

CLOSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Closter, New Jersey

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Tenakill Middle School

July 15, 2021 - 7:30 PM

The Board meeting was called to order by Ms. Finkelstein at 7:32 PM

The following Board members were present:

Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

The following Board members were absent:

Ms. Bhagat

Also present:

Mr. McHale and Mr. Villanueva

NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by the President:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Secretary to the Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time, remote access information, and place thereof, posted at each school building within the district, district website, the Board of Education office, the Office of the Borough Clerk, and transmitted to *The Record* and *Northern Valley Suburbanite* newspapers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Vincent McHale, Superintendent of Schools shared with the Board and the community his report:

- *Our fourth-grade moving-on ceremony and eighth-grade graduation took place at Memorial Field on Wednesday, June 16, 2021. Both ceremonies were a beautiful celebration of our students. He wants to thank:*
 - *Ms. Smith, Dr. Carmichael, Mr. Tantum, Mr. McElroy, and Ms. Eichenlaub for their efforts in planning for the ceremonies.*
 - *Our secretaries and custodians for all of their extra work in preparing the programs, certificates, diplomas, setting up the stage and chairs, and making sure that it all went off without a hitch!*
 - *Our teachers from PreK – grade 8 prepared our students for their milestones of completing grade 4 and grade 8. A special thank you to the teachers who organized and prepared students for the ceremonies.*
 - *The Closter PTO, KPG, and parent committees planned and provided wonderful year-end extras for our students.*

- o *The Closter Board of Education trustees for supporting our students and allowing us to have the outdoor ceremonies so that we could recognize our students in the way they deserved, especially after being socially distant for so long during the pandemic.*
- o *The Closter Mayor and Council for granting permission to use the field; to the Closter Recreation Department and the Closter Police Department for their great assistance!*
- *The School Restart and Recovery Committee is scheduled to meet on July 21, 2021, to continue planning for our return to full-day, in-person school days for all. The NJDOE and NJDOH released *The Road Forward: Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year* and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released updated guidance, as well. Once the committee has made recommendations, He will send out information about our reopening to all stakeholders, most likely at the beginning of August 2021. For now, please know that Closter Public Schools will provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction, and operations for the 2021-2022 school year.*
- *Our summer programs are in full swing! Kudos to Ms. Marotti, Ms. Menchise, and their students who are painting a colorful Hillside mural in the entry hallway! This mural will be an extra welcome for everyone returning in September.*
- *The renovations of eight classrooms at Hillside Elementary School have started. The classrooms will be updated with new ceilings and floors, along with new lighting, storage cabinets, and sinks. This week the new floor tiles are being installed. The roofing project at Hillside is also ready to proceed but was delayed due to rain. The roofing contractor will begin when the weather is cooperating, with an estimated completion date of August 10, 2021.*
- *As summer continues, He encourages students to read, practice math facts, and read some more! Enjoy the warm days.*

Mr. Vincent McHale, Superintendent of Schools presented to the Board and the community the 2019-2020 HIB Grades Report:

- *Hillside Elementary School scored 77 out of 78 points*
- *Tenakill Middle School scored 67 out of 78 points*
- *The District score is 72*

All information is posted on the district website

Mr. Vincent McHale, Superintendent of Schools presented to the Board and the community the American Rescue Plan Grant Spending:

Closter Public Schools' first installment of the American Rescue Grant will be \$510,172. The funds will be allocated between Hillside Elementary and Tenakill Middle School, covering the employment of a full-time Assistant Principal for Hillside, Mental and Health Support for both schools, Support teacher for K-2 at Hillside Elementary, and updated maintenance to both School buildings.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN GRANT
 First Installment - \$510,172

Allowable Uses	Stakeholder Support %	Spending Plan	Hillside	Tenakill	% of Grant	Total
<i>Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of the individual schools.</i>	55%	Fund 0.40 FTE for Hillside Assistant Principal (Salary \$52,875 + FICA/TPAF \$23,974)	\$ 76,669		15.03%	\$ 76,669
<i>Providing mental health services and supports.</i>	88%	Mental Health Support Services Provider	\$ 36,250	\$ 36,250	14.21%	\$ 72,500
<i>Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.</i>	84%	Academic Support Programs -Winter & Spring 2022 -Summer 2022	\$ 91,150	\$ 91,150	35.73%	\$ 182,300
<i>Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, by (A) administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction. (B) Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.</i>	84%	Support Teacher for Grades K - 2 (Salary \$79,159 + FICA/TPAF \$35,622) 70% of Teacher Salary	\$ 114,781		22.50%	\$ 114,781
<i>Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.</i>	88%	HVAC Work B209-\$5755 (TMS) & Stem Lab (HES) Windows Replacement (TMS)	\$ 13,200	\$ 50,722	12.53%	\$ 63,922
			\$ 332,050	\$ 178,122	100%	\$ 510,172

PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Cross to open the meeting to the public.

