

# The Board Report

*April 6, 2020*



**Disclaimer:** The Board Report is a synopsis of the Hampton Township School Board meetings and is not intended as a replacement for any official Board minutes.

## ***The Hampton Township Board of School Directors***

**Bryant Wesley II, Esq.**  
**Mrs. Jill Hamlin**  
**Ms. Denise Balason**  
**Mr. Matt Jarrell**  
**Mrs. Joy Midgley**  
**Mr. Robert Shages**  
**Mr. Greg Stein**  
**Mrs. Trisha Webb**

**Board President**  
**Board Vice President/Transportation Chair**  
**Board Secretary/Facilities Chair**  
**Technology Chair**  
**Personnel Chair**  
**Board Treasurer/Policy & Legislative Affairs Chair**  
**Finance Chair**  
**Student Affairs Chair**

*This was the first Hampton Township Board of School Directors meeting held by video conference, a step taken to maintain the social distancing required due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

## ***Members of Administration in Attendance***

**Dr. Michael Loughead**  
**Dr. Rebecca Cunningham**  
**Ms. Leza Raffel**  
**Dr. Ed McKaveney**  
**Mr. Jeff Kline**  
**Dr. Marguerite Imbarlina**  
**Dr. Jackie Removcik**

**Superintendent of Schools**  
**Assistant Superintendent of Schools**  
**Communications Consultant**  
**Director of Technology**  
**Director of Administrative Services**  
**High School Principal**  
**Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction**

# Special Voting Agenda

A brief Voting Meeting was called to order for the purpose of allowing the Board to vote to temporarily suspend Board Policy No. 006.1 – Local Board Procedures/Remote Participation in Board Meetings. The purpose of this action item was to suspend the current physical meeting attendance requirements, thereby allowing all Board members to participate by video conference call. The motion, which was needed to accommodate social distancing related to the [COVID-19](#) Pandemic, passed unanimously. This was the first meeting of its kind ever held in the District.

## Work Session Agenda: Committee Reports

### Student Affairs

#### Student Representatives' Report

Student representatives Lindsey Fortes and Nicole Fortes gave a thorough report on the distance learning that teachers are providing for students while schools are closed due to COVID-19:

- Teachers are using Google Meet mostly to answer student questions. While the video conferencing app could be used for lectures, most students feel since participation is optional and scheduling issues are possible, this is its best use.
- Teachers are also using Google Forms and Google Docs for assignments and assessments.
- Distance learning has positives and negatives for students. Being at home is more distracting. While most students are spending two to four hours on daily assignments, some need four to six hours. They are enjoying not having to wake up early, and being able to complete assignments at their own pace, within the date they are due.
- Students believe teachers are doing a good job under new and difficult circumstances, and they wanted to let them know it is appreciated.

The representatives also reported that while Talbot Thon could not be held due to the pandemic, students have currently raised about \$40,000.

### Educational Programs

#### 2019-20 Community Service Requirements for Seniors

Dr. Imbarlina asked the Board to suspend 10 of the 40 hours of community service as a graduation requirement for this year's senior class, because social distancing and closed schools puts them at a disadvantage for both earning and documenting the hours. This amendment would establish the required hours for the Class of 2020 to be 30 hours. The Board will vote on the recommendation at its next meeting. Additional adjustments may be sought in the future for next year's high school students.

#### Exploring a Potential Pass/Fail Grading System for the Fourth Quarter

Dr. Imbarlina reported that in these uncertain times, some students and families are able to utilize online learning without any issues while others have experienced some challenges. To minimize any negative impacts on the students' grades and transcripts, the District team is exploring the possibility of a pass/fail grading system for the fourth quarter and will present a more specific plan to the Board soon.

#### Consideration of a New High School Daily Class Schedule for the 2021-2022 School Year

Dr. Imbarlina presented an update from the planning team on a proposed high school schedule for the 2021-2022 School Year. A large design committee of department chairs, teachers, the librarian, a school counselor, and high school administrators have been considering different options which may make better use of instructional time.

