

Shelly Blackman:

[inaudible 00:00:03]

Shelly Blackman:

(silence)

Shelly Blackman:

Hi.

Deborah Polite:

Hi Shelly.

Shelly Blackman:

Hi, how you doing?

Deborah Polite:

I'm good. How are you doing?

Shelly Blackman:

Good. Debby. I got ants in my pants now that I got vaccinated I want to get going.

Deborah Polite:

Good. You're ready to travel now, right.

Shelly Blackman:

Not quite. But at least I went to the Brooklyn museum and the Botanic garden. That's something. I'm not ready to get on an airplane.

Deborah Polite:

No.

Shelly Blackman:

Maybe the subway. I'll take the ferry of the subway into Manhattan, I think.

Deborah Polite:

Okay. That's a start.

Shelly Blackman:

How about yourself?

Deborah Polite:

I'm doing it the natural way. I have an antidote that I'm taking.

Shelly Blackman:

So good luck with it.

Deborah Polite:

Yeah. It's all good. My husband he got his shot.

Shelly Blackman:

It's hard to know what the right thing is. I don't know.

Deborah Polite:

Well, I said, you know, if it comes that you know that it's a legal matter, then I'll do it. But other than that I won't. I'll continue with my antidote.

Shelly Blackman:

I understand.

Deborah Polite:

So that's where I'm at. Hi David.

Shelly Blackman:

Hi David.

David:

Hi, how are you doing Shell, how are you Deborah?

Deborah Polite:

Hi. Sorry for your loss David and your families.

David:

Well, it was more of a friend. Do you remember a lady, her name was Mary Thompson? She worked for-

Shelly Blackman:

Oh, of course.

David:

Yeah. She passed away. That's who we had to go-

Shelly Blackman:

Sorry to hear that.

David:

Funeral mass. She passed away in her sleep, which is a nice way to go, but not good for the family.

Shelly Blackman:

Yeah, yeah.

Jill:

But it is a nice way to go. [crosstalk 00:15:11].

David:

That's the thing.

Jill:

Hi Deborah.

Deborah Polite:

Hi, I'm doing good. How you doing?

Jill:

I'm fine thanks.

Deborah Polite:

Good. Hi Mike.

Michael:

Hi, how are you.

David:

Hello Michael.

Michael:

Hello David.

Nelly Tournaki:

Hi everybody.

Deborah Polite:

Oh, Kathy's back. You're back. You're back.

David:

Hi Kathy, welcome back, wherever you are.

Kathlyn Barret-Layne:

Thank you.

Deborah Polite:

Welcome back.

Lyn:

Hello everybody.

Deborah Polite:

Hi Lyn.

David:

Hi.

Lyn:

David, I knew the Thompson family too.

David:

Oh, okay. Yeah. It was a shame.

Lyn:

Yes.

David:

Because she had cancer and she was doing well and then died of a heart attack in her sleep.

Lyn:

Terrible.

Nelly Tournaki:

Did people know him?

David:

Well, worked for Siemens, I think, and a few other places, but she was living in New Jersey now. Her husband was a financial guy or something. Anyway. It is a shame. As we get older it's too young to die in their seventies.

Jill:

Hi everybody. [crosstalk 00:16:49].

David:

Hello, hello,

Jill:

It looks like we've got a quorum. But we're missing Ken.

David:

I think so. I don't see him.

Lyn:

Denise had to cancel last minute and Robin isn't able to attend either.

Jill:

Okay.

Lyn:

and Darren is attending at 7:30.

Jill:

Well, we've got a quorum so we can begin. So I would like to call the meeting to order. I think everybody has the agenda as well as all the attachments which I hope you read through. There's a lot of substance in those committees. So please take a look at them. But the first order of business is a mission story. And [inaudible 00:17:32] I don't know who's going to do that. Do you?

Lyn:

Yes. Phil Coard was joining us and we spoke with him up here. He is now.

Ken:

He is.

Jill:

Here he is.

Phillip Coard:

Hello.

Jill:

Hi Phil.

David:

Hello.

Jill:

Ken will you introduce him?

Ken:

Sure. Phil is on the faculty at [inaudible 00:17:59] school and his background is in teaching social studies and computer science. And an interesting fact about him is he is passionate about equity and he's also the basis in the Wolfe Tone band.

Deborah Polite:

I can tell by the guitars. He has a lot of guitars in the back.

Ken:

Multi-talented [inaudible 00:18:39] man.

Phillip Coard:

Thank you Ken, thank you.

Jill:

Well, welcome Philip. We have started all of our board meetings by asking one of our faculty members to come and talk about an incident or a story or an event that happened because it's important for us on the board to get a firsthand taste of what it's like for our kids. And so I really appreciate your giving up your evening to come talk to us.

Phillip Coard:

Of course, of course. So I guess what I wanted to share is that I actually organized a digital youth summit about a month ago. And it was advertised by a bunch of teachers and principals at ICS. And we actually had a bunch of students from the culture [inaudible 00:19:30] come to the summit. And basically what it was focused on was you know, we know that in COVID right now, a lot of kids are going through a lot of mental health issues, they're home, they're isolated. So these are some problems that our students are facing and what this summit was meant to do was to provide mindfulness and wellness strategies and things that the kids could take away with them to use in their life when they're feeling stressed or when they they're dealing with mental issues.

Phillip Coard:

Another part of that was we had entrepreneurship workshops. We had music and art workshops, and we had a spoken word poetry piece where the students were creating their own spoken word poetry. And the feedback that I got from a lot of the kids that participated from Nicole [inaudible 00:20:24] Lavelle was that we did a survey and a lot of the kids talked about how it was refreshing for them. They talked about how it was really awesome to be with all their fellow students and participating in that way because that's something that a lot of the kids are losing in this whole experience of COVID is that connection, kinship with their fellow students. And that was just a positive thing that happened for me.

