

Transcript of MTPS BOE Meeting 9/19/23

0:39

foreign

4:09

okay

5:19

thank you

10:03

all right a little bit after seven o'clock so we'll get started

10:09

I'd like to call to order the regular meeting of the Morristown Township Board of Education meeting was called in

10:15

conformance with the open public meetings act with adequate notice as provided in the agenda may I please get

10:22

a moment of silence

10:30

please arise for the pledge

10:38

the United States

10:46

liberty and justice for all

10:54

Federal call please Mr Heiser Mrs arcara Burns

10:59

Mrs Fallas Macaluso here Dr Maya here Mrs Miller here Mrs Morano here miss

11:06

Romano Mr weeks president Mrs mccopless here Mr Villanueva here thank you

11:14

and may I please get a motion for the approval of the minutes for the August

11:19

22nd 2023 executive session in the August 22nd 2023 regular meeting

11:28

any comments or questions all in favor

11:35

any other abstentions great all right thank you

11:41

thanks everyone for being here either in person or on video it is uh our first

11:48

meeting with the school year actually underway with students in the building and uh of late it definitely feels like

11:55

fall certainly in the mornings um so I know we're only a couple of weeks in but summer seems at least to me like a

12:03

distant memory um just wanted to talk about uh two issues

12:09

that uh I've been asked about recently the first is the uh our efforts to hire

12:17

a permanent superintendent and um as as I think most people know here Mr

12:22

bollingdorf is we extended him last year to uh remain with us through the end of

12:28

this Academic Year which is June 30th of next year and so the board

12:35

is in the process of uh creating our plan uh to tackle the
12:42
recruitment process and um pull to post the opening of the
12:47
position for permanent superintendent and to begin um
12:53
in Earnest uh Gathering resumes and and interest from
12:59
from potential candidates now I don't have a specific timeline on when we will make that posting uh
available but
13:07
um we did just discuss it in executive and we are um concretely coming putting putting a
13:14
plan together so that uh we can have a permanent superintendent in place uh at
13:21
the time that Joe will sadly be departing so um I wanted to provide a brief update on
13:27
that point uh the second point that I have been getting some questions about uh recently
13:34
relate to the population growth in town um and specifically the the new housing
13:44
developments that are either underway or will soon be underway uh and the impact
13:51
that that I would say may but the impact that those developments will have on our
13:58
schools and we've talked about this in the past uh and and
14:04
some of you may know we have a committee of the board that is specifically looking at these issues and
so I but I
14:11
did want to provide sort of an update just because they have been getting some questions about so as we
have mentioned
14:18
we're looking at you know the potential uh if not certain and I'll say certain I
14:24
think it's fair to say there will certainly be population growth uh due to these these uh new housing
developments
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and specifically we expect that there will be an increase in students enrolled at the schools and so we're
examining
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um where we think those students may be and which which of these developments um we're trying to get
projections on
14:46
how many students will you know we could reasonably expect certainly not with pinpoint accuracy but a
reasonable
14:53
estimate of how many students could be coming uh from these these new housings
15:00
development um and James has been working at it for a long time
15:05
um and has been communicating actively with the township to to get their best
15:11
estimate of what they think uh could come to fruition in terms of
15:16
student population increases and so probably doesn't come as a surprise and

15:22

I think you know we would likely need to increase our space uh

15:28

uh in some form or fashion here in the district to accommodate what could be a significant population growth and so

15:36

um we're actively James again I say we but it's it's James and his team and the

15:41

administration um at all levels is actively looking um at what might make sense in terms of

15:49

expansion of our facilities um and so you know

15:54

I would expect that at some point in the relatively near future I don't know

16:00

exactly when but there probably will be a capital referendum seeking approval of uh expanding our

16:07

space in some fashion but we're certainly not in a position to to provide much detail yet on what that would look like but it is something that

16:15

I think it's important that the community is aware of so that's one piece um that we're looking at in terms of how

16:22

to address growth and you know we could build uh you know we could get approval to

16:28

build you know the Taj Mahal which would be an enormous amount of space and that's one part but we also need

16:35

Revenue to support these students and that's the other part

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um well certainly space would be helpful if not a necessity

16:46

we need Revenue to accompany these students that will be coming into our district

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and um I've spoken about this in the past certainly internally and and a few board

16:57

meetings but I do think it's important for the community to be aware

17:03

um of of the structure as we understand it of uh some of these new housing

17:10

projects and their um there's as we understand that they

17:16

are subject to a a pilot and that's an acronym for payment in lieu of taxes

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and essentially it's a it's a municipal tax abatement program that encourages developers to come to

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towns uh to develop and whether that's commercial developments residential developments it

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is it's a carrot in the form of uh Financial incentives

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for developers to to develop and generally and I'm no expert on this so

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please take this with the uh the understanding that that I'm not an expert

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um the way that these work is um rather than a developer paying real

17:59

estate tax to the township it will pay it will make a payment a

18:06

payment in lieu of taxes to the township typically at a much a greatly reduced

18:13

rate than what it would be if it had been paying market rate taxes um and so that's that's the incentive

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um now typically in my understanding is this is currently the case here

18:28

those payments that flow to the township do not flow to the school district

18:36

and so that's problematic for the schools because

18:42

typically your tax bill what you pay in property taxes about about 65 of it

18:48

comes to the schools so it's a significant portion of your property tax bill comes to us and

18:55

supports everything that we do here I won't say everything I think our budget last year was roughly 82 million dollars

19:03

a little over 70 million of that was generated by tax revenue so we rely heavily on taxes to keep our schools

19:11

running so under these pilot uh

19:16

strategies no tax dollars come to the schools

19:23

so if we have a large influx of students with no accompanying Revenue Source you

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can see the problem uh that there there could be and so what

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we uh we have engaged in conversations with

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representatives of the town and flagging this issue uh and spoken you know

19:50

generally about some of the arrangements at some of the locations and I can say we've come to learn that certainly at

19:57

least at the mall there's a pilot that will generate significant Revenue uh for

20:02

the township which is which is wonderful for the town um but it is important

20:09

that the school district in my opinion gets its fair share

20:14

of that Revenue um because if we don't and we have a big influx of students

20:22

um it's going to exert an enormous amount of pressure on our staff on our students if we don't