The Design Committee started with a list of goals :

- ## Goals
1. Utilize time more efficiently for instructional purposes
  2. Provide time for students to develop deeper learning competencies by diving deeply into a lesson, grappling with complex problems, and/or completing a project
  3. Create a system that promotes balance for students
  4. Equalize student access to tutoring and enrichment
  5. Include time for peer mentoring and or advisory to develop relationships between students and adults within the building to support academic, social, and emotional growth
  6. Improve job-embedded professional learning time for teachers
  7. Create designated co-planning time for teacher collaboration

The current daily schedule at the high school consists of nine, 41 minute periods with four minute transitions between each class. Students typically take seven or eight classes per day. Two possible alternatives -- both examples of what is commonly called block scheduling -- would divide the school day into fewer, longer periods. An alternating A/B format could be used, so that while students would typically be enrolled in eight courses, they would attend only four on a given day. Both scenarios would include a 30-minute lunch and a daily, across-the-school time slot for enrichment, remediation, and personal interest work called "Talbot Time".

Dr. Imbarlina said most students would choose how to spend their Talbot Time, giving them more autonomy and freedom to pursue what is most important to them. Possible options include academic support, AP/Honors study groups, peer mentoring, independent projects, extracurricular activities, or externships. Some students may meet with college recruiters, and others could take online college courses.

## #1: A/B Day Schedule with Talbot Time in the Middle

A Day	Time	B Day
<b>Period 1</b>	8:20-9:40 (80 minutes)	<b>Period 2</b>
<b>Period 3</b>	9:44-11:04 (80 minutes)	<b>Period 4</b>
Grade 9/10 Lunch --11:08-11:38 Grade 11/12 Lunch --11:42-12:12		
<b>Period 5</b>	12:16-1:36 (80 Minutes)	<b>Period 6</b>
<b>Period 7</b>	1:40-3:00 (80 Minutes)	<b>Period 8</b>

# #2: A/B Day with 2 Rolling Lunches and Talbot Time at the End of the Day

A Day	76 Minute Time	B Day
Period 1	8:20 - 9:36 (76 minutes)	Period 2
Period 3	9:40-10:56 (76 minutes)	Period 4
Period 5 + Lunch	11:00 - 12:50 (110 minutes)  <b>Lunch A</b> A Lunch: 11:00 - 11:30 (30 minutes) Class: 11:34 - 12:50 (76 minutes) <b>Lunch B</b> Class: 11:00 - 12:16 (76 minutes) B Lunch: 12:20 - 12:50 (30 minutes)	Period 6 + Lunch
Period 7	12:54 - 2:10 (76 minutes)	Period 8
Talbot Time	2:14 - 3:00 (46 minutes)	Talbot Time

The Board asked about the experiences of other schools that are already using a schedule with fewer, longer class periods, and how students react to spending more time in each class.

Dr. Imbarlina and Dr. Removcik said that it would be important to take a closer look at how teachers and students could utilize the longer class periods and highlighted that a new schedule would enable the teachers and students to work more collaboratively on deeper learning.

Dr. Imbarlina stressed that the Design Committee has much work to do before deciding whether to make a recommendation to the Board. This summer, committee members will collect faculty and community feedback and plan professional learning for the next school year. In the fall, they would like to visit other schools that have this type of schedule. If at that point the committee believes a new schedule would be beneficial at Hampton High School, the committee will bring a recommendation to the Board later in the fall for their consideration.

## Remote Learning Update

The District is beginning its fourth week of remote learning. Dr. Removcik praised the teachers and administrators for doing a fantastic job of transitioning into an online learning environment. Teachers have been asked to identify the essential knowledge and skills that students at each grade level will derive from each course within the remaining part of the school year. That information will be shared with the next grade level teachers as they prepare for the next school year.

Dr. Removcik reported that teachers are using Google Classroom, emails, and videos of themselves teaching, and are selecting the most appropriate method for each grade level.

On “Paws Day,” which occurs each Wednesday, students receive enrichment and intervention services and work with elective and special area teachers. Some teachers have used Google Meet for video conferencing and learning together, but new materials are not covered on Paws Days.

School counselors, teachers, and principals have all worked together to monitor student completion of assignments, Dr. Removcik said. Dr. Loughead praised this incredible collaboration, noting that teachers are working many hours to make remote learning successful.