Statements made by individual participants are limited to a duration of three (3) minutes unless otherwise announced at the beginning of the discussion. A maximum of 15 minutes for public input is scheduled as per policy 1120. The Board urges large groups to select one person to represent them. The Board reminds those individuals who take the opportunity to speak to please step up, identify themselves by name and address, and limit their comments to items listed on the agenda.

No Public Comments

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Micera to resume the regular order of business.

BOARD OPERATIONS

Moved by Dr. Puttannah, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A-C.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Minutes**

Motion to approve June 14, 2021 minutes.

B. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drill - HES**

The Board acknowledges that Hillside Elementary School successfully conducted its second emergency school bus exit drill, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.2, at 9:30 a.m. on June 18, 2021, at Hillside Elementary School, 340 Homans Avenue, Courtney Carmichael, Vice Principal, and Anna Suttora, Secretary in charge. Bus #1 was included in the drill.

C. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drill - TMS**

The Board acknowledges that Tenakill Middle School successfully conducted its second emergency school bus exit drill, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.2, at 9:15 a.m. on June 18, 2021, at Tenakill Middle School, 275 High Street, Keith McElroy, Vice Principal, was the staff member in charge. Bus #1 was included in the drill.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Lee, Ms. Cross, Dr. Puttannah

Moved by Ms. Lee, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motion A.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Staff Coursework**

Motion to approve the following courses for 2021-2022 as recommended to the Superintendent by the Principals:

Staff Member: William Potkulski
Course No./Title: EDUC7120 Bullying
Institution: La Verne University
Credits: 3

Staff Member: Jaime Caruso
Course No./Title: 1) 5601-070 Counseling Skills in Nursing
2) 6040-060 Curriculum Design
Institution: William Paterson University
Credits: 6 (3 credits each)

FINANCE AND PHYSICAL PLANT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Kwon, Ms. Finkelstein, Ms. Kothari

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A - R.

Ms. Kothari requested information for item F. Mr. McHale explained these are received students for the special education program.

Ms. Finkelstein asked if there was any feedback regarding Realtime in item H. Mr. McHale explained no feedback was requested however the district is pleased with the program.

Dr. Puttannah requested if the fees in items Q & R are consistent with the past or has there been a change. Mr. Villanueva informed the board there was a \$5 increase in the use of facilities and an adjusted rate for the custodians based on the contracted hourly rate.

Mr. McHale informed the board regarding item R was the contract with KCE Champions for a before and after school program.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Monthly Bills SY 20-21**

Motion to approve payment of bills from June 15, 2021, to June 30, 2021, in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$1,150,053.30
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 13,521.44
Total	\$1,163,574.74

B. **APPROVAL - Monthly Bills SY 21-22**

Motion to approve payment of bills from July 1, 2021, to July 14, 2021, in the amount of:

General Fund (Fund 10)	\$924,560.27
Special Revenue (Fund 20)	\$ 287.70
Total	\$924,847.97

C. **APPROVAL - Staff Remuneration**

Motion to approve remuneration to staff members as follows:

Staff Member: Karen Caruso
Course: 1) Virtual Manipulatives for Math Instruction
2) Teaching and Learning Online
Remuneration: \$920.00

Staff Member: Meghan Pleus
 Course: Motivating Students Who Don't Care
 Remuneration: \$375.00

D. APPROVAL – Application & Acceptance of ESEA Grant

Motion to approve the application and acceptance of ESEA grant for School Year 2021-2022 in the following amounts:

<u>ESEA Total</u>	<u>\$ 96,680</u>
Title I A	\$ 50,752
Title II A	\$ 17,549
Title III	\$ 18,379
Title IV	\$ 10,000

E. APPROVAL – Application & Acceptance of American Rescue Plan Grant

Motion to approve the application and acceptance of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) grant in the following amounts:

First Installment	\$ 510,172
Second Installment	\$ 255,086

F. APPROVAL – Tuition Contracts for Received Students

Motion to approve tuition contracts for received students as outlined below for the 2021-2022 school year:

<i>NJ SMART ID</i>	<i>TUITION</i>	<i>GRADE</i>	<i>DISTRICT</i>
7574534238	\$25,375.00	GR2	Tenaflly
TBD	\$31,952.00	GR-PRE-K	Haworth

G. APPROVAL – Special Education Placements

Motion to approve the following 2021-2022 Special Education placements for Closter Students:

<i>NJ SMART ID</i>	<i>TUITION</i>	<i>GRADE</i>	<i>PLACEMENT</i>
7204732761	\$48,577.00	GR3	NVRHS-TIP

H. APPROVAL – Contract for Realtime

Motion to approve the annual contract for the 2021-2022 school year with Realtime for the following services:

Student Information System	\$ 10,750
Special Education Management/IEP Writer	\$ 4,000
504 Student Manager	\$ 1,800
Notification/Alert System & E-Signature	<u>\$ 2,950</u>
Annual Cost	\$ 19,500

I. **APPROVAL – Contract with Bergen County Special Services**

WHEREAS, the Bergen County Special Services School District (BCSSSD) is a body corporate organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey pursuant to N.J.S.A.18A:46-29.

WHEREAS, the LEA is required by law to provide remedial and auxiliary services to eligible students attending non-public schools within the public school district pursuant to P.L. 1977, Chapters 192-193 from BCSSSD.

WHEREAS, the LEA and BCSSSD hereby agree to provide the remedial and auxiliary services in accordance with the applicable New Jersey statutes and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and the policies of the Board of Education of BCSSSD.

WHEREAS, the auxiliary and remedial services to be provided are limited to P.L. 192 Compensatory Education, English as a Second Language, and Home Instruction. P.L. 193 Supplementary Instruction, Speech Correction and Examination and Classification for eligible pupils.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Closter Board of Education hereby approves the agreement to contract with Bergen County Special Services for SY 21-22.

J. **APPROVAL - Shared Services for Speech Therapist**

Motion to approve the shared services agreement with Demarest Public Schools for a Speech Therapist in the amount of \$27,678, two days per week for SY 2021-2022.

K. **APPROVAL – Related Services Contract**

Motion to approve contracts with the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired for students #361002, #9597653741, and #1595602128 in accordance with their IEPs, in the amount of \$6,600.00 for the 2021-2022 school year.

L. **APPROVAL - Disposal of Outdated Smart Boards**

Motion to approve the disposal of 12 outdated Smart Boards from Hillside Elementary School; tag numbers 10147,10097, 10162, 10124, 10120, 10122, 10144, 10118, 10121,10107, 101108, and 10109.

M. **APPROVAL - Disposal of Server**

Motion to approve the disposal of one (1) Powermac G5 Server, from Hillside Elementary Technology Office; tag number 10020.

N. **RETROACTIVE APPROVAL - Purchase of Classroom Furniture**

Motion to retroactively approve the purchase of classroom furniture from School Specialty in the amount of \$19,635.56 through the Ed Data Contract #26EDCP.

O. **RETROACTIVE APPROVAL - Purchase of Classroom Furniture**

Motion to retroactively approve the purchase of classroom furniture from Nickerson NJ Inc in the amount of \$17,287.10 through the Ed Services Commission of NJ 20/21-01.

P. **RETROACTIVE APPROVAL - Purchase of Eleven (11) Promethean Boards**
Motion to retroactively approve the purchase of Eleven (11) Promethean Boards from Keyboard Consultants in the amount of \$57,482 through the Educational Data Services (EDS) Bid #10437 MSRP Tech/AV/Computer/Interactive Whiteboards.

Q. **APPROVAL - Use of Facilities Fees**
Motion to establish the fees for the Use of Facilities for the 2021-2022 school year:

\$100.00 per room/day

\$53.00 per hour for custodians (\$70.00 per hour on Sunday or Holidays)

R. **APPROVAL - Before and After School Enrichment Programs Contract**
Motion to approve the contract between the Closter Board of Education and KCE Champions LLC to provide Before and After School Enrichment Programs. The agreement includes a facility rental fee of \$1,000 per month.

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson Ms. Bhagat, Ms. Finkelstein, Mr. Linn

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Micera to approve Motions A - T.

