EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES MEETING
April 1, 2020
Video Conference (ZOOM)
7:00 P.M.
Minutes

I.   **The Chairman,** Damary Bonilla, called the Education Programs & Resources Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Coleen Joseph called the roll.

II. **Board Committee Members Present:** George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Damary Bonilla and Debbie Kulick.

III. **School Personnel Present:** Brian D. Baddick, Tabitha Bradley, Ryan Moran, Heather A. Piperato, William Riker, Coleen Joseph, Joe Formica, and Scotto Hnasko

IV. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

RECOMMENDATION: Motion was made by Rebecca Bear to approve the agenda for April 1, 2020 and with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action in the best interest of the District. Motion was seconded by George Andrews and carried unanimously, 4-0.

RECOMMENDATION: Motion was made by George Andrews to approve the minutes from the March 4, 2020 meeting. Motion was seconded by Rebbecca Bear and carried unanimously, 4-0.

V.   **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**
  a. Learn from Home Program

  Dr. Bonilla mentioned that today's meeting was supposed to discuss Middle School Programs and Resources this evening, but considering the present crisis and the amazing work that the district has being doing with the Learning from Home Program, it would be better for the administrative team to walk us through the Learning from Home Program, a great opportunity to talk about some successes and also talk about some changelleges and recommendations.

  Mr. Moran thanked community members that were able to join this virtual meeting and explained how each participant will be able to participate. To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency all participants' microphones have been muted, an opportunity will be provided after all of the presentation is made. The raise your hand feature will be used to provide all public participation or comment. For the purpose of public participation time, our focus is to provide comments on the information shared in the meeting. For all questions about the Learn from Home program as well as requesting a device, it is asked that they submit a form online.

Mr. Moran thanked all the teachers, staff and administrators, for the countless hours contributed for two and a half weeks to make the return to school a reality this week. It was a monumental task to move the entire district to a Learn From Home model, This evening the Curriculum Instruction department will provide an overview of the Learn From Home Plan including its current status as well as our plans for the next few weeks.

Our journey began just over two weeks ago, when the Governor of Pennsylvania announced the closure of our schools, many teachers and administrators, and staff responded in many ways to support our students and families for the first two weeks before we began the Learn From Home Program. Teachers and administrators communicate and engage with our students either via a phone, email or social media and through the use of many other forms of technology. Without being provided that directive they took the initiative to continue to engage our students and we are very thankful for that. Teachers also purposely created a list of Instructional Resources which was organized by grade level and subject, that was posted through our District website, which was just another way to ensure that families were able to engage students in learning while we were not in session.

This week the Launch of the Learn from Home Program, a program that has two components: (1) A Digital Learning platform as well as a (2) Non-Digital Program for family members that may not have access to the internet, but want to continue to be engaged in our learning process. On Monday we began the Learn from Home Program. We were able to send paper materials to over 120 families throughout the district so that their students could engage in learning this week. The remaining students started their digital learning platform. At the Elementary level (K-5) we have students on google classroom, learning classrooms that were designed by our Elementary Teachers and administrators. Dr. Bradely will share more specific information on what that looks like and what our next steps are with that program. In Grade 6-8, we were able to utilize our Cyber Academy's platform, *Edgenuity*. A lot of gratitude is owed to Dr. Vitulli and his entire staff for moving all of our students in Grades 6-12 into our Cyber Academy learning platform, one that we are already seeing the benefits of. We appreciate the amount of work that Dr. Vitulli and his staff did and continues to do.

Our focus in our Learn From Home Program, these first two weeks is a transition period, it's a period that our focus is to reconnect and reengage students. We wanted to ensure that we took the time first to reconnect and reengage and also that we have enough time to ensure that all students are able to access learning, whether digitally or non-digitally. We still have work to do and continue to do this week to provide families with devices upon their request. That two week transition period is

extremely purposeful to ensure that by week three we have all students prepared and ready to continue their learning for the remainder of the school year.