Phillip Coard:

Some of the students talked about, and I have some of the responses. They talked about how they love getting the opportunity to learn something new and to meet other students that they might not have known from other schools. They talked about it was great to connect with other people and not just in this school but in the community. And a lot of the kids really enjoyed doing spoken word because poetry in a lot of ways can be cathartic for them. It's a way for them to, you know the arts or poetry and these things are good ways for them to have release. And it was really awesome that a lot of our kids got to have that experience and they enjoyed it. And it was just something I wanted to share.

Jill:

Great. Any questions for Phil? Are you going to do it again?

Phillip Coard:

Yes, absolutely. It's something that I plan on doing more of.

Jill:

Yeah, Nelly.

Nelly Tournaki:

Thank you Phillip. That's wonderful to hear. But also sad to know that our students are going through a hard time and that their mental health is a big challenge. So in addition to this specific event that you created in order to uplift them, do you find yourself having become a therapist for your students?

Phillip Coard:

I think honestly none of us signed up to be therapists but as educators I think all of us, we see our students a lot. We see them seven to eight hours a day and they open up a lot to us. And I think that by us, not necessarily the therapists but providing them with the space to have that emotional release. I think that's such an important thing for them to feel comfortable and feel like they have a place where they can be themselves. So I think that's important for us to do as educators.

Nelly Tournaki:

Absolutely. Yes. By creating that safe space. Absolutely. Thank you.

Jill:

Any other questions or comments for Phil? I would also add that I think it's really remarkable that you were able to get the students from two schools who don't know each other to participate together. I would understand that that the coach and students know you and would trust you, but Lavelle kids don't. So it's really commendable that you were able to integrate those two groups into, into one event.

Phillip Coard:

Absolutely. I can't take credit for that. I really do have to thank Dori a lot because Dori also shared that with major with her students and a couple other teachers including [inaudible 00:23:31] Gustavo. They spread the word about the event and it was awesome because we actually got the kids to come and it was on a Saturday, which for me we had about 200 students in attendance at this visual summit on a Saturday when kids already zoomed out. I think it was just remarkable. I think the kids are really dying for that. They want that outlet to express themselves. What they wouldn't normally have it in schools they don't really have it in the same way at home. So yeah. I can't take all the credit for that. I think all the principals who shared that information as well.

Joseph Carroll:

Yeah, the idea was a good one.

Phillip Coard:

I'm sorry. What did you say?

Joseph Carroll:

I said the idea was a wonderful one.

Phillip Coard:

Oh thank you. Yeah. It came out really great. I partnered with a Canvas Institute, which is a nonprofit on the Island. And we had a number of sponsors like [inaudible 00:24:24] Edison sponsored it. We had couple of organizations that were able to sponsor it. Provided like we sent journals to all the kids' homes. So we gave them journals because part of the workshop was journaling. Just like writing down your feelings, talking about your feelings. So we got them journals and stuff like that, but it turned out really great. It really exceeded expectations.

Joseph Carroll:

An interesting sort of [inaudible 00:24:51] way of kids getting together outside of the school framework. So I think that was perfect. It was really good thinking on your part Phil.

Phillip Coard:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Deborah Polite:

Hello Phillip. Did you use any type of music with them from time to time?

Phillip Coard:

In my classroom or at this event?

Deborah Polite:

Either at this event or in your classroom?

Phillip Coard:

So at the event I actually deejayed it. It was awesome. We had like a dance party at the end, so everybody kind of got up, got the wiggles out. Everybody was dancing. I was deejaying some stuff. I tried it with my students when they come in. Sometimes I play soft music or I play something as they're coming in. I've been trying to incorporate some of these things into my practice because with the times kids don't really have a lot of space nowadays. Especially a lot of them living at home with multiple siblings, all that kind of stuff to decompress. So that's something that I'm big on. I like using music in mine as well.

Theresa Peterford:

You know you could bring you when we're back in person, like there's nothing stopping you, even though you're a history teacher from bringing in like your base or your guitar. And just kind of like taking a break for a few minutes in between things and playing. I feel not only is your teaching excellent and I know we're always improving our craft, but I've seen some of your work, which has been great. But you also would create that memory. Like I got this like basis history teacher that when we take a break in between stuff, sometimes he's not just playing the music from the computer, but he's actually checking out work, but strumming a little bit on the base. So be creative with that.

Phillip Coard:

Yeah. Maybe. I could DJ for my phone. I have a DJ. They'll do a little five minutes after them.

Michael:

So what are you going to play for us tonight?

Phillip Coard:

I don't know man, I don't know. Only got my base. [crosstalk 00:26:48]. I'm sorry what did you say?

Bonnie Fritz:

Have you thought about a school of rock?

Phillip Coard:

Oh man. So one of my dreams is I have always thought about a music school. I'm in my admin program right now doing my admin license and something I really feel passionately about is students being exposed to the vocations and to the arts. So that's something that would be awesome. I know that Steve Disalvo does it. He's actually my band mate, but I really admire what he does over there. His band is basically a mini version of our band. He does such a great job with it.

Bonnie Fritz:

We'll be standing by for further news on this.

Phillip Coard:

All right. All right.

Jill:

So thank you again not only for coming tonight, but for organizing such a wonderful event and telling us about it. It's really important that we know what kind of effort you're putting in and the benefit to our kids as a result. So thank you again.

Phillip Coard:

Of course. And listen in the future if you guys ever want to do events like that, I have experience and I've made some connections in doing it. So if we ever want to do that as a school or as an organization, I'd be more than happy to help us do that.