Mr. McHale read to the board and the community the resignation letters of Ms. Finnegan, Ms. Lotito, and Ms. Anderson. Mr. McHale thanked them and wished them well.

Mr. McHale acknowledged the new tenure track teachers and leave replacement teachers.

Motions were approved by a roll call vote of the Board as follows:

YEAS: Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

A. **APPROVAL - Resignation of Kate Finnegan as Special Ed Teacher**
Motion to accept, with regrets, the resignation of Kate Finnegan as Special Education Teacher as of June 30, 2021.

B. **APPROVAL - Resignation of Mary Lotito as Elementary School Teacher**
Motion to accept, with regrets, the resignation of Mary Lotito as Elementary School Teacher as of June 30, 2021.

C. **APPROVAL - Resignation of Brittany Anderson as M.S. Physical Education/Health Teacher**
Motion to accept, with regrets, the resignation of Brittany Anderson as M.S. Physical Education/Health Teacher as of June 30, 2021.

- D. **APPROVAL - Motion to Rescind Offer of Employment to Inne Cho as M.S. Science Teacher**
Motion to rescind offer of employment to Inne Cho as Middle School Science Teacher for the 2021-2022 school year.
- E. **APPROVAL - Student Teacher in the Pre-K Classrooms for Summer 2021**
Motion to approve Nicole Hayden as a student teacher in Pre-K classrooms for the summer 2021.
- F. **APPROVAL - Isabella Prulello - Grade 5 Leave Replacement Teacher**
Motion to approve Isabella Prulello as Grade 5 Leave Replacement Teacher, non-tenure track, from September 1, 2021, through February 28, 2022, Salary will be \$200 per day on days 1 through 10; then beginning on day 11, MA Step 0, \$60,839 pro-rated, pending a criminal history background check.
- G. **APPROVAL - Jennifer Smith - Grade 5 Math & Science Leave Replacement Teacher**
Motion to approve Jennifer Smith as Grade 5 Math & Science Leave Replacement Teacher, non-tenure track, for the 2021-2022 school year. Salary will be \$200 per day on days 1 through 10; then beginning on day 11, MA Step 0, \$60,839 pro-rated.
- H. **APPROVAL - Noelle Caramanna - Basic Skills Teacher - Tenure Track Position**
Motion to approve Noelle Caramanna as Basic Skills Teacher, tenure track, for the 2021-2022 school year, at a salary of \$62,139, MA Step 1.
- I. **APPROVAL - Brianna McSweeney - M.S. Science Teacher - Tenure Track Position**
Motion to approve Brianna McSweeney as M.S. Science Teacher, tenure track, for the 2021-2022 school year, at a salary of \$70,664, MA Step 5, pending a criminal history background check.
- J. **APPROVAL - Karen Caruso - Mentor for Provisionally Licensed Teacher**
Motion to approve Karen Caruso as a mentor to Christopher Rota. Mentor to be paid by the provisional teacher.
- K. **APPROVAL - Eileen Kennedy - Mentor for Provisionally Licensed Teacher**
Motion to approve Eileen Kennedy as a mentor to Noelle Caramanna. Mentor to be paid by the provisional teacher.
- L. **APPROVAL - Amanda Cummings - Mentor for Provisionally Licensed Teacher**
Motion to approve Amanda Cummings as a mentor to Isabella Prulello. Mentor to be paid by the provisional teacher.
- M. **APPROVAL - Amy Kenny-Whritenour - Mentor for Provisionally Licensed Teacher**
Motion to approve Amy Kenny-Whritenour as a mentor to Jennifer Smith. Mentor to be paid by the provisional teacher.
- N. **APPROVAL – Tenakill Middle School STEM Program Staff**
Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following teachers for

Tenakill Middle School STEM Program (funded by the Learning Acceleration Grant) August 2 - 18, 2021, for nine sessions, five (5) hours per session at a rate of \$50.00/hour per teacher:

- Shireen Moidu
- Christopher Rota

O. **APPROVAL – Tenakill Middle School ELA & Arts Program Staff**

Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following teachers for Tenakill Middle School ELA & Arts Program (funded by the Learning Acceleration Grant) August 5 - 19, 2021 for five (5) sessions, four (4) hours per session at a rate of \$50.00/hour per teacher:

- Julia Leibowitz
- Sarah Menchise

P. **APPROVAL – Tenakill Middle School Wellness Program Staff**

Motion to approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following teachers for Tenakill Middle School Wellness Program (funded by Mental Health/Support Grant) July 21 - August 27, 2021, for three (3) sessions, six (6) hours per session at a rate of \$50.00/hour per teacher:

- Jennifer Annese
- Alexandra Earle
- Lauren Mandal
- Elhaam Manoochehri

Q. **APPROVAL - Substitute Teachers, Nurse & Custodian**

Motion to approve the following substitutes for the 2021-2022 school year

Substitute Teacher:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Certification</u>
William Angresano	NJ Substitute Certification
Elyse Asch	NJ Substitute Certification
Corrine Corcoran	NJ Substitute Certification
Lauren Finan	NJ Substitute Certification
Sylvia Greco	NJ Substitute Certification
Lauren Kessler	NJ Teacher Certification
Maria Lagomarsino	NJ Substitute Certification
Alissa Latner	NJ Substitute Certification
Nina Mody	NJ Substitute Certification
Frank Noviello	NJ Substitute Certification
Sujin Ock	NJ Substitute Certification
Helen Papapetrou	NJ Substitute Certification
Christina Paspalas	NJ Substitute Certification
Jaime Perez	NJ Substitute Certification
Neetu Raghav	NJ Substitute Certification
Jay Ringelstein	NJ Substitute Certification
Sylvia Schoeppler	NJ Substitute Certification
Robert Scozzafava	NJ Substitute Certification
Rhonda Starer	NJ Teacher Certification

Howard Stone	NJ Substitute Certification
Sarah Strauss	NJ Teacher Certification
Rita Tobia	NJ Substitute Certification
Kathy Wellenkamp-Keller	NJ Teacher Certification
Mary Wrightson	NJ Substitute Certification
Kaitlyn Yu	NJ Substitute Certification
*Katherine Hastings	NJ Teacher Certification
*Songhee Lee	NJ Teacher Certification
*Kye Hyung Lim-Goo	NJ Teacher Certification
*Lewis Ritter	NJ Teacher Certification

Substitute Custodian

Nelson Amaya
 Cirilo Carajal -Alta
 *Carlo Camerini

Substitute Nurse

Barbara Farrell, RN NJ Certification

*pending criminal history review

R. **APPROVAL - Paraprofessionals - NJ Substitute Certified**

Motion to approve the following Paraprofessionals to be used as substitute teachers when needed.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Certification</u>
Antoinette Ring	NJ Substitute Certification
Judy Eller	NJ Substitute Certification
Changhui Sun	NJ Substitute Certification
Jessica Sein	NJ Substitute Certification
Julissa Agramonte	NJ Substitute Certification
Loreta Molina	NJ Substitute Certification
Jiyeon Kim	NJ Substitute Certification
Karen Finan	NJ Substitute Certification
Tara Contractor	NJ Substitute Certification
Gabriella Sloezen	NJ Teacher Certification
Catherine Chow	NJ Substitute Certification
Naynaben Dhorajia	NJ Substitute Certification
James lafrate	NJ Teacher Certification
Farha Saad	NJ Substitute Certification

S. **RETROACTIVE APPROVAL - Summer Camp Custodian**

Motion to retroactively approve Mayuli Copeland as custodian for the Summer Camp from June 28, 2021 - July 30, 2021, at a rate of \$18.00/hour, on a needed basis. The Closter Recreation Department will reimburse the BOE for this expense.

T. **APPROVAL – Summer Custodial Assistants**

Motion to approve, upon recommendation of the Business Administrator the employment of the following 2021 Summer Custodial Assistants; not to exceed 7.5 hrs/day, effective July 16, 2021, through August 27, 2021:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Maxwell Solomon	1	\$12.00/hour
Anthony Rota	2	\$12.50/hour

BOARD COMMITTEES

Committees have not met

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

No Old/New Business

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Ms. Cross to open the meeting to public discussion.

Mr. Villanueva read to the board and the public a letter from Mr. Randesi, 160 Alpine Drive.

Mr. Randesi expressed his concerns with the face-covering policy for the upcoming school year. Mr. Randesi's letter will be submitted with the original minutes.

Mr. Villanueva read to the board and the public a letter from the Kindergarten Team and Ms. Weiss requesting the first five (5) days of school to be split into AM/PM sessions or half-day schedules. The original letter will be submitted with the original minutes.

Mr. McHale addressed the board and the public regarding Mr. Randesi's letter. At this time there is no plan until the school committee meets to determine what the district will do regarding masking. The Governor's Office and the Department of Education have advised the school districts to hold off their masking decision because as the summer progresses there may be some changes with the recommendations of the Department of Health and Department of Education.