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have resources to support that um I can imagine class sizes going up

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rooms being very full and as I said even if we build a

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tremendous amount of space to accommodate more students if we don't have an accompanying Revenue

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source to pay people to staff that additional space the value of that additional space is

20:53

somewhat capped in my opinion so

20:58

um I just wanted to to raise this issue and

21:03

some Community awareness again this is a a an issue that I think that you know I

21:10

certainly want to hear what community members think about it I think it's brainer

21:16

um that we would want to to direct revenue from these pilot

21:22

um these pilot arrangements to the schools again as I said 65 percent of your taxes

21:28

come here seems to me that um if a developer that is bringing in a

21:34

significant number of new families uh is coming here that's a portion of those funds should be following those those

21:41

students as well so I say all that if you have any thoughts please

21:46

uh let me know and certainly be be vocal about it

21:52

um I think it's an important issue and I think it's important that sooner rather than later we understand uh what if

22:00

anything the school district will be getting so with that I'll pass it off to Mr

22:05

ballendorf thank you Mark here we go uh good

22:12

evening everybody welcome back hard to believe we're into week three already of the new school year counting uh counting

22:19

down the day September is a beautiful month after we got through the heat wave of the first week of September uh things

22:26

have cooled off uh rather nicely and I hope our buildings are are comfortable for our kids and for our staff I want to

22:33

personally thank uh start with the buildings and grounds crew and the work that they did over the course of the

22:38

summer to prepare our buildings to get things ready for the start of the school year it's it's a daunting task it goes

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on behind the scenes that folks don't uh get to witness and see but it's a

22:50

tremendous a lot amount of work and we appreciate and value the work that they do and thank them for it I also want to

22:58

thank all of our staff members our powers our bus drivers our teachers our supervisors and principals for the work

23:04

in advance of the school year and now that we're back here up and running the the uh the enthusiasm for which they do

23:11

their work each and every day in the and the difference they have to make in a life of their children in front of them

23:17

each day is profound and we appreciate the work and the effort that they do um

23:23

very excited about the implementation of the new slio program I do want to thank the municipality for partnering with the

23:31

district and making that possible it's been working out great the feedback has been very positive uh just the fact

23:38

alone that we're having a presence uh helping to control traffic every single morning at each of our schools and in

23:45

the afternoon upon departure has to be a source of great comfort for our families it's been a noticeable difference in

23:52

arrival and dismissals and the work that goes on in between we're very very much grateful for that partnership and our

23:59

ability to uh to enhance what it is that we do here to help ensure the safety of our children and our staff each and

24:05

every day and to that end one of the things that uh was absent when I came

24:12

here to Morristown that I noticed is something that we really don't like to talk about uh and think about but we

24:18

live in in such a world that we're compelled to think about things and be prepared for all all possible scenarios

24:25

and one of those things was a large-scale reunification site in the event that we ever had to relocate staff

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and students particularly from the high school in the event of a of a significant emergency and I'm happy to

24:38

say that we are on the verge of entering a a shared partnership with a facility not far from here that would engage Us

24:46

in that reunification effort we're working with the local OEM the office of

24:51

emergency management in processing that and building out the logistics for it so

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I will certainly be pushing out information to the community as that continues to develop but we're we're

25:03

heading a very positive direction and I'm happy to report out on that too to all of you tonight

25:09

uh moving forward we have a uh presentation that I'm going to turn the

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microphone over the Dr Karen Benton who will present on state assessment data presentation

25:21

I want to do the kids first before we do that that's a great idea well welcome guys uh here to the board meeting

25:30

um and thank you for being here and taking on the responsibility of being our student Liaisons I always think you

25:35

guys are the highlight of the the evening but in in in recognition of the

25:41

fact that you have schoolwork and things that you need to do we'd like to try to get you out of here if you want to go sooner rather than later so we're going

25:47

to push you right up to the front of the line with your reports and I think we start off with our senior class representative

25:56

foreign

26:02

good evening board and parents uh welcome back to school everyone um if you've been a regular board attendee you'll know me my name is Jack

26:09

Britton I'm your senior class liaison and this is my fourth year in a row doing this uh it's been a long time I

26:14

started all the way back and we would do virtual meetings during October year so I've been here since then and obviously

26:20

I'm a senior now so senior year means big things it means applying to colleges and looking towards your life outside of

26:26

high school especially writing those college essays now I had a job over the summer and that's why I claim I couldn't

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get them done even though I probably only worked three days a week um so now I'm working on my college

26:37

essays I get them done during school anytime I have free periods I'm working on them or anytime at home and have

26:42

extra time I work on my college essays um it's not that bad but decisions have to be out by early November so it is

26:48

definitely crunch time for me and a lot of other seniors who are applying to colleges so those decisions and applications will be in soon

26:56

um so like the college application night that we just had our Morristown High School uh the school prepares us a lot

27:01

for colleges our counselors have been meeting with us they've seen us out of classes we've been getting our senior

27:06

meetings with them and plus the additional senior perks we get like driving to school and I leave school early at 1 10 so I get home at 1 15

27:13

every day which is a nice little break um additionally we just had our senior Sunrise the other week which was very

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fun I actually personally attended it was early in the morning on a Friday we had a ton of food a ton of drinks we

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even had a food truck there I personally got these new telecovered waffles which I thought were amazing I thought the

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food truck had excellent food I really enjoyed it there's additionally other school spirit activities coming up

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homecoming is coming around October 14th and spirit week and pep rally are going to be the week surrounding it which give

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the student body really a chance to exhibit school spirit and also as a member of AP Stat I'm taking that this

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year and we gave out a survey to the senior class of 2024 and asked for some Spirit Week idea themes and we're trying

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to see any responses we get back and it's really a way to include the larger student body in that and that concludes

28:00

my report I'll hand off to our junior class liaison

28:17

good evening this is Kyle summerson the board liaison for the class of 2025. uh

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this year is our classes junior year which is a stressful time for every student

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many of us are taking a lot of AP classes and have our schedules pulled to the brim a lot of us are experiencing

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work and greater numbers than we would ever have and the most difficult classes that we've ever had

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and so as September comes to an end a lot of our eyes are already on the PSATs