Dr. Bonilla thanked Mr. Moran.

b. **Program Overview**

1. Elementary Level Program

Dr. Bradely stated that she couldn't be more proud of how our staff worked around the clock to ensure a successful launch for our Learn From Home Program on March 30th. We developed a framework for learning experiences and academic support for 3,000 students and professional support for 190 plus teachers in three days. The decision making considerations were tackled along that way.   The context of our decisions - **What did we know?** (1) We knew that young learners would need more support; (2) We knew that we had devices for grades 3-5 that didn't go home with our students at that time; (3) 97% of our families had access to the internet; (4) Our staff had devices and used digital components of our instructional resources that could also be downloaded for non-digital learners; (5) Our students were familiar with our instructional resources in both digital and non-digital versions; and (6) We had teachers who were utilizing google classrooms. **What we didn't know was -** (1) How long would this go on as we were at the onset of this crisis? (2) We didn't know the families' level of comfort in supporting their learners at the Elementary level and our own staffs' access to the internet at their homes. Some considerations that we had to think about - we wanted to keep our students' minds and hearts busy and happy. We knew that our school community was facing uncertainty. We knew we wanted to make the learning experience user friendly for families. We designed a weekly, theme-based Elementary Program that incorporates all course subjects, specials and access to academic supports. Through the use of weekly choice boards our program was created uniformly by a design team of grade level experts that push out the content both in digital and non digital form. Our newly formed distribution team oversees that work, and also ensures that the accompanying non-digital materials address the same standards that were offered to our digital learners.

We are working in phases. **Elementary Phase 1** - The first week of Learn from Home will focus on developing new online and offline routines, as well as focus on skill review and practice. This will allow family and staff to become more acclimated to new learning experiences, students will have access to course subject activities as well as specialist activities through choice boards. Academic support teams will be added to homerooms with their students and have begun designing their own systems during this phase. **Phase 2** - The weeks following: Focus on deeper understanding of knowledge and concepts as well as review and practice. The paraprofessionals will begin phasing into their own classroom in week three, while continuing to maintain a choice board for non-digital learners. Our academic support team members will have specialized choice boards available, where appropriate and will continue to explore the logistics of small group support. As we continue to plan our design team has

developed protocols and schedules to continue the plan and support our students throughout a Learning From Home Program.

Dr. Bonilla thanked Dr. Bradley for the clear break down .

Mr. Moran stated that if there are no questions we will have Mrs. Piperato share the program at the secondary level.

2. Secondary Level Program
Mrs. Piperato stated that decision making for our 6-12 population, **What did we have to consider?** - We knew that 6-12 had devices already, we conducted a survey and we also knew that the large majority of our students and families had internet services at home already. We also knew that if everything stayed the same at this point our new graduation date would be June 16th, how do we keep to that because that really was the latest that we wanted to go and of course this was the early stages of Covid 19. How do we build a program for students that will withstand some of these changes in decisions that may come down from both the Federal and State Education Department. The considerations for us, we had a different set of considerations for Intermediate and High school level. High school level, the first consideration was the turnaround time that we will really need to launch this to really be online ready. This is digital learning from home for families. Third consideration was attendance for students if we had to. Progress monitoring - give families   a measure of how the students were doing in the pacing of the course. Professional support, we need to consider how much professional support were we going to give our teachers and where that professional support would come from. The level of student independence, we have independent students at the high school level and a less independent at the middle level, so we had to take that into consideration. Then the need for support services for some of our students with disabilities. In addition to all of those Intermediate levels carried another set of considerations. There were some scheduling differences, at the intermediate level, we had to be careful with what program we choose, if we stated very much the same there were someTheming differences between the middle schools. The second part about scheduling, we had to pay attention to was the number of classes that Intermediate Level students have. They have two blocks of specials or electives and within that six day cycle. They can see up to three different teachers, so if you lay that on an online schedule it means that our students would have had 11 classes as a middle level student. The biggest consideration was the ease of families, we looked at mirroring the themes that Elementary had in some ways that 6 -8 population is like high school in other ways that 6-8 population is like middle school. We wanted to make sure we keep that continuity so we made the same themes as K-8. Student choice, we wanted to also give a lot of student choice in our selections, we wanted to pick a tool that would not be so difficult for families to navigate. Lastly, grading was a lot of considerations, what we solved for High school and what we solved for Intermediate. For High School when we look at the level of content that Edgenuity offered, about 140 of our current classes out of 190 shifted to Edgenuity. Then we had about 40 classes migrated to google classroom, 20 of those 40 teachers already had a google classroom and students were already used to getting into it. So the learning curve there was very small. We have staff at 6-12 of about 24-30 trained teachers in google classroom they have been going through a 3-year professional development on Instructional technology and how to really deliver that well,