Mr. McHale will discuss the Kindergarten half-day request with the Board and the Curriculum Committee.

Ms. Finkelstein thanked the Kindergarten Team & Ms. Weiss for their thoughtful suggestion and it will be discussed with the committee.

Moved by Mr. Linn, seconded by Ms. Cross to close the meeting to public discussion.

CLOSED SESSION MOTION (If required)

Moved by Ms. Micera, seconded by Mr. Linn to approve the following Closed Session Motion.

Motion was approved by a voice vote of the Board:

YEAS: Ms. Kothari, Ms. Kwon, Ms. Lee, Mr. Linn, Ms. Micera, Dr. Puttannah, Ms. Cross, Ms. Finkelstein

NAYS: None

BE IT RESOLVED that the Closter Board of Education will adjourn to a Closed Session to discuss the following:

HIB

The matters so discussed will be disclosed to the public as soon as and to the extent that such disclosure can be made without adversely affecting the public.

The Board went into Closed Session at 8:18 PM.

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 8:33 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Kwon, seconded by Ms. Cross to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Floro M. Villanueva, Jr.

Business Administrator/Board Secretary

To Mr. Vincent McHale and the Board of Education,

In order to facilitate a smooth transition and meaningful learning environment for the Kindergarten students, it is essential to provide an introduction to students that is beneficial to their well-being and social emotional growth.

The Kindergarten team is proposing the first 5 days of school in September to be either split class am/pm sessions or full class half days.

Due to their age and Covid, the majority of incoming kindergarten students have no prior knowledge of school expectations or behaviors. There have been many concerns shared by parents and read in preschool reports about the lack of knowledge of some readiness skills. For example, using words to express needs and wants and understand two-step directions; using the bathroom, washing on their own and needing help pulling up pants with buttons, and zippers; separation from a parent or caregiver without getting overly upset, interacting with other kids, and paying attention to a task an adult is leading. Parents have also shared concerns with adjusting to a morning routine and their child's ability to finish a full day.

The half days will give students a chance to understand information from the teacher about first time routines such as walking in the hallway, using the bathroom, classroom safety and fire drills. The adult-to-student ratio is vastly different from preschool. With a shortened school day, students will be able to adjust to this new environment so school will be less overwhelming. Students will also be able to build up their stamina for a full school day. Students will be able to retain the important information, develop trust with the teacher and build relationships with their peers.

Teachers will be able to give parents attention with any questions they may have after the school day. We are aware that half days may cause some adjustments to parent's schedules but feel the payoff will be greater and have a lasting effect on the students. We are confident this plan will ensure a great start to a successful school year.

Sincerely,

The Kindergarten Team
& Ms. Weiss

July 14, 2021

**Anthony & Jera Randesi
160 Alpine Drive
Closter, NJ 07624**

Dear Superintendent McHale, Tenakill Administration and Members of the Board of Education:

Our child attends Tenakill Middle School and will be entering the 6th Grade in the upcoming 2021-2022 school year. We are writing this letter to express our concerns regarding the face covering policy that will be enforced for the upcoming school year.

In the event our school district implements a policy requiring face coverings for all students, it is critical to consider the physical, emotional and social implications it will have on them. Studies have shown that requiring students to wear face coverings for an extended period of time will cause more harm than good. Moreover, our state is open and far removed from a State of Emergency. Children are also participating maskless in all sports and attending athletic clinics whether indoor or outdoor.

Currently, the Covid-19 vaccine is approved for an Emergency Use authorization. The Covid-19 virus mortality rate for children 18 years old or younger is less than 1%.

A more concerning policy would be requiring only unvaccinated students to wear face coverings. This policy will create segregation and discrimination. Unvaccinated students will be labeled by wearing a face covering. Requiring face coverings for only unvaccinated students will open the door to those vaccinated students of being afraid to sit at the same lunch table or use the same bathroom.

In closing, we as Americans cherish our God given freedoms and liberties and we should respect each individuals' choice. At this time, the decision to wear a face covering should lie in the hands of the parents, guardians and students.

We respectfully request that this letter be read at tomorrow's Board of Education Meeting as we are unable to attend. Thank you in advance for your courtesy in this matter.

Respectfully,

**Anthony Randesi
Jera Randesi, Esq.**