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in October if one does well on this test they can earn a National Merit Scholarship which is a very attractive

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thing to put on a college application more of us are already thinking about the saps although most universities have

29:00

gone test optional this is this highly important test it's still a central part of a decent application

29:08

many juniors are already studying for the next round of SATs starting early next month others are waiting for later

29:15

dates however starting with the first test in 2024 which is in March the SATs

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will be moving to a digital format which is a factor when people think of taking

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the SATs many have private tutors or go to test prep centers or even they just

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self-study with uh the near bottomless source of sat workbooks and online resources

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still we juniors are stressed out as we start the most rigorous and important year of

29:45

high school however overall it has been a good start to the year for our class and we all look

29:52

forward to all the fun events and perks of finally being upperclassmen thank you all for your time

30:13

good evening teachers parents and the Board of Education my name is Angela

30:18

bajati and I am excited to be one of the sophomore class Liaisons this year I want to begin by extending my sincere

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gratitude for allowing me to address the Board of Education today I'm here to share some news about the

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recent MHS club and activities Fair as well as provide an update on the start of our school year

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I would like to announce that our recent club and activities fair was an overwhelming success we saw an incredible turnout of students

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from all grade levels and it was heartwarming to witness the enthusiasm and engagement of our school community

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with over 30 clubs represented ranging from clubs dedicated to sports reading

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and writing scientists and World languages that bear truly showcased the diverse talents and interests of our

31:03

Morristown students the fact that so many students from different grade levels attended speaks

31:09

volumes about the sense of unity and inclusivity we Foster here at Morristown High School

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it's a testament to our commitment to providing a wide range of extracurricular opportunities from for

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our students to explore and grow Beyond academics we are grateful to have so many high

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school teachers who help us to pursue our passions thank you to all of our club advisors

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as for the start of a school year I would like to report that it has been exceptionally smooth and positive our

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dedicated teachers supportive parents and motivated students have all played integral roles in ensuring a successful

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beginnings this positive momentum sets the stage for a year filled with growth learning

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and achievement thank you all for your time

32:05

good evening good evening everyone my name is Lily

32:11

trakis and I'm the 9th grade student council of liaison thank you for having me at your meeting

32:16

the freshman class has been presented with many choices during our introduction to the high school we've

32:22

chosen which clubs to do which classes we want to take and even where to sit at lunch

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we've been tasked with choosing who we want to be as ninth graders this process can be daunting however

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having the freedom to make more choices is what high school is all about finding out who you are and what you

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want to do is a big part of the process additionally we've had lots of amazing teachers supervisors and adults to help

32:46

us along the way I think the abundance of choices is one of the most striking differences between

32:52

whams and the high school whams we were presented with a few clubs that we could join and a few different

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electives here at the high school we've been presented with a myriad of activities

33:03

having all these options is important because it isn't just about having something to do after school

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it's about connecting with the supportive group that shares your interest and is motivated to make positive changes

33:14

I've talked to a lot of my peers about the first few weeks of the high school and the general consensus is that though

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it has been a big adjustment it has been very positive people are bonding with their sports teams finding clubs that

33:25

they are passionate about and settling into classes that they find interesting it's been a great few weeks and we're on

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track for an amazing school year thank you

33:39

thank you very much that's you guys are really impressive you're real you're a real credit to our school system and to

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your parents and I mean I just couldn't even imagine if you're 14. wow just to

33:51

be able to present like that all of you well done so I'm going to give you an opportunity if you want to escape this is your chance if you want to stay you

33:59

can but if you want to uh get out you want to take a picture absolutely go

34:04

ahead

34:10

well done thanks guys

34:17

always my favorite part of the meeting they're so impressive you know it's not surprising you know

34:23

and obviously this first month we were ratcheting up with home and school council meetings I've attended some of

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them and I just very much always been impressed and continue to be so with the

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amount of community and parental support that exists in this in this uh School District it's it's really a big big part

34:41

of why uh it's such a successful district and and things go the way that they do parental involvement and

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Community involvement is very critical to the lifeblood of any District so for those of you doing that work out there

34:52

we thank you uh moving on to Dr Karen Benton who will lead us to a presentation on our state

34:58

assessment data the NJ GPA and the excess results Dr Ben

35:05

thank you good evening if I get closer uh tonight we will look

35:11

at our access in NJ GPA assessment results um this year we will split this into two

35:17

different board meetings so next month we will look at our last year's NJ SLA for grades three through nine

35:24

um and I will also highlight tonight some of the Department of Ed changes to our multilingual education as well as

35:32

our graduation requirements

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so one of the changes that has come from the Department of Ed is a change

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um in uh our nomenclature for referring to students um who are multilingual Learners

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previously we have used the term English language Learners which really focuses on students who are in the process of

35:57

learning English and while many of these students are immigrants the majority of the students are born within the U.S we

36:05

are switching to the use of the term multilingual learner um as students who are developing

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Proficiency in multiple languages their native language as well as English and

36:18

sometimes more than those two languages the state of New Jersey has transitioned

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from the term English language Learners to multilingual Learners to describe students in a more strength based terms

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um and I previously presented information about how our multilingual learner enrollment has changed but we've

36:40

taken a deeper look and gone back in in Black you can see the years uh the five

36:47

six years prior to the pandemic and then in 2019 we stayed flat but in the last

36:53

three years we've seen a pretty significant increase in our multi uh learner enrollment

37:01

um and you will uh in the agenda for today in the exhibits you will see our

37:06

2324 professional development plan and you will see that one of our district goals is focused around how we can best

37:13

support multilingual Learners and making sure that our teachers are well trained and have the and equipped to support the

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Learners in their process of acquiring language

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so one of the ways that we assess these students

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in terms of their progress and acquiring language but also diagnostically so we

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understand where they are in their language acquisition is the Wida access testing or just access that is

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administered annually to students um either we do that in the spring or as

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they move into the district and that test you can skip to the next