Jill:

Great idea. Okay. Moving on to the more mundane parts of our agenda. The first topic is the consent agenda. And this month that consists of adopting tonight's agenda, approving the minutes from the February board meeting, the reports from the executive committee, governance and nominating committee, education and accountability and the president's report. All those items were sent out to you. I hope as I said earlier, that you had a chance to look at them. And is there a motion to accept the consent agenda?

Bonnie Fritz:

So move.

Deborah Polite:

I second.

Jill:

Bonnie and Deborah. Okay. All in favor?

David:

I.

Jill:

Any opposition? Thank you. And one item that wasn't in the consent agenda, I wanted to call your attention to the report of the replication task force which met for the first time and reported out. And you all got the minutes from that task force meeting. Are there any questions about that? Since this is a new task force that was set up to work on the replication of new ventures and they did a lot of work judging from the content of the first minute. So comments or questions about that?

David:

Well, this is David. My question would be I don't think we've seen the RFP yet. So they've spoken and wrote about certain dates within a task force. But I don't know if those dates are realistic since we haven't seen the RFP yet. I don't know if Ken can answer to that.

Jill:

Ken address that one.

Ken:

We're proceeding. There is an RFP out for new charters. The RFP for replications hasn't come out yet. We are assuming until we see otherwise that it's going to be on the same timeline. So we're preparing as if the charter application was going to be due mid-July. And we're doing that even though you're not having seen it we are not entirely sure that we're going to be able to apply. There is contested language that the state education department council has been looking at. And I guess since it hasn't been posted yet, it means they haven't resolved it yet. But we're going ahead as if we'll be able to apply in this round. And if we can't we can't.

David:

Okay.

Ken:

We'll slow down.

David:

Thank you Ken.

Jill:

Other questions or comments? Anything from the committee members, the task force members, excuse me? Okay. Well, thank you all for the work on this, and I'm sure there will be more to come. And again, I encourage you to read the substance of how the school is developing. Okay. The finance and audit committee has a resolution for the board consideration, and Eddy's not here tonight to present it. It's in the minutes. Essentially what the finance committee is recommending is that we approve a one-time bonus for all staff members of \$2,000 in response to the incredible work people have done during COVID. So it'd be \$2,000 for full-time staff members and it'd be prorated for anybody who was less than full-time or who hadn't worked for the whole year. And then the second part of the resolution is to restore the school's contribution to the 401k plan. You'll remember that last spring, the board voted to suspend that because we weren't at all sure about our financial status with COVID and now we've gotten this far along we're very comfortable with restoring that contribution to the employee's 401k. So that's the resolution. I'm sorry Joe?

Joseph Carroll:

[inaudible 00:32:33].

Jill:

[crosstalk 00:32:34]. All right. [crosstalk 00:32:39].

Michael:

I have a question just quick, how many employees we have?

Speaker 16:

234 I don't know if you heard me.

Michael:

234.

Jill:

Yeah.

Michael:

So that's almost-

David:

400,000 give or take.

Michael:

400, 000. And we have enough I assume, cash to cover that? That doesn't put as in a-

David:

Yes. And it won't be that cruel Michael because [inaudible 00:33:11] all year.

Joseph Carroll:

There are various levels of contribution.

David:

Finance has put that money aside for that and plus for resurrecting of the 501K money. So all that money has been put aside.

Shelly Blackman:

Could you just, this is Shelly, could you just give me an idea of, so it's about 400,000 of the bonus, give or take and restoring the 501C3 whatever it is, how much is that?

David:

That was about 600,000 I believe.

Shelly Blackman:

So it's about a million dollars give or take that we're talking about?

Jill:

It's no more. It depends cause we haven't figured out exactly how much the bonuses are going to cost.

Shelly Blackman:

Right. But give or take we're talking about a million dollars. Could you just quickly reflect... And I understand we don't have to put a million dollars in cash. We have to put something like \$400,000 in cash and the \$600,000 goes out over the course of a year.

Ken:

It goes out next January. It's the way it gets paid.

Shelly Blackman:

It has to be paid all at once.

Ken:

There's like a seven or eight month accounting process.

Shelly Blackman:

Right.

Ken:

While Fidelity calculates exactly how much and it gets paid next January.

Shelly Blackman:

Right. So how does that leave us in cash? Or could you comment on what our financial status would be given that-

Ken:

I think this year's operating budget after paying out this additional we ended up 3.5 million positive. That's not counting all the cash that came in this year in those special funds, the PPP and the main street. We did a lot of bulk tightening in anticipation of your preparation for a potential 20% cut in per pupil funding this year. And it didn't happen. So.

Jill:

So there were two things about our revenue that were very encouraging. One is we anticipated really draconian cuts from the state, those didn't materialize. So we continue to receive our normal revenue. In addition, we received the PPE and main street loan, at least PPE was forgiven if you used it to maintain the staff, which we did. So in that sense we're in a very good financial position this year, much better than we had expected. And that gives us the leeway to do these two special things.

Shelly Blackman:

Thank you.

Joseph Carroll:

The committee reviewed all these factors and found it prudent and affordable Shelly. You know it.

Shelly Blackman:

Okay. I just didn't understand it. Thank you.

David:

Shelly, I renew it again that you could come back to the finance committee if you wish.

Shelly Blackman:

I appreciate that I would, if my salary were to increase by 100%.

David:

Well 100% [crosstalk 00:36:40].

Jill:

We can do that Shelly. Consider it done.

Shelly Blackman:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Ken:

You just have to waive the \$2000 bonus-

Shelly Blackman:

That's right.