so they offered their services to their peers, who had not done google classroom before so they offered their professional support, we had a strong professional support system in place. We had another category of other, at the Highschool level we try to differentiate our opportunities for students. We have been pursuing out of the box thinking for students who are going to leave, to make them competitive in what it is they want to pick after high school. We had dual enrollment classes and students how to navigate that with Northampton College. MCTI students, what are they going to do, had to come up with a solution jointly for that. A lot of AP students, what is the College Board going to do, all this was at the early stage. Unfortunately, there were a number of classes that were so hands-on that there was not a Technology solution for it. It came down to two classes that no matter what we couldn't figure out a solution for which were a Drama II class and a Piano class. In addition, we had to cancel a class for one student that was in CAD. Those were done in phases. We decided that we were only going to deliver on Edgenuity five core classes that every middle level student would take (Math, English, Science, Social-Studies, and Reading). We made one exception, some eighth graders were taking a full year language course for high school credit, they continued that online. In Phase 3, Choice board electives, our students can access this once a week at the middles level, go into their Edgenuity account and click on the choice board link. The student can choose one of the different projects out of 11 subject matter every week. This is linked with Elementary so that families can work on these projects together if they have children at elementary and middle level, if they choose to do that. The very last piece that we are still working in conjunction with Pupil services is connecting of our special education teachers into our classes in Edgenuity and Google Classroom classes to begin to help our regular education teachers, to modify any content and learning experiences that our students with learning disabilities may need to be able to have the same content and have the same success with the material.

Mr. Moran thanked Mrs. Piperato.

Dr. Bonilla, stated that she appreciated the background and the overview of what those steps are from the thought process to implementation, and knows that we are still testing for the first few weeks and we are not grading.

Mr. Moran mentioned there are many moving parts and a lot of work ahead that has to be done and continues to be done to make the Learning from Home program a success. We purposely built this in phases. Phase 1 - really was to ensure that all students and all teachers had the ability to have access to that learning, whether though digital or non-digital and we know that we still have devices to distribute that we are working through to get into the hands of students. But our goal for that first two weeks was that the core content teachers as well as the special education teachers were able to begin providing support to students. As we move forward during the next few weeks, we will be bringing in additional staff and support services to provide support to students. For example, counselors supporting students virtually, paraprofessional and student aides supporting students. I know Mr Baddick and his team were working hard to do that. Our first goal was to ensure that we had courses ready to run, beginning this week, Monday, which we were able to accomplish.

Dr. Bonilla asked Mr. Moran to tell how many Phases are in the program?

Mr. Moran stated that Phase 1 was really the transition period, that we wanted to make sure that we had the students prepared as well as staff. Phase 2 really begins week three, where we are starting to enter what does this now look like, we know that we are going at least until April 30th, so the next phase is starting with onboarding other staff members and support systems. It's just those two phases that we are focusing on now.

Dr. Bonilla asked if we are building the phases as we go? Because we did hear from the governor this week that there is an indefinite date for returning and would like to know what we are anticipating.

Mr. Moran stated that the decisions that we are making really come from two different lenses, one was the anticipation that we come back, so what type of plan that we need to put in place in the event that we come back that we have a seamless transition from virtual to back into the classroom with teachers. The other lens was that the program has to be flexible enough to work in the event we don't come back, and can we continue to provide the Learn From Home Program for the next 8-9 weeks. So we are really trying to look at it from both lenses, and we have to accomplish that, knowing that there is a strong possibility that we are not going to come back. So the decision that we are making is the same decision but we know that whatever that decision is we will be able to meet both, possible return and the possibility that we don't return. So some of that right now is the continuity of education, continuity of learning. Our focus was that we didn't want to just provide activities for students to do voluntarily or on their own that was more review practice from the beginning. We made a conscious effort to say we want to continue learning, so that if we do return, students would be able to do that and can continue with the education with the teacher in front of them. So the goal was that we ensure continued learning.

Dr. Bonilla asked , if Phase 2 can be week 3 to week 9 if needs be?