37:56

one yep um uh that test covers several domains

38:01

of language acquisition including oral language literacy and comprehension and
38:07
then those are broken down between listening speaking reading and writing
38:12
um to give an overall composite score and when a student reaches 4.5 or higher
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they are considered proficient and they are exited from the multilingual program however there is a
requirement to
38:25
continue to monitor their progress for the next two years to have an understanding of what additional
38:31
supports they will need even though they have exited the program
38:39
um and when we look at the scores we classify students um language acquisition as either entering
emerging
38:46
developing expanding bridging and reaching I won't read all of those things but our teachers are working
on
38:52
developing an understanding of how best to support students at each of these levels and we also take
into
38:58
consideration um how we offer the multilingual learner
39:04
support courses with our ESL teachers
39:10
so looking at our district scores you can see a comparison from 2022 scores to 2023 and we did
experience an increase
39:17
of about six percent um in our scores across the district
39:22
um this represented in 2023 70 students and in 2022 uh 58 total students
39:31
when we look at the breakdown of those uh scored categories
39:37
um and we look at our great bands K to 5 6 to 8 and 9 to 12. you can see how the
39:43
70 students this year fall into the different language acquisition categories
39:50
and so as we continue to focus on how best to support our multilingual uh
39:56
students with an understanding that the increased enrollment that our president
40:01
spoke about in his opening comments could also include additional multilingual Learners
40:08
um we are over the summer our multilingual supervisor and our
40:13
multilingual teachers wrote new curriculum across each grade band um our as I mentioned our district PD
40:20
plan includes a series on supporting multilingual learners for all teaching staff with and that is through a
40:25
partnership with Rowan University's Department of multilingual education
40:31
um and we are looking in terms of next steps to do uh in more intensive psyop training which is an
instructional model
40:37

specifically for teaching multilingual learners for select cohorts of teachers
40:43
um as well we were able to increase our MLL Staffing at WAMS from a half time to
40:48
a part-time position and we continue to use the title III funds dedicated for
40:53
multilingual education for after school tutoring go to the next one next we'll move on to
41:00
our graduation requirements um those of you who have heard this presentation in previous years know
that
41:07
over the past five years there has been a lot of changes and flux in what the
41:12
graduation assessment requirements specifically will be for students and we
41:17
had several years where students were not tested because of the pandemic and
41:23
these assessment requirements were waived however for the class of 2024 our
41:28
current seniors and Beyond there are now three uh Pathways everyone must sit for
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the New Jersey graduation proficiency assessment called the NJ GPA and if they score 725 or greater
that is
41:45
considered graduation ready and they have met their graduation requirement once they sit for the NJ
GPA if they do
41:54
not pass then there are two other Pathways that are available to them they can either meet the
designated cut score
42:01
on a substitute competency tests such as the PSAT and the s.a.t
42:06
um which that has been a pathway available for several years however over the last two years students
did not have
42:13
to first sit for the NJ GPA or previous the NJ SLA they now must sit for the
42:20
pathway one test the other pathway is to submit through the District of student
42:25
portfolio appeal so you can see for ELA and um I should
42:33
mention that the NJ GPA is given in 11th grade however the test is based in ela
42:39
on Ela 10 so English 10 standards and for math the test is based on Algebra 1
42:47
and geometry standards but they take the test as 11th graders in the spring of
42:53
their 11th grade year um and so this did come out rather small so I will tell you that we did the
42:59
two-year comparison 2022 scores were in blue and 2023 scores are in red and you
43:07
can see for ELA in the first bar that is our overall score
43:14
and I'm gonna go through and so our average score last year was a
43:21
758 in English and this year it was in 800. so we did see a significant

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Improvement within the district as well as both years performing well over the

43:32

725 cut score the next several bands are a disaggregated data for Latino students

43:39

American Indian Asian black and white and in each of those you can see that we

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did have at least an increase uh in scores over last year our last two

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categories are our special education students and our economically disadvantaged students and again you can

43:58

see an increase in 2023 scores over 2022 scores

44:04

um and I think that this is in large part due to a strong Focus within our

44:10

Ela department at the high school focusing on specifically the reading

44:16

informational text and several of the writing standards that we previously saw

44:22

coming out of the pandemic that students were you know had suffered an impact in

44:28

those not necessarily from our njsla data but from our own internal benchmarking data so there was a focus

44:34

in that and so we hope to see that that Trend will continue Dylan

44:40

um looking at our math scores we can see a slightly different uh Trend here

44:47

um where there was a in most categories either the same or a slight decrease in

44:54

the scores for math um in working with teachers and talking with our math supervisor it is important

45:02

to note that this year's senior class that took that are in red saw the

45:08

increase are the students who took Algebra 1 and geometry during the

45:13

pandemic so they had their ninth grade year interrupted when they were many of

45:18

them were taking algebra one and then the sophomore year when they would have

45:24

been many of these students would have been taking geometry they were during the hybrid learning years

45:30

so if you go to the next slide Dylan some of the interventions and supports that we're looking to implement this

45:37

year and moving forward is that um any student um and I should note in that previous

45:43

slide for math um the average score did still uh exceed the cut score required

45:50

for graduation proficiency however for those students that did not we had about

45:55

um you know uh less than 25 students this summer who were in you know the

46:01

situation where they had not passed and so we used our Title One funding to offer a summer program for all Rising

46:07

seniors who had not met the graduation requirement and this program included remediation instruction in algebra 10 or in

46:14

Algebra 1 and geometry depending on which they had not passed and students developed a student appeal portfolio

46:20

which was the third pathway this guarantees we will submit those portfolios uh usually in January and so

46:29

this you know ensures that they have a pathway to graduation but we also allowed students

46:35

to retake the NJ GPA during the summer Administration so they had two

46:40

opportunities during the summer program to meet their graduation requirement um Additionally the teachers in the 11th

46:48

grade math and English courses are going to be looking to incorporate both practice and Sample writing tasks in a

46:54

six to eight weeks prior to the spring Administration as well as looking for

46:59

more guidance from the state last year the English teachers were able to use

47:05

the framework for text complexity as well as sample writing tests that were provided by the state and we're looking

47:11

for similar resources to come out of the state this year in math

47:17

any questions from the board okay thank you

47:35

well thank thank you Karen for that presentation our kids are in good hands

47:40

um a special presentation and a recognition on the partisan people I probably should have put this up first

47:45

because for helping us out and doing great work we may just sit through that and I apologize we could have done this