Jill:

Okay. Any other questions or comments on this resolution? All in favor?

Michael:

I.

Jill:

Any opposition? Great. The resolution is passed. And I understand Ken that the staff will be notified when they returned from the break?

Ken:

Yeah. We're going to notify them tomorrow.

Jill:

Great.

Ken:

So that they have the good news as they say enjoy their vacation.

Jill:

Good. Okay. Now the next item was another resolution about Richmond Prep. And this came out I think yesterday, the admission policy, revisions to the admission policies. And I don't know, Dirk, if you want to comment on this from the education and accountability committee's point of view.

Dirk Tillotson:

Yeah. So this to make the consistent, we historically have had two separate lotteries for most of our schools, so that we can maintain our 40% of special ed students. Under the federal funding if you're getting a certain set of federal funding, you actually couldn't have those two separate lotteries. You had to have a unitary lottery. Having the two separate lotteries allows us to make sure that we really get our 40% of sped kids. From my understanding they did change the federal guidance around the lotteries.

Dirk Tillotson:

And so now we can actually do these two separate lotteries for this school as well. And at the same language that's with our other schools it's really just a way to make sure it's hard to really assure that we get the right mix of kids, unless we have two separate lotteries that kind of take 40% of one kid and 60% of the general ed kids. And that is the design of our model. So it's just changing our policy to make it consistent with that. And there was a change in the way the feds interpreted the law that now allows us to do that was my understanding of it. Where otherwise we'd have to wait until we stop getting this federal money and then we'd amend the charter. And that's what we usually do.

Jill:

So is there a resolution for this item?

Dirk Tillotson:

I'll move it unless people have questions about it.

Shelly Blackman:

I have just one question. Sorry to be a pest. But did I read in there correctly that 12% of the places are held for the relatives of teacher, relatives of staff?

Dirk Tillotson:

I don't... Go ahead Ken.

Ken:

There's a preference for children faculty and staff that which is similar to the sibling preference. There's a limitation on it which is in the statute which I think is designed to prevent kind of parent co-op at schools in which all the slots are [inaudible 00:40:18] it's limited by statute to this 12%. It's always very nice when we have, you know it kind of shows that the teachers believe in the schools when they enroll their kids. I think we've never had more than three at a time. 12% would be over 140, 50 faculty. Dana is doing her best.

Shelly Blackman:

Yeah. I was just thinking of the numbers and it seemed like 12% would be an inordinate amount.

Dirk Tillotson:

That's a lot in reality.

Shelly Blackman:

Yeah. It would be great, particularly since it would probably be the non special need kids. So you get from 12% to 20%.

Ken:

Actually historically most of the faculty kids who pretended have been special needs kids.

Shelly Blackman:

I understand. Okay. Okay. Thank you.

Jill:

Any other questions?

Bonnie Fritz:

[inaudible 00:41:46] wording of the resolution?

Dirk Tillotson:

It's pretty long. There's several-

Ken:

It's written by lawyers.

Dirk Tillotson:

That's the main problem. I can read you the key part. In order to ensure the balance of students with disabilities in general education students RPCs holds two lotteries for each grade in which students are admitted. One for students with disabilities have individ IEP and a second lottery open to all students. Students with IEP will comprise up to 40% of our CPS total enrollment. So that comes out in a bunch of different places within the policy and changes some other pieces that were different. But that's the gist of it.

Jill:

So the new policy has a couple of paragraphs that are changed, but Dirk's right. They basically all just represent that issue of the [inaudible 00:42:44] lottery. Any other questions or comments? Okay. All in favor.

John Strand:

I.

Jill:

Any opposition? Great. Okay. So we have a new Richmond pre-amp admission policy. All right. The next topic is a discussion of success measures. And we've talked about this several times at board meetings, and what we decided would make most sense was to begin with an overview of what are the measures of success that the world applies to our schools, the feds, the department of education, the city, what are people looking at to determine whether or not we're being successful? So that's the background and that's where we're going to start tonight. And Theresa Peter Ford has been very gracious about offering to come and give us sort of a prep on what the current measures of success are.

Jill:

Where we're going with this is in future board meetings I want to look more specifically at the measures of success for our high schools, which I hope we can do in April and then to look at the measures of success for a Lavelle middle school. And then for Lavelle elementary. In addition I would like the board to spend some time discussing what other measures of success besides the ones that are external, do we think are important. As we had talked about we hope at some point in the not too distant future, to be able to develop a marketing campaign and part of that certainly ought to be our talking about what we think are the important measures of success for our kids. And that may include the ones that Teresa's going to discuss, but there may be other topics that aren't looked at by the board of ed or whoever that we think are very important. But I don't think we can have that discussion until we just understand how our schools are measured now. So Theresa, the floor is yours. I really appreciate your doing this.

Theresa Peterford:

No problem. Thank you so much. And I do have my little timer that I'm going to set for 10 minutes because I was told we want to try to keep the one-on-one part brief. And I'm going to share my screen because at heart I am still a teacher and that is how I teach. So just give me one minute so I can share

with you our PowerPoint. Okay. Let me know if you can see what I'm showing you because I really can't see everyone.

Jill:

We see. We can see.

Theresa Peterford:

And is it big enough?

Jill:

Yep. Fantastic.

Theresa Peterford:

So charter schools best in a nutshell basically what I chose to hone in on was the New York state education department's performance framework. I felt like this was, and while it does also touch upon federal measures, one of the most important things, essentially for the board to have a basic understanding of, because this essentially is what gets our schools renewed. We are overseen by this performance framework and then the New York State Education Department. So basically the framework has 10 performance benchmarks and there are three key areas of charter school performance.