In response to Board questions, Dr. Removcik stated that the District has been in touch with families who do not have internet access at home, and added that some students have received paper packets of instructional materials through the postal mail. Later in the meeting, Dr. McKaveney said that many local providers are offering free or expanded internet use. Dr. Removcik also said the District has been closely engaged with students who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to ensure their needs are being met. In many cases, those interactions have been one-on-one.

## Facilities

Ms. Cassandra Renninger and Mr. Christopher Brown of VEBH Architects updated the Board on the design of the [Hampton High School renovation](#).

- The Township is planning to build a paved community trail, with lighting, that will lead to Fridley Field, Ms. Renninger said.
- VEBH's discussions with the Township traffic engineer has led to an exploration of splitting the high school driveway to create two entries, one main entry and a secondary entry that would serve the parking area and back of the school. A third driveway would lead to the area near the community ball fields. This plan would keep student and parent traffic separate from bus and staff traffic. At the Board's suggestion, Ms. Renninger said a discussion of means to protect the bus area would be added to a site security work session later this week.
- While the original concept called for two additions, a new concept for one consolidated addition would solve issues related to crowd flow for events held in the gym and accommodate more appropriately-sized restrooms, concessions, and other support spaces. This addition would also allow for the creation of two health classrooms with a folding wall between them, which could be opened to create one large space, adding flexibility. Technology office space would also be located in the area. In addition to these functional benefits, building a single addition would simplify construction phasing and could result in economy of scale in cost savings.
- Ms. Renninger said current planning for the new cafeteria includes creating a food court concept. If the high school moves to a new daily schedule, the cafeteria would be sized and furnished to accommodate groups of students working and eating together. A pick-up window for students ordering ahead of time is also a possibility, as is an area for pre-packaged food service.
- Mr. Brown said that an examination of the 1964-portion of the roof confirmed that it must be replaced. Initial testing found trace amounts of asbestos, but more testing is needed to determine how much and where it is located.
- Other testing will be done inside the building to find any other potentially hazardous materials that must be addressed. A comprehensive report will be delivered to the Board.
- Some studies, such as determining which roof drains should be reconfigured to eliminate drainage issues, completing a survey of the site, and testing water pressure, have to be reworked to uphold social distancing requirements.
- In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Renninger and Mr. Brown said that it was too early to know if social distancing would delay the construction schedule, as it depends on how long the pandemic response would last. Some work can be done remotely, while other tasks, such as building tours and various testing, cannot.

## Finance

### Flexible Debt Resolution to Finance High School

Following an overview by Mr. Vasko, Mr. Kline and Mrs. Chiesa (bond counsel), the Board reached consensus on a parameters resolution allowing the District to sell bonds in 2020 to borrow money for the high school construction project, provided that certain conditions are met. The resolution will state that the board can borrow up to \$12 million at an interest rate of up to 3%.

Board members want to have the resolution in place so that they can respond quickly to any favorable changes in the bond market. Board members and Mr. Kline noted that the resolution provides the District with flexibility but does not require the Board to sell any bonds. It also does not prohibit the Board from taking additional action to borrow additional money if market conditions are favorable.

The Board is expected to vote on the resolution at next week's meeting.

**Food Service**

Mr. Kline reported on proposals for a new one-year food service contract with Metz Culinary Management. To avoid a program deficit of about \$13,000, the District will need to increase the price of breakfast and lunch by 10 cents per meal.

- The price increase would have no impact on students who receive free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch.
- The District’s prices are lower than surrounding school district’s prices by between 10 cents and 30 cents per meal.
- Board members were in consensus that a small increase makes sense. They are expected to vote at their next meeting.
- Mr. Kline and Dr. Loughead praised Metz for [providing packaged lunches](#) each day for those who receive free and reduced-price lunch. Dr. Loughead noted that the employees have been enthusiastic and a pleasure to work with, and families have been very appreciative.

**Finance Recap**

- Revenues are up 3.73% through March. Many delinquent real tax bills were paid, putting delinquent real estate tax revenues back in line with the budget.