47:52

a little bit sooner but is um is uh John Costello and Chris Giles here

47:59

Gillies I'm sorry Chris come on up

48:05

so Chris is representing the Morristown Rotary Club and uh we want to acknowledge and thank him and I think we

48:12

have something for you but we'll get it to you um for their effort in putting together 118 backpacks for our kids uh this uh

48:21

beginning of this school year um I am Marie appellucci was very much involved in the district and helping to

48:26

put these things together things together so that we could uh equip our kids appropriately for the start of the

48:31

school year so we want to thank you on behalf of the school board and the district and thank thank you for rotary's commitment to our kids it means

48:39

a whole heck of a lot thank you

48:48

thank you and do we also have Mike iacquinto here

48:53

he's not here but we also want to extend a thank you to Edward Jones and Company who also donated quite a few backpacks

49:00

to our school district this year so thank you for uh for all of your continued support of our kids and our

49:05

district thank you along with the show

49:27

just by way of mentioning in the exhibits you'll see both a mentoring plan and a professional development plan

49:32

that the state requires as part of the agenda it basically is with regards to our professional development of our

49:40

teaching staff and mentoring of our new staff members that are new to the

49:45

teaching profession so you can find them listed on the exhibit section if you're interested in seeing more about those

49:51

plans and with that I turn it over to Mark great thank you Mr ballendorf we will move on

49:58

to the board committee reports section of the agenda first on the list is the ad hoc committee on Housing Development

50:05

that I am the chair of and I think I covered a lot of material in my opening

50:11

comments so I won't um spend a lot of time here I'll just note we've got a meeting scheduled I

50:17

think next week or the week after um to talk further about the issues that

50:22

I had mentioned uh earlier so any comments or questions on anything

50:27

all right next up is Communications Jill

50:33

so with the communications committee met this morning for its first meeting of

50:38

the 2023-24 school year it was Brook my hot Mark Villanueva Melissa Burns myself

50:44

and also Joe bolendorf and Dave Tate um given it was our kickoff meeting of

50:49

the year we really reflected on the progress that's been made over the past year under Joe's leadership to enhance

50:56

Communications in further and some of our district goal to engage in more strategic Communications to increase

51:03

awareness about District initiatives with a focus on student achievements

51:08

um notably the committee got a great update from Joe on the dedicated part-time stipended PR Communications

51:16

resource that the board approved at our August meeting Karen Mead has moved into

51:21

that role and is a central office point of contact for communications to date

51:27

you know and getting in the role short while but she's been primarily focused on monitoring the six School website

51:33

sites updating the district website to be consistent and really starting to leverage social media more

51:39

so we thought well so much progress has been made and we're really proud of that we recognize the opportunity now that we

51:46

have this dedicated resource to further enhance communication efforts we talked about a number of potential objectives

51:53

that we'd still like to see prioritized enhancing the district website making it more user-friendly mobile friendly

52:01

establishing a public relations plan and even further increasing our social media

52:06

presence so those are all very operational tactics in furtherance of

52:12

our strategic goal so to that end we've tasked Dave Tate to work with Central

52:18

Administration to develop the objectives action steps and timelines for the

52:23

communications active action plan which will be you know led by Karen in this

52:28

role but we will also expect some creative resources we talked about some

52:33

ideas at the last committee perhaps leveraging student ambassadors or clubs to help pull through

52:39

some more modern and productive Progressive Communications tactics so

52:45

we're looking forward to hear back from Dave on what he and Central admin pull together at our next meeting

52:52

anything questions did I miss anything Mark Melissa

52:58

thank you very much Jill uh curriculum committee Lauren

53:03

sure um we met September 14th and attendance was uh Joe Bolender Dr Benton Mick weeks

53:10

Danielle Miller Mccopless and myself um there was a robust discussion about

53:16

the district setting up a uh guideline or statement to present regarding the

53:25

issue the usage of AI and so the board members we gave

53:32

feedback um at this point this would be a non-action-oriented

53:39

um item it was really just a discussion in curriculum um with you know providing

53:46

feedback on the statement for the guidelines um this initial draft was created after a

53:56

summer of discussions between teachers and admin regarding the emerging AI issue and discussion about what would be

54:02

best practices within the district um kind of piggybacking on that we took

54:08

a look at the issue with the policy of plagiarism right now policy is really

54:14

only addressed in the code of conduct and so on the agenda for next month

54:19

would be to look at preliminary policy on plagiarism and then recommending uh

54:26

moving that forward to policy committee once we're done discussing it with the

54:32

implications with AI as well we then discussed um additional the need for additional

54:39

curriculum writing you'll see that on the agenda tonight for approval of curriculum writing we needed this in

54:45

part to be compliant with Cusack compliance um and so there was that request

54:52

um that we discussed we also took a look at the World Language issue with American sign language that was updated

54:58

on how we were addressing the need to continue with that program and the desire by the board to support that

55:05

program as well um we also then as Dr Benton just presented took a really glossary look at

55:12

the 2022-2023 state assessment results and again kind of a discussion of moving

55:18

forward how we continue to support our students and Learners in the best way possible

55:23

um with all those robust uh discussions uh tabled for next month which we did

55:29

not get to was a discussion of safety and inclusion of diverse student subgroups so that will be on the agenda

55:34

for September October and also continued reconsideration of instructional resource and Library materials

55:42

any questions

55:47

all right thank you very much Lauren finance and operations Mick

55:54

please

56:01

hey thank you Mr Villanueva so finance and operations committee met September

56:06

12th uh last Tuesday and attendance in addition to myself uh

56:12

Cheryl mccopless Daniel Miller Claudia Moreno Joe ballendorf James Heiser Jeff Perry Carol Butler and Karen Benning I

56:19

think I remember that correctly at least that's what I wrote down so we had many items uh and we did not

56:27

get through everything but we had a good discussion about all of it we started off talking about overnight

trip

56:33

requests those were back in Earnest especially now that things are operating fairly normally so the high school

56:39

administration submitted several the first being a model Congress there

56:45

were four requests actually in multiple places I think it was Yale Harvard

56:50

Princeton and William and Mary cool I did that without even writing it

56:56

down um so the thing is that's pretty ambitious they may only do about three of those so we we talked

57:04

about the merits of all of those the theater uh the theater department is actually putting together a trip to go