Theresa Peterford:

And I'm not going to take any questions right now just because I can't see anyone, but if you have questions afterwards I [inaudible 00:46:19]. The way the framework is used in sort of two different ways it's used during the charter term. When we're talking about taking a look at ourselves and seeing where we stand in relation to the different components of the benchmark and how well we're doing. Two of our schools right now, we're getting ready for our midterm visit from the state, or we're referring back to this framework right now, or to renewal process. And whether it's a five-year or a three-year or a one-year or no renewal, all of that is essentially based on the performance with regards to this framework.

Theresa Peterford:

And today we're going to really just dive deeper into the educational success component, which is benchmarks one to three, but even that's a lot. So we're going to hone in a little bit more specifically on benchmark one. But just so you have an understanding of the three benchmarks, one to three, the first one is around student performance. So they look at proficiency and trends toward proficiency or growth. What proficiency means for the three through eight state exams is a level three. There's four levels, one, two, three, and four, and a level three means you are proficient according to the state. And in high school, it's a 65% for passing or for proficiency. The second benchmark is around teaching and learning. We won't be going too deep into this, or really deep at all into this today, but that's where we're talking about the curriculum, the instruction, the systems that are put in place for program evaluation, principles, making sure that there is effective instruction happening in the building observation, and of course, supporting diverse learners.

Theresa Peterford:

Then we have the third benchmark, which is around school culture, school climate and engagement. And we won't be going into that deeply today, but you can see some of the main components include behavior management, safety, mental health supports, communication, and social, emotional learning. And so this is all based on the 2019 framework, which is the most recent and in this most recent iteration the benchmarks which are also followed by a series of indicators, basically have three sets of ratings. So the state can determine whether you and your school meet that benchmark, whether you're approaching that benchmark or whether you fall far below. And you can see the difference between those three right here. Obviously the goal is always to try our best and hit meets in as many components as we possibly can, but we are learning and growing organization. Therefore we understand that that's not always going to be possible.

Theresa Peterford:

So when we dive deeper into strictly looking at benchmark number one, which is student performance, what I thought was important for you to understand was some of the main components of that benchmark. So the first one is really around accountability and that's based on the every student succeeds act indicators. And every student succeeds act is the federal law that basically relates to public schools and hold schools accountable for the ways that students learn and achieve and making sure that there's equity and equal opportunity for special needs students. And some of the things that they look at in this in the ESSA indicators includes graduation rates, college and career readiness, chronic absenteeism, student growth. It's very, very full. You can Google ESSA and you'll find a lot of information on that federal law. So if you're more interested in that after today, you can certainly go ahead and do that.

Theresa Peterford:

They also look at the way we perform compared to similar schools. So how is our school doing compared to similar schools with similar demographics? We always think about how similar those demographics actually are when we're being compared, because we've had in the past to create many districts and really explain to them you state that who you're comparing us to isn't exactly the apples to apples, right? And how we are unique in terms of our student body, but they are looking at how we compare to other schools in relation to proficiency. They're looking at outcomes, so those scores that I was talking about earlier, how are we in grades three through eight in terms of proficiency and in terms of growth or trending towards proficiency.

Theresa Peterford:

And they look at that for all students as a whole, but they also look at subgroups. And in the next slide we're going to talk a little bit more about those subgroups. For high schools they're looking at outcomes as well. So that's where we see those regions outcomes of a 65 or higher. There's also this college and career readiness score, which essentially equates to a 75 in ELA and an 80 in math on the regions according to the state show that students are college ready. They look at graduation rates as well as on track to graduate. And so oftentimes in our ed and accountability meeting, you later will present different slides on how many credits the students have received and whether or not they are on track to graduate. And those outcomes just like the middle school and elementary ones are looked at for all students, as well as for subgroups.

Theresa Peterford:

So when we talk subgroups we talk about the big three, and I know that you guys just like us have a ton of acronyms, always being thrown at you. It's oftentimes what I call alphabet soup and education, but these are the big three subgroups that we try to dis-aggregate all of our data into, and that the state is quite concerned with. So we have ELLs or English language learners, right. Those are students who have a primary language that isn't English, and they need help reaching that English proficiency. Whether it be services in school or even sometimes out of school. Then we have SWD, which is a Student With Disability. And so oftentimes we call these students special education students. But when we're referring to them, oftentimes with the state, they're going to be called SWD students. And that's when we have a child who has been determined to have a disability and require special education supports, whether it's speech services, a special program, testing accommodations, and they've been recognized as having one of 13 disability classifications.

Theresa Peterford:

And then we have ed, which is economically disadvantaged when we're speaking in relation to the state. ED could also mean emotionally disturbed. So that's how sometimes people get mixed up. But in this case, we're talking economically disadvantaged. So students who are on free and reduced price, lunch, or economic assistance programs.

Theresa Peterford:

This is the last slide I thought it was important because chronic absenteeism did come up in the ESSA indicators, and it's hard to wrap our heads around. So I've actually had about four meetings with Elena since our last board meeting, where I've kind of asked her to help me explain it in a way that will be easier to understand. So when we're talking about attendance rate and chronically absent, what I thought was the first thing to understand is that we're talking about measuring two different things. So the attendance rate is the average percentage of time students are present. So what she does for this is she looks at the actual days present, so if there are 300 students, how many days were they actually present? And then she divides that by the possible days present. And that's how she comes up with that average percentage of time students are present. And so for last month, for example, elementary school was at 94%.

