge and the High School for the time period of September 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

M: S:
NT JP NA LS DC AW DB

E3. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the following outside agency for services for the 2020/21 school year or as indicated:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERVICE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>RATE</u>
Peace & Plenty	Health & Wellness Webinar	2/25/2021	\$350.00
Peace & Plenty	Health & Wellness Webinar	3/11/2021	\$350.00
Peace & Plenty	Health & Wellness Webinar	3/25/2021	\$350.00
Peace & Plenty	Health & Wellness Webinar	4/1/2021	\$350.00

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Ms. Agoos asked how the Peace and Plenty company was chosen. What amount of time will the rate cover? How will the program work?

Dr. Gamper responded that it will be a 45-minute webinar and will be voluntary for staff members.

Ms. Agoos asked how did we find the vendor.

Dr. Gamper responded that the recommendation came from the Department of Special Services.

Ms. Wagner expressed concern about finding information on the vendor. She felt if we are going to provide a service, we should be sure we are getting the best service provider.

Mr. Pierotti asked what is in the webinar.

Dr. Gamper responded that they would go over different health and wellness techniques. For example, setting reasonable expectations for yourself, talking about how you are feeling, setting boundaries and reaching out for assistance. They will also talk about self-care, eating healthy food and watching for signs of burnout.

Ms. Agoos thought the amount charged seemed expensive and wanted to know how it matches up with other providers.

Ms. Wagner asked if other vendors were considered for this contract

Dr. Gamper responded that he did not know.

Mr. Pierotti commented that he did not remember hearing about this.

Ms. Wagner commented that she is open to seeing a BIO or credentials but is not comfortable voting on this now.

EDUCATION DISCUSSION

- A. Student Safety Data System (SSDS)

FINANCE RESOLUTIONS

Be it resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary that the following actions be taken:

F1. Certification Resolution: The Park Ridge Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13 (e), certifies that the Board Secretary's January 2021 monthly financial report (appropriations section) did not reflect an over-expenditure in any of the major accounts or funds, has not been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6:20 – 2.13(b), and based on the advice of the district officials, we have no reason to doubt that the district has sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. The Park Ridge Board of Education also certifies that the financial records are in compliance with Park Ridge Policy numbers 0171, 1320, 4413 and 6510. ***"F1"***

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F2. The Park Ridge Board of Education accepts the Cafeteria Report for the month January.

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F3. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the Check Journal (List of Bills) containing Check #45046 - 45152 in the total amount of \$2,867,267.20 and EFTs using ACH technology #L48971-L49079 in the amount of \$21,292.97. ***"F3"***

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F4. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the payment of Athletic Vouchers #12153 - 12156 in the total amount of \$320.00. ***"F4"***

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F5. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the Varsity Athletic Club Voucher # N/A in the total amount of \$N/A. ***"F5"***

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F6. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the Unemployment Compensation Vouchers # _____ N/A _____ in the total amount of \$ _____ N/A _____.

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F7. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the January 2021 “Report of the Secretary” and the “Report of the Treasurer” to the Board of Education. **“F7”**

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F8. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the following 2020/21 General Fund Transfers for the month of January 2021 in the amount indicated per Appendix A. **“F8”**

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F1.-F8– Backup attached

F9. The Park Ridge Board of Education accepts the following scholarship donation to be used during the 2020/21 school year:

<u>DONOR</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>TYPE OF DONATION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Park Ridge Owl Boosters	Gary Mioli Scholarship	Monetary	\$2,000.00

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F10. WHEREAS, the Park Ridge Board of Education recognizes that the actual legal costs for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year exceeded 130% of the Statewide per pupil average and

WHEREAS, the Park Ridge Board of Education has undertaken steps to reduce these costs by restricting access to the Board Attorney to only authorized personnel and having the Superintendent and Business Administrator review every legal bill before payment and

WHEREAS, the Park Ridge Board of Education has determined that implementation of further procedures outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2(a)(3) beyond the aforementioned procedures already implemented would not significantly reduce legal costs, as evidenced by the fact that the excess legal costs incurred are the result of a litigation, grievances, protracted negotiations, and/or due process hearings initiated against the District, which the District has been compelled to defend and over which the District has no control;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Park Ridge Board of Education hereby accepts the 2019-20 legal costs as meeting the criteria for controlling legal costs and

BE IT FURTHER Resolved that the Board will look for more ways to reduce these costs should the opportunity present itself.