57:11

to Disneyland out in California so that is a unique opportunity which

57:19

they are working with students now potentially allowing families to join within certain parameters so that the

57:26

students and the families the activities for the students are separate from the families but it would all be worked out

57:31

similar to how we've had families accompany certain students on the Disney World trip in the past or Disney yeah

57:37

Disney World trip in the past but uh they're looking at that so that they could have the minimum threshold that they would need to meet

57:43

uh we also talked about the Disney World Universal trip

57:48

and because of scheduling issues they're potentially talking about staying at Disney World this year

57:55

and visiting Universal but one of the big issues was talking about how to

58:01

mitigate the issues with flights from previous years we spoke with our provider the travel

58:09

agency they provided some assurances and that travel agency has a very good track

58:14

record we heard about issues with other travel agents with other schools

58:20

and those issues were not handled as well so we are staying with the one we have even though there might be a slight

58:25

price increase it was felt that that was worth it the administration recommended staying with them

58:31

so the committee was in favor of all of those things the next section rfps

58:39

we talked about the lease purchase RFP there were some good rates out there

58:44

reviewed the qualified bids and Administration selected the lowest rate which we would always expect or the best

58:51

rate excuse me not lowest on interest um or at least purchase yeah anyway uh

58:58

we also talked about the cyber security I forgot to notice the Beckett is that on for September it's okay so

59:06

the tally sheets will be shared with the committee and the board and cyber security audit looking at the practices

59:12

here what risks we may have that'll all take place uh the approval of which will

59:18

take place next month there was an RFP out for instructional related Services again Administration

59:25

reviewed with committee the submissions and those are now on the agenda tonight

59:31

for approval also the uh

59:37

we had uh ones out for rfps out for our professional services including Bond Council architect auditor solicitor

59:44

the administration said they would share their options and and the feedback with the committee and let us know which ones

59:51

they wanted to review further and then we also talked about the health broker

59:56

in the admin Administration also provided recommendation and will let us know about their

1:00:01

recommendations and let us know about others and that'll all be shared with we as we talked about an executive there

1:00:08

was the um actually this this one was not this was the EDC student enrichment uh program

1:00:17

Administration explained to us basically all that's going on and I believe there was an email about it too all that's going on with the changes going on with

1:00:24

uh with the enrichment program and the retirement of the previous person who

1:00:31

was running that and we talked about the parameters uh with which they want to

1:00:36

move forward and how they want to keep that program running and actually make it work better

1:00:42

and then also the codisol that we discussed that is also in the agenda tonight that

1:00:48

was another discussion item a lot of the media was taken up with a presentation from a company called

1:00:54

psylocks am I pronouncing that correctly they provide security software that

1:00:59

gives the opportunity to share and view status conditions for various locations around the district primarily lets us see lets teachers Alert central

1:01:09

the central Administration or others in charge in each building what's going on in each classroom anything from there

1:01:16

may be a student missing or There's A disruption going on in the classroom too there's a serious event going on in the classroom so we talked with them got a

1:01:24

very good understanding of that the materials that the organization left are available to any other board members who

1:01:30

want to look at that and I'm sure Mr Heiser would would be happy to meet with you and let you know what that's about

1:01:36

so we the administration's considering that uh the email was also sent to the board

1:01:43

about the rod Branch approval and how that's going to affect the capital uh improvements going on in the district so

1:01:49

we were very happy to get that funding I believe it was a 40 60 split with the

1:01:54

state was that correct okay we talked about the

1:02:00

2022-23 audit which will be starting early next month there's a new uh statute

1:02:07

I guess is that what you call a rule gasby pronouncement makes it sound much

1:02:12

more official but basically it requires us to do accounting differently for subscriptions for curriculum materials

1:02:19

so that's going to require a lot of additional work Administration told us that they would

1:02:25

be looking to hire outside help to do that so that they could keep on track with all of the other things that they're doing and the committee felt

1:02:32

that that was reasonable uh chapter 44 there was a state report

1:02:37

put out about the savings that chapter 44 has afforded we talked

1:02:43

about the actual situation for our district where it didn't necessarily reflect savings

1:02:49

but uh we we had a discussion about that that also talked about where we are with

1:02:55

enrollment currently the remaining items about facility rentals referendum and then talking

1:03:02

about a new law Bill s 1221 slash A1349

1:03:07

we do not have time for those things so those are table till the next meeting so that is my probably overly thorough

1:03:14

report any questions comments we all feel like we were there

1:03:20

thank you um much longer than that yeah yes just

1:03:26

just to uh shed some light on mixed comments regarding psylocks

1:03:31

um psylocks is an integrated software program um and this is what we're looking for we're looking for an integrated software

1:03:38

program that is both cell based and Wi-Fi based that would enable our staff to integrate with Administration and

1:03:45

first respond units when real emergencies occur it would not only allow them to alert and create status

1:03:52

reports for their specific classrooms that would also be guided by mapping but

1:03:57

it would also allow them on us to have two-way communication so with cell phones which can be very unreliable

1:04:04

particularly in emergency and we we recognize that some of the cell phone service here in Morristown is not the

1:04:10

greatest depending on where you are we need a reliable form of communication so

1:04:15

that in the event of emergency we can be sure that information is flowing and flowing

1:04:22

appropriately and to the right people so that's the kind of security and emergency software that we're looking at

1:04:28

um and so that process continues and we hope to have something in place

1:04:34

hopefully before the end of the school year if not in the budget for next school year there's obviously a price

1:04:40

tag attached to those sorts of things but it's a very very important uh to

1:04:46

have that level of ability in a school district and that's what we're working towards thank you

1:04:52

thank you any further Joe thank you for clarifying that it was

1:04:59

something we were looking at in the near term because I was going to ask if that was going to be part of the budgeting process for 24 which

1:05:07

starts sooner than we think so thank you for the clarification and then make you just mentioned

1:05:12

um the discussion around the increased trip costs um I think we also talked about Pathways

1:05:20

for financial assistance too so there was also a discussion about making sure that it's accessible to everyone so I

1:05:27

just want to clarify that great thank you our last committee is

1:05:35

policy Claudine uh we'll be meeting on Thursday the 21st great

1:05:40

any off-board committee updates from anybody I have one from speak as special

1:05:48

education advocacy Council the speak meeting was listed the first meeting of the year was listed on the