Theresa Peterford:

When we're talking about chronically absent, we're measuring the percentage of students who have been absent for 10% or more of the enrolled school days. And I would like to look at this as a moving target. So if we are at 100 days of school, any student was 10 or more absences would be included in this percentage. If we're at 30, any students who are absent three or more times would be included in that percentage. So the main takeaway here, when we're looking at these two charts, which I know have been quite confusing, and I think Elena's going to also label them a little differently moving forward, but we're measuring different things. So on one, we're looking at percentage of time and on the other we're looking at the percentage of students who have been chronically absent. So I know that was my timer, and we are moving into the discussion mode, but that's basically charter school success in a nutshell.

Jill:

Very impressive. Okay. Questions?

Deborah Polite:

Yes, Teresa ED students, what category are they in?

Theresa Peterford:

So what I wanted to point out, I'm glad your-

Deborah Polite:

Emotionally disturbed.

Theresa Peterford:

Emotionally disturbed students would be SWD. Students with disability if they have been officially classified. So students who maybe have struggles, but don't actually have an IEP and haven't been classified, they wouldn't count in the state's measures for SWD. They're looking at actual students who are classified.

Deborah Polite:

Thank you. I thought so but I just wanted to be sure.

Theresa Peterford:

Sure.

Jill:

Bonnie, you had your hand up?

Bonnie Fritz:

We discussed also the impact of sequential absentees, as opposed to those spread out. Do you collect that anyway?

Theresa Peterford:

Yes. So that would be another measure of like long-term absences. So when we're talking about chronic absences, I'm going to give you that a hundred days example, if it's the hundredth day of school and Theresa missed 10 sporadic days, they weren't sequential and they were kind of cumulative, I would still count in that measure. If it's the hundredth day of school and I missed 10 days because I have flu, I would still count in that measure. When we're talking about long-term absences, which I did not include in this presentation that's when we're talking about consecutive days. Students who have consecutively missed a number of days in a row. And yes, that is another measure and that is something that our attendance teams do pay very careful attention to because those students need to be addressed quite differently than the student who on the 30th day of school had three absences because they had a cold and their parent kept them home. So the long-term absence status is looked at and it is really important. Great question.

Jill:

Doris you had a question.

Doris Schueler:

Yeah. I was wondering if you have any information as to which of those three categories are chronically absent more so, or what the proportions are. In other words of the chronically absent kids, how many

are economically disadvantaged? What percentages are each of those three categories so that we might be able to earmark what's happening in terms of the absences.

Theresa Peterford:

That's an excellent suggestion. I'm pretty sure we have them. I don't have them right now, but what I can do if you think it would be helpful. And I do think it would be helpful is when we do at accountability meetings, we can ask Elena to dis-aggregate, so that way we can tell of the chronically absent students, how do they measure in terms of that big three? I think that that could be very helpful. We're looking at it, but I think sharing that data would be really important. So that's a great suggestion.

Doris Schueler:

And also this is just for this year, this data?

Theresa Peterford:

So the attendance data that I showed just now was literally just from March to give you an example of what it looks like when we presented at accountability. And look at the two different charts to sort of have a better understanding because the charts look really similar and they're measuring different things. And I think it's been really hard for many people. And I can't exclude myself to kind of wrap our heads around what the two different measures are and how we can explain the two different measures. And so that's what I wanted to do. That data though was just from the March meeting.

Doris Schueler:

Okay. Thank you.

Deborah Polite:

Theresa. Go ahead Shelly.

Shelly Blackman:

Just as one who comes from years of trying to assess mental health interventions, which is complicated like this, I hate complications and I wish, I'm allowed to wish I guess, I wish we had a simple way of assessing outcomes. Forgetting everything about process. Whether the kids are absent or not absent or eat lunch or don't eat lunch, just with teaching arithmetic is there a test of arithmetic to assess capability arithmetic? Is that enough for us or am I missing something?

Theresa Peterford:

That's more of a discussion question, Jill. Unless you want to open it up to discussion now, or if you want to throw any more like specific questions to the presentation, but that's up to you.

Jill:

Well, people can always ask questions, but let's follow up on Shelly's question. Right? So clearly Shelly, there is a measure, right? There's a math score that people are looking at. I don't know what that means. I don't know how to interpret it. If a kid gets whatever the number was, I forget now 75% or something.

Theresa Peterford:

For grade three to grade eight test, it's a level three for proficiency at school, just focus on that 65 for proficiency for the regions. So yeah, there is that measure, but I guess Shelly, what I would say, and I don't want to hog the discussion, but what I would say is that they're looking at that. So they're actually looking at that end outcome, but they're also factoring in other things, because if you have a school and the kids could take the test with their eyes close and get a level four but they're not coming or it's not a good environment and it's not an environment where their social emotional needs are being met and all things that maybe we would get into more with benchmarks two and three, the state wants to look at that too. They don't want to just see what the end goal is like, can this kid just pass the test? Because at the end of the day, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to be successful. We need more well-rounded kids. So I can understand that portion of looking at all of those other important pieces of the puzzle I could say for myself.

Shelly Blackman:

Well that's a very important thing you said because it implies that the outcome measures have to be more than academic achievements. You're talking about some social, emotional measures as well. That's a very important statement.

Jill:

Yeah Ken.

Ken:

I think particularly about these tests, the grade three to eight test. They're developed kind of as a crude measure to see how the states were doing. Which states were doing a better job at educating their kids. As a way of evaluating how kids are doing which is how we start to use them, they're a very flawed tool. So kids are grouped based on what grade they're in. Kids entering first grade there's a years difference in age. There's still a years difference between the oldest kids in third grade and the youngest kids in third grade, even if nobody gets retained. Because they're lumped in this cohort and it makes a big difference when you're little, whether you're a year older or a year younger.