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F11. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the reimbursement to Amaurys Garcia, under the Local 68 contract, for the following approved courses and amounts:

<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Energy Management	Rutgers University	\$205.00
Structural and Mechanical Systems	Rutgers University	\$483.00

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F12. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the following tuition rates for the 2021/22 school year:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Integrated Pre-school (Reg. Ed.)	\$ 3,100

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FINANCE DISCUSSION

A. 2021-2022 Budget discussion

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS RESOLUTIONS

Be it resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary that the following actions be taken:

BG1. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the following payments to Eastern DataComm for the following Project: ***"BG1"***

INVOICE NO.	PROJECT NAME	AMOUNT
159312	EB LENS3	\$59,807.88
159180	WR LENS3	\$16,980.88
158317	HS LENS3	\$6,720.00
158916	HS LENS3	\$25,141.88

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BG2. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the Use of the Building Facilities Application by TGA Sports, for use of the High School tennis courts, as per Board Policy #7510 "Use of School Facilities," from April 19 - April 23, 2021, as attached. ***"BG2"***

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BG3. WHEAREAS, the Park Ridge Board of Education is desirous of repairing dugouts in the community as a joint project with the Borough and the Park Ridge Athletic Association and;

WHEREAS, the Borough has agreed to hire the contractor and oversee the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Park Ridge Board of Education hereby approves an inter-local agreement with the Borough for the renovation of dugouts with the Board's share being \$7,333.33. ***"BG3"***

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BG4. RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Park Ridge Board of Education, in the County of Bergen, New Jersey authorizes Parette Somjen Architects to submit all necessary plans and paperwork to the Department of Education concerning the “Ceiling Replacement at East Brook and West Ridge Elementary Schools” to serve as an application to the office of School Facilities and an amendment to the District’s Long Range Facility Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this project shall be a “Capital Reserve” project and the Board of Education is NOT seeking State funding but will fund the Project through the District’s Reserve Account.

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BG5. RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Park Ridge Board of Education, in the County of Bergen, New Jersey authorizes Parette Somjen Architects to submit all necessary plans and paperwork to the Department of Education concerning the “Ceiling Replacement at Park Ridge High School” to serve as an application to the office of School Facilities and an amendment to the District’s Long Range Facility Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this project shall be a “Capital Reserve” project and the Board of Education is NOT seeking State funding but will fund the Project through the District’s Reserve Account.

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BG6. RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Park Ridge Board of Education, in the County of Bergen, New Jersey authorizes Parette Somjen Architects to submit all necessary plans and paperwork to the Department of Education concerning the “Restroom Renovations at Park Ridge High School” to serve as an application to the office of School Facilities and an amendment to the District’s Long Range Facility Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this project shall be a “Capital Reserve” project and the Board of Education is NOT seeking State funding but will fund the Project through the District’s Reserve Account.

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PERSONNEL RESOLUTIONS

Be it resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with the Business Administrator/Board Secretary that the following actions be taken:

- P1. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the appointment of the following substitutes for the 2020/21 school year:

Teachers

Emilie Barros

Karlie Fleming*

Andrew Keenan*

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**Contingent upon completion of state-mandated paperwork.*

- P2. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the reimbursement of anticipated conference/seminar expenses for the following staff members for the 2020/21 school year:

APPROVE:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REASON/LOCATION FOR CONFERENCE/SEMINAR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED</u>
Desiree Misciagna	NJTESOL/NJBE (Virtual)	5/25 – 5/27/2021	\$299.00
Lisa Bernardo	NJTESOL/NJBE (Virtual)	5/25 – 5/27/2021	\$299.00

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- P3. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves a Leave-of-Absence for Paul Neralich (District Technology) as follows:

- A Federal Family Medical Leave-of-Absence effective February 4, 2021 through February 12, 2021, without pay but with benefits.
- A Federal Family Medical Leave-of-Absence effective February 18, 2021 through February 22, 2021, without pay but with benefits.

The dates listed above are based on current attendance and are subject to change.

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P4. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves Dr. Robert Gamper as the school district liaison to law enforcement authorities, to act as the primary contact person between the school district and the law enforcement authorities.

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P5. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the appointment of Nicole Ortiz, as Guidance Secretary at Park Ridge High School, on Step 2 of the Secretarial Guide, at an annual salary of \$50,556.00, effective March 1, 2021, prorated.

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P6. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves the appointment of Emilie Barros as East Brook maternity leave replacement teacher, from 3/01/21 – 6/23/21, on Step 1 of the MA Guide, at an annual salary of \$61,604.00, prorated to her start date.

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P7. The Park Ridge Board of Education approves additional hours for the following staff members for the 2020/21 school year:

Staff Member	Hourly Rate	Total Hours	Time Period	Assignment
Jean Eramo	\$16.97	1 hour per day	2/12/2021-6/23/2021	Provide virtual support
Lyzette Napier	\$16.97	1 ¾ hours	1 session	Translation services
Francine Moran	\$19.19	1 hour per day	2/5/2021 – 6/23/2021	Student support
Kim Wagreich	\$75.93	9 hours	N/A	Student 2012 - 070 evaluation

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