1:05:54

website as being on the 28th but is actually on the 26th it's at 6 PM

1:06:00

in the Star Center which is connected to the high school to the right of the main

1:06:05

doors speak is a parent-run Advisory Group for

1:06:10

parents and caregivers of students with any and all special needs who are either in need of or are receiving special

1:06:17

education in our district at the meetings you have the opportunity to hear from Dr Tate who is our director

1:06:23

director of special education and it's a great opportunity to find resources and connect with others who

1:06:30

may have common experiences with you if anyone has any questions

1:06:35

please reach out to Angie silveri she is the president this year at info at

1:06:41

Morristown speak dot org thanks

1:06:46

thank you Melissa anyone else okay

1:06:52

next we'll move on to our first public comment section of the agenda and this

1:06:58

is the section of public comment or comments about items that are on our

1:07:04

agenda and subject to vote um the the parameters of public comment

1:07:12

are set forth in the agenda but I'll just remind everyone that it's a three

1:07:17

minute time limitation on any speakers public comment please state your name

1:07:24

and address to the extent you're comfortable saying the address before making your comments and

1:07:31

um it is a a comment section it's

1:07:36

um it's not a question and answer uh section we we certainly receive and

1:07:43

appreciate and understand your any comments or questions but it is it isn't um a q a and I I believe me I

get it

1:07:51

that it can create a somewhat awkward environment particularly in a in a

1:07:56

somewhat small setting but those are the rules of the road and uh we are going to

1:08:01

follow them so uh with that may I please get a motion to open public comment

1:08:08

all in favor thank you if anybody would like to make a public comment on agenda items please

1:08:14

approach the microphone has to be agenda items there's towards

1:08:20

the end of the meeting there's another public comment section that is on anything School related

1:08:26

at the end it would be the the time I'll I'll give you the the thumbs up a little bit later okay

1:08:34

anyone else all right may I get a motion to close

1:08:39

public comment all in favor all right thank you

1:08:46

okay up to the business of the board um

1:08:54

we're particip article eight reports to the board may I please get a motion for

1:09:00

approval of items one through three in the agenda

1:09:10

any comments or questions all in favor opposed abstentions

1:09:16

thank you article 9 recommendations of the superintendent

1:09:22

letter a is the remote learning plan uh which is a routine item that we have

1:09:28

every year may I please get a motion for the approval of letter A

1:09:37

any comments or questions all in favor noser abstentions

1:09:44

thank you okay we are going to

1:09:50

skip to in there is an addendum added to this section of the agenda and

1:09:57

this will be article 9 and I guess it'll be a new letter B is that it okay and

1:10:03

this is a shared services agreement and I'll read it into the record

1:10:08

um to the extent you don't have it in front of you this will be a motion to recommend the board approve the shared

1:10:13

services agreement between the township of Morristown and the town Morristown Township School District Board of Education for class three special law

1:10:20

enforcement officers uh and so this memorializes the arrangement that uh Mr

1:10:26

ballendorf was able to negotiate with the township for the new slio officers

1:10:33

that are now with our district may I get a motion

1:10:39

any comments or questions all in favor any nose or abstentions

1:10:46

thank you okay moving back into the agenda suppose James this will

1:10:53

now be letter C educational program may I please get a motion for the

1:10:59

approval of items one through ten under letter c

1:11:05

foreign

1:11:14

thank you letter D finance and business may I please get

1:11:21

a motion for the approval of items one through eight under the finance and

1:11:27

business section of the agenda any comments or questions

1:11:38

no no finance and business is now Dee

1:11:43

has B moved up no no I I moved a little fast there so I

1:11:51

apologize it is amended letter D and it will be it's financed in business is the header

1:11:58

and it's items one through eight of the finance and business section so

1:12:04

it's clear I think we've got a motion in second already all right any other comments or questions extension

1:12:12

hey give me a minute all all in favor okay and he knows our abstentions

1:12:19

abstain from number one I love something

1:12:28

understood okay letter

1:12:34

let's let's just stick to the headers uh employee relations may I please get a motion for approval

1:12:41

of items one through 16 under employee relations

1:12:48
any comments or questions roll call vote please
1:12:57
Mr Sir Burns yes Mrs fowles Michael Russo Dr Maya Mrs Miller
1:13:04
yes Mrs Moreno yes Miss Romano Mr weeks yes Mrs macapolis yes Mr Villanueva yes
1:13:12
thank you we are up to article 10 suspensions may I please get a motion
1:13:18
for approval of letters A and B under article 10 please
1:13:29
any comments or questions all in favor nose or extensions
1:13:37
thank you any other abstentions okay
1:13:43
article 11 is informational only regarding student enrollment this year as compared to last year is there
any
1:13:49
old business any new business
1:13:55
okay this is now our second public comment section
1:14:01
um and this section has the same rules that I described earlier and are listed in the uh in writing in the
agenda this
1:14:08
is for a public comment about any school related items uh that are either on the
1:14:15
agenda or off the agenda so may I please get a motion to open
1:14:21
public comment all in favor all right if you have a public comment
1:14:27
please approach the microphone state your name and address and
1:14:32
times yours
1:14:42
uh I am not really ever because
1:14:53
I have a question um it was something that I even like really felt fascinated about and um
1:15:02
dominated by then I was really excited I went into the center of time but it was
1:15:08
from cauliflower I wasn't looking at those of you guys
1:15:16
um as someone who is like them and I would love that moment
1:15:55
so thank you for your time thank you thank you for your comment
1:16:06
foreign
1:16:28
[Laughter]
1:16:39
good evening everyone I'm Nicole Dancy president of Holman School home in
1:16:44
school is off to a great start so far we've had kindergarten meet and greet for all three lower elementary
schools
1:16:52

fourth grade ice cream social senior sunrise breakfast

1:16:57

staff appreciation luncheons for all elementary schools uses and whams Harlem

1:17:04

Wizards assemblies at all lower schools to get the kids excited about the event

1:17:09

the upcoming events Book Fairs at all lower schools the week of October 2nd

1:17:15

uef October 16th Harlem Wizards on Friday October 15th in the Mac the doors

1:17:22

open at six event starts at seven event is already sold out

1:17:27

Morristown autumn day on Saturday October 14th we'll be selling calendars

1:17:33

and encouraging the community to join home in school we will also have samples of apparel and merchandise that will be