Ken:

And there's nothing that doesn't get taken into account in the way that it's kind of [inaudible 01:03:38]. The other is that it's assuming that everybody is this developing developmentally at the same pace. And some kids are ahead of the kids developmentally. And we see that in our middle school kids. Most of our kids come in behind. Some of that may be due to that they got poor instruction in elementary school. Some of it's due to the fact that they're developing more slowly. The fact that our kids catch up, for instance, in ninth grade and pass the algebra regents in ninth grade, even though their eighth grade scores predict that they will never graduate from high school. Is your part because we're [inaudible 01:04:38]. But it's partly because this is a really flawed tool for measuring how individual kids are doing.

Jill:

Bonnie.

Bonnie Fritz:

We talked a little bit in education and accountability about the different types of outcomes. And of course the obvious one is what Theresa started with, which was did you make the grades so you can

pass and get the charter renewed and so forth. But then there were other outcomes too that were also significant. And how we get at those? And I think you talked about the map test, and then you also bring in a company called the premier assessment. Was that an attempt to get at some of these other characteristics that could help qualify success?

Theresa Peterford:

So that's a good question. So yes and no. So I want to say for example, this year we weren't sure if we were going to have the June regions. And so we brought in this company to sort of do a mock version of it. Yes. So we can see for ourselves how the students are doing on something that's not bias created by an outside company and it's being scored by our teachers. But also so that way we can present in our story to the state, not just say we didn't have a test so we didn't do anything to see where our kids are. We can say we have this standardized measure that we invested in. The math test was actually recommended to us by David Frank as being one of the better indicators for performance on state exams. It's still new. So whether or not it's going to be really helpful in other ways is kind of like the jury is still out and we've spoken to other schools, some of who have been using them for a really long time and have found them somewhat helpful and some of them haven't. But essentially again, a way for us to do the math testing, let's say multiple times a year and see how are students progressing? And it's our own internal measure that we can then utilize.

Theresa Peterford:

But yes. Does it have a relation to the state? Yeah, we're hoping it can be predictive so we can intervene early if we can see how students are performing on that math assessment. And one other thing about the state tests, like, let's say this year it's going to be one day, but typically it's administered over a couple of days, period. That's just a one day or two day snapshot. It assumes that every kid's a good test taker. It assumes that that kid didn't have a horrible day that day and didn't wake up dealing with a ton of issues at home. And so that's another reason why I do wish we had more of like a portfolio outcomes measure with the state. Maybe one day they'll shift to something like that. But I think Ken hit the nail on the head when it's, it's not just about looking at our school, they want to compare us to other schools and then compare states, I guess at a federal level so I don't know if we'll ever see that day.

Joseph Carroll:

You were responding to the ground rules. It is what it is. You doing what you have to do Theresa. It's the right thing.

Theresa Peterford:

We're trying.

Ken:

So the payoff for our kids is graduating from high school. That's a really big deal. And the goal is for them to graduate ready for college, whether they choose to go immediately to college or not. And we're not there yet. We're really good on the graduation rates. Probably groups we're compared with where we have graduation data, which is both New Ventures and the Vale. It's a really outstanding outcome. We're not where we want to be in terms college readiness yet, some of our kids graduate, they're like we're going to CSI. We're not going to be ready or not ready to start taking the college courses right away. They have to do more prep. But it's still where many of our kids are coming from. It's a big step up from what the likely outcomes were, four or five, six, seven years earlier.

Joseph Carroll:

You're absolutely right about that Ken, but also I think not only getting towards academic success, the other issue, I don't know who mentioned it, but someone did, the social and emotional support that our faculty and our staff provides these students, one, it's something to behold. It's wonderful. It's wonderful. Now I think going back to Jill's point of things to market, that's probably an unrealized marketing arena, but I think we should be thinking about that at some point.

Ken:

Next month, I think you're going to hear from the New Ventures team who have been part of a task force in the state working with state education department and another transfer high school on your proposals for some supplemental measures that might be added, which will help reflect some of these things. Like a work benefits measure. There's no work readiness measure in any of this even though the fed sort of wanted in the ESSA stuff but there's no way of measuring it right now. They just say sort of if you pass the algebra regents in the English regions you're ready for work which is not really quite enough.

Joseph Carroll:

Deal with the public, you're not ready for work.

Theresa Peterford:

But Joe, I think that for me what I do appreciate about the framework is that benchmark three, which we didn't get into today in great detail, it does touch upon that culture climate and student and family engagement. And there are some social emotional and mental health support pieces to that. It's just that the focus of benchmark one is student performance. So we really didn't elaborate on it or get into it, but I am happy that the state did include that in benchmark three because it is a key component when we're educating, like I said before, like a whole child, you can't just focus on the academics and completely ignore the rest. And one goes hand in hand with the rest. You know one goes hand in hand with the other, you can't just separate the two.

Ken:

Further down on the list they look at governance, that's when they interview you guys.

Deborah Polite:

Theresa I just have one followup piece. You explained to our committee, the ED committee what happens to students who have an emotional episode, a mental health episode and are hospitalized. Can you just explain for the rest of the board?

Theresa Peterford:

Yes. So there was a question about, so a student is hospitalized, are they now considered a long-term absentee or where does that fall? And so what I was explaining was fortunately in our charters, we do have the provision where if a student is hospitalized, they can come back to us. But once they do go into that hospital school, they essentially do come off of our ATS roster and they would be getting a different code for that time. And then once they're ready to come back, that's when they'll come back onto our ATS and our charter, at least, I know for Lavelle, Ken you can speak more to this, but it really specifically had that thought in mind. [inaudible 01:13:11] we don't want to just say sorry, you lost your seat. You're

out. No, we're here for students with emotional challenges that's going to happen and has happened. So they do have that opportunity to come back.