The Allegheny County School Health Consortium approved a 3.5% increase in medical insurance and a 6% increase in dental insurance.

**Personnel**

The personnel agenda was presented.

**RESIGNATIONS:**

1. Accept the resignation of Ms. Makenna Krebs, who is resigning effective April 6, 2020. (Ms. Krebs is a Building Substitute at Hampton Middle School.)

**TEACHERS:**

2. Approve Ms. Stephanie Seretti as a Substitute/Grade 8 English-Language Arts Teacher at Hampton Middle School from March 10, 2020 to March 31, 2020 at a salary of \$100 per day, and then approve Ms. Seretti as a “Virtual” Building Substitute at Hampton Middle School from April 1, 2020 through the remainder of the 2019-2020 School Year at a salary of \$21,500, pro-rated. (Ms. Seretti is a Substitute for Ms. Stacie Sespico and then replaces Ms. Makenna Krebs as a Building Substitute.)
3. Approve Ms. Rachel Davis moving from a Long-Term Substitute RtII Teacher at Hampton Middle School to an Elementary “Virtual” Building Substitute at Central Elementary School from April 16, 2020 through the remainder of the 2019-2020 School Year. There is no change in salary. (Ms. Davis is replacing Ms. Lynsey Norman.)

**SUPPLEMENTALS:**

4. Approve the following Building/Coaching Supplemental positions for the 2019-2020 School Year, at a rate of \$136 per point:

NAME	POSITION	BUILDING	POINTS	RANGE	TOTAL STIPEND
Ms. Lori Valentine	Middle School Track Coach Assistant “D”	HMS	15	15/19	\$2,040

(Ms. Valentine had served in this position from the beginning of the track season until the District closure.)

**Policy and Legislative Affairs**

**Second Reading of Policy # 220**

The Board did a second reading of Policy #220: Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials. The Board is expected to vote on adoption at its next meeting.

**Second Reading of Policy # 913**

The Board did a second reading of Policy #913: Requests from Non-School Organizations/Groups/Individuals. The Board is expected to vote on adoption at its next meeting.

## **Second Reading of Policy # 836**

The Board did a second reading of Policy #836: Social Media. This new policy outlines standards and protocols for District-operated and maintained social media accounts, personal/professional social media accounts, and third party social media accounts. The Board is expected to vote on adoption at its next meeting.

## **Technology**

Before asking Dr. McKaveney for his overview, Dr. Loughead praised the Technology Department as a group of unsung heroes for their role in the quick transition to remote learning.

Dr. McKaveney reported the following updates on infrastructure and logistics related to remote learning:

- The District was in a good position to expand the use of technology before social distancing made it necessary.
- Once schools were closed, teachers were provided with just-in-time technology training.
- With permission, technology staff members were also able to remotely control the computers of teachers, employees and students, so any issues that can be easily explained can be handled by IT professionals.
- In response to a Board question on the safety of Zoom usage, he said the District had used Zoom in a more limited way prior to social distancing and already had appropriate security in place to do so. Dr. McKaveney said that media reports of security issues are likely tied to increased use of the service by less tech-savvy people who may not know how to use security settings appropriately. Zoom has since made secure settings the default option to help in this regard.

## **Transportation**

Mr. Kline said the district has been working with W.L. Roenigk for ten years and has benefitted from two “district friendly” five-year contracts with annual increases averaging about 1.8%. The rate the District pays for transportation services is now well below neighboring districts – between 10% and 35% lower. W.L. Roenigk has proposed extending the contract with increases of between 3% and 3.5% for the next seven years. Board members reached consensus on doing so.

The approval of the contract extension will be considered by the Board at the April 13th voting meeting.

## **Public Comment**

There was no public comment. Since tonight was the first virtual Board meeting, Dr. Loughead invited anyone who wanted to comment but was not able to do so to please email him directly using his email address on the [www.ht-sd.org](http://www.ht-sd.org) website. Mr. Wesley also asked that anyone who wanted to comment or ask a question email him or other members of the Board using the contact information on the District’s website.

## **Executive Session**

Mr. Wesley, Board President, announced that the Board would be calling in to a separate meeting for an executive session.