1:17:40

for sale in home and schools online store which will be coming soon many of

1:17:46

these events have been completely funded by home and school through our membership and fundraising efforts I

1:17:52

would like to encourage the Boe and everyone in attendance this evening to join home and school thank you for your

1:17:59

continued support

1:18:07

hello I'm John Lloyd I'm a teacher at the high school and I'd just like to

1:18:12

thank the entire High School staff for facilitating our annual activities Fair

1:18:18

on September 14th we had a fantastic turnout um the cafeteria was filled with

1:18:24

students we had dozens of clubs represented and students saw all the choices they have for participation at

1:18:30

the high school um and the teachers at the high school would also like to thank the entire

1:18:36

guidance office staff for handling the schedules of over 1300 students in a

1:18:42

caring and professional way they did a fantastic job thank you

1:18:52

uh hi oops hello hi my name is uh Tom Lawless I'm a special education teacher

1:18:57

down at the high school I live at 133 East Main Street except blue building over there I live up at the top

1:19:04

um we would like to thank our custodians our maintenance members throughout the district for having our building shiny

1:19:10

and clean and keeping everything in its place we appreciate their hard work and the efforts for keeping our building running smoothly our secretaries for

1:19:18

helping us keep our buildings open all of our supplies and all the necessary information for our staff students and

1:19:24

families we know that there are endless phone calls and explanations of multiple times where we want to know that we
1:19:30
value all of you and what you do for our schools and as well as our paraprofessionals for jumping right in
1:19:36
with our students and working to everyone with everyone to get the year off right we couldn't have done it
1:19:42
without you so thank you
1:19:47
good evening hello I'm Kim Martin I teach here at whams and I want to commend and thank Robert's staff
as well
1:19:54
as Baker and South Valley that greeted all of their incoming kindergarten students and parents on
September 6th it
1:20:01
was a great opportunity for all the families to meet their teachers and to see their classrooms as well as
during
1:20:06
this time they were able to take care of very or gather very important information regarding
1:20:12
dismissals and lunches which helped alleviate the chaos on the first week of school although there were a
few tiers
1:20:19
there were by far more Smiles I also want to thank Coleman school for everything they do for us
1:20:33
here no laughing hi I'm Melissa luck I'm also a teacher
1:20:39
here at whams I'm a science teacher on the 8th grade side we wanted to thank
1:20:45
Wham staff for creating a new schedule that we did for the first day of school that allowed us the
opportunity to
1:20:51
introduce our students to Middle School especially the new ones both 7th and 8th and to complete the
team building
1:20:58
activity that also helped them to walk through their new schedule so we thank everybody for their
patience and
1:21:03
kindness and again we also thank Homan school for everything they've done thank you
1:21:18
okay hello I'm Cara long I'm a sixth grade math teacher at the ues and I
1:21:24
would like to commend my colleagues at the ues for hosting back to school night for parents and
guardians of fourth and
1:21:31
fifth graders on September 12th um parents enjoyed browsing student work
1:21:36
that was posted in the hallways meeting their children's teachers on September 13th back to school night
was held for
1:21:42
parents of sixth graders both nights were a positive experience for teachers and staff together
1:21:49
we would like we would also like to thank the Holman School Association for hosting their annual ice
cream social at
1:21:56
the ureas for all incoming fourth grade students students had the opportunity to

1:22:02

come meet new friends tour the fourth grade hallways and most importantly enjoy the ice cream thank you

1:22:15

hi I'm Trish lockhiller I work at South Valley I teach there I would like to

1:22:20

commend all of South Valley for a smooth transition for all students and staff to back to school and especially a huge

1:22:27

thank you to the South South Valley kindergarten team who worked closely with home and school to make sure our

1:22:33

newest South Valley students had a smooth start to our new school year they did this by welcoming stat

1:22:40

welcoming students and parents to South Valley before day one they ensured that

1:22:45

the students would see a familiar face in the morning as they arrived or it came off of their buses also during this

1:22:52

time they offered students wristbands to ensure that they would get to the proper line students during this time were able

1:22:59

to meet teachers see classrooms bring in their supplies all at the same time while reducing their jitters

1:23:06

thank you good evening my name is Beth Lefferts I

1:23:14

am a teacher at Baker school but also a Community member for many years first of all we'd like to thank homean

1:23:20

school for our delicious luncheon and the Wizards assembly was phenomenal the children were bouncing off the walls in

1:23:25

a good way not just balls um also I'd like to let you know that a

1:23:31

group of the elementary special education teachers at Baker were Wilson certified Specialists this summer and

1:23:37

it's a rigorous training and we're very proud of our teachers and we congratulate them on completing a

1:23:42

year-long practicum and intensive academic classes to meet the certification to better service our

1:23:47

students at Baker we have second grade teachers Mrs botanelli and Mrs baxman who have introduced their classes to

1:23:53

readers theater already this week and the two classes are merging they're learning about

1:23:58

um how to be a better reader but building new relationships new friendships across the grade level and

1:24:04

learning to cooperate at the same time our Baker kindergarten families

1:24:09

got together with our Baker kindergarten teachers and we welcomed them all before

1:24:15

school started the children got acclimated they made new friends explore the outdoors and even made headbands

1:24:22

with listening ears we had big Dumbo headbands but we're real excited about our new group of Baker Bears thank you

1:24:35

anyone else for public comment all right seeing none may I get a motion

1:24:41

to close public comment please second all in favor

1:24:48

thank you is there anything for the good of the order

1:24:55

okay well thank you thank you uh Mr Miss Dancy for the updates from from home and

1:25:01

school uh as Mr ballendorf had mentioned earlier we and others have mentioned we really appreciate everything that that

1:25:07

home school does and really looking forward to the uh the Wizards coming back it's always an awesome event so uh

1:25:14

glad that that you all could get that going again so thank you and unless there's anything further

1:25:21

may I get a motion to close public comment I'm sorry it's been a long night may I get a motion to adjourn

1:25:28

so moved all in favor thank you