Ken:

Yeah. Specifically when they're in a hospital program, they're still entitled to public education. And if they're hospitalized in New York city the DOE provides that instruction if they're in a state hospital that's provided by state education department teachers. I guess employed by state health department teachers in the state hospital, or other kinds of state facility. The kids get the free public education that they're entitled to. We say in our charters that the kids can come back. If they're removed for whatever reason. It's not just for hospitalization. We've had kids whose families were placed in shelters in the Bronx and couldn't travel. Weren't able to get to Staten Island for school and then when they returned to Staten Island we take them back. We don't fill their seat if their intention is to come back.

Theresa Peterford:

And those hospital teachers do consult with our teachers as well. So it's not just like they go in and they have no idea. We have to fill out forms and there's meetings. And we talk about where the student is and what they're needing and missing. And so that's I think a source of comfort as well.

David:

Ken can I ask you a question about the going into the Bronx, as you had made an example. Where do they get schooling? You know that they've been transported Bronx. They hope to come back to Staten Island, but it could be a month before they get back or even longer.

Ken:

They're usually placed by the city assigned to a district school. Although we had one case, in fact where the mothers [inaudible 01:15:59] the kid from the shelter in the Bronx to Lavelle every day.

Theresa Peterford:

That student actually was also entitled to transportation through like the McKinney Vento, which is for displaced and homeless students and the McKinney-Vento act. And so if the family maybe was displaced, let's say to Brooklyn, but still felt like it was a reasonable food. Yeah. There were supports in place to get them to school. But ultimately with that student in the Bronx at the end of the day, I think after a while, it did get a little taxing. And so that's when maybe they would say, I want to go to my district school and then come back when I'm back on the Island.

David:

Okay. Thank you.

Ken:

If this possible we try and work with the parents and families and implement the plan that works best for them. Their choice.

David:

Can I have one more question then. The bottom line with all of this is that if the student doesn't get the grade that's necessary for the regions, is there anything we can do to put that student ahead?

Theresa Peterford:

Yes.

David:

Okay.

Theresa Peterford:

Great question. So what we're talking about in my presentation was sort of how the state judges the school, right? But when we look at individual students, for example, a student with a disability, doesn't have to get a 65. There is actually a lower threshold and there's multiple ways of doing it. So I would explain it, but it's a couple of different scenarios. There's also like a superintendence exception where if there is a student who's demonstrated certain proficiencies we can do appeals on the Regents exams and they haven't passed, they've taken it three times. They've demonstrated proficiency in another way. And then there are processes for that. But of course that information does get factored into that you're talking about how does the world view us? Right. So although that's really helpful for the student and it's helpful for us because we want to see the students succeed, that information still gets factored in when the state is saying, hmm, you're ready for your renewal, are we going to give you a one year, two year, three year, four year, five year and they're looking at all of that information. They're basically looking to see how many students did hit those proficiency levels along with trending and all those other things that I spoke about earlier, but for the individual student, we can do certain things to help them get through.

Ken:

In that process I'm the superintendent at the time. I know it sounds crazy. I think that's the tip of the iceberg of what we do. Part of the advantage of the small talk, because we can get kids to get very close to graduation and then for some reason it start giving up. And what often makes a huge difference for them as they get in that last lap is it's the principal who's personally calling them and their parents, and you're working on a plan for how is this kid going to get this last course out of the way, rather than your one course short of graduation no pudding. And the small school, the small schools that we have with the principals really can get directly involved with every single kid who's in danger of not graduating. It was one of the things I think that makes a huge difference. And we're very good at that. When kids are less than one year away, they get to that where they could graduate in that year, that almost a hundred percent of our kids make it which is very high. When kids get close our teams find ways to keep them in the race.

Jill:

And we will talk more next month measures we looked at tonight are necessary, but not sufficient. We've got to be able to meet those measures of success if we want to continue operating. But I think we all agree that there are probably other additionally important ways to look at our success. And as Joe said, it's up to us to articulate what those are so we can translate it to the public. But this was a really good grounding Theresa. I appreciate it very much. I think we all learn stuff and there will be more to come in the next couple of months. Any final questions or comments for Theresa? Thanks again. That was great.

Theresa Peterford:

You're very welcome. I'm happy to do it and I'll be probably here supporting the high school's next meeting as well.

Jill:

Great. Okay. The next item is the dashboard which was sent out and you all have, I hope you're looking at it because there's useful information on our financial status, the cash flow, our enrollment and our special need kids enrollment as well as the board of attendance. So I think it's a helpful snapshot of where we are each month and it's worth considering. Okay. Is there any new business from anyone? Hearing none is there a motion to adjourn?

Dirk Tillotson:

Shelly and Michael, second. Okay. All in favor.

Bonnie Fritz:

I.

Dirk Tillotson:

Any opposition? Thank you very much.

Deborah Polite:

Good night.

David:

Good night everybody.

Theresa Peterford:

Happy holiday. [crosstalk 01:22:15]

Michael:

Have a good holidays.

Speaker 16:

Theresa.

Theresa Peterford:

Yes.

Speaker 16:

Sam, can you and Theresa hang on and Elaine for one second.

Theresa Peterford:

Yes. Sure. And you know we're still recording, right?

This transcript was exported on Mar 26, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

Speaker 16:

Yup. Don't worry I'm not going to say anything bad Theresa.

Theresa Peterford:

I'm only asking because my professor to stop recording before I asked the question at the end of the class last week and they didn't even realize it.

Ken:

Could we stop the recording?

Lyn:

I think we can. I'm going to try to look at that.

Theresa Peterford:

I got it.

Lyn:

You got it?

Theresa Peterford:

Yep.

Ken:

Hey guys, before I lose this-