Mr. Moran stated that what makes it look different is how we are adding to the support, we are all learning this at the same time. How do you provide support to students from the classroom teacher to the supplemental supports through virtual means. We are confident that we can do that through the next nine weeks.

Dr. Bonilla stated that from a personal lens that she sees the need for her boys. At MSE the guidance counsellor recorded a video and shared that with students and that was additional emotional support for her boys, and already looked at a list of services, knowing their strengths and weaknesses, with parents becoming teachers it's definitely good to know that as a school district we are thinking ahead.

Dr. Bonilla asked if Mr. Moran or someone on the team can talk us through, what you are seeing as some of the successes so far, and challenges and what supports are needed and how the school board and this committee can do to assist and be of support to you and would love to address at some point the user friendliness at the end of day 3.

Mrs. Bear asked, is there a set time that the students need to log in? Are teachers monitoring the students progress? Are the teachers reaching out to parents to see if they need help?

Mr. Moran stated that it is a recommendation for all students to start by 9:00 a.m. daily. It is not a requirement. We know online learning but with the complexity of the world presently we don't know what each household is going through that's why we grant the flexibility for students to login anytime. The teachers are available from 7:30 - 9:00, planning and prep, then instruction starts at 9:00 a.m., teachers have office hours where they are available to assist students and families. It is a requirement that they login each day and check in. We will be providing further communication to our students and our families as we begin week 3 with specific instructions and expectations.

Ms. Bear asked if a student does a full week's lesson in Geometry on Monday, does that student still have to login?

Mr. Moran stated that they will still need to login, we are encouraging student to not work ahead. As Mrs. Piperato shared this is not a true cyber academy program for all students that choose to go digital, most students were unable to make that choice, due to what is occurring on the outside. We want to try to keep students together as much as possible, so that teachers can facilitate through the use of zoom or google meet the opportunity to meet. It would be helpful that students are around the same instruction with other students, as well if we were to return it would help if students stay with their classes as much as possible. We are not preventing someone from working ahead, but we are recommending that they manage their time to work on tasks on a daily basis and try to stay with their class as much as possible. It would allow us to provide support better. Your question regarding contacting students and parents, that is our goal during this transition period for these first two weeks is to make sure that all students have logged in and are participating. If we notice that that is not happening, the first line of defense just like if we were sitting in the classroom, would be the teacher reaching out to the students, if that's not a success then we reach out to the parent, if that's not successful, then its involving resources at your building, your school counsellor, your administrative team, to reach out in different ways so that all students are accounted for and on the road to participation.

Ms. Bear asked if the grades will show up in Sapphire for parents to monitor?

Mr. Moran stated that grading is probably one of those questions that would come up very often. A final decision has not been made, we will be engaging our teachers and our administrative teams tomorrow to get their input on what grades would look like for the fourth quarter.

Ms. Bear asked if as of now grades wouldn't show up in Sapphire ?

Mr. Moran stated that for the first two weeks it was non graded it was feedback only.
That was very purposeful to ensure that students had enough time to transition to either digital or non-digital platforms. To connect, engage, and also provide feedback to students.

Ms. Bear asked so after a week and a half later will grades go into Sapphire?
Mr. Moran stated that once we make a final decision, after getting input from our administrators and our teachers, we will release that information to our families.

Dr. Bonilla stated that that would be kind of a tricky area for us, because it is so new, even with her two kids that are actually in the same grade you could see differences in terms of strengths and weaknesses, the consistent communication between the teachers and students and family would be critical with the students' success. Then as Mr. Moran talked about tieing in the different support, the guidance counsellors and others. Class dojo was a platform where principals shared morning videos, it is an opportunity where they share announcements and teachers used that platform to start the day. There is consistency and continuity.

Mr. Moran stated that it is important to know that there are a lot of variables to consider. First and foremost our goal is to ensure access for students to continue to participate in learning. Learning is going to look different. We have to consider several different things. We also have to consider the independence level when we say students are independent enough. It is a family commitment for students in grades K-5. Their independence levels would be different. Are students independent enough? As we hit week three and students are engaged in learning.

Dr. Bonilla stated that one strategy that has been helpful with Dr. Riker as the District leader is the opportunity via video, is sharing sensitive information, critical information, timely information, with a face is a really good opportunity for us, if we can engage teachers with more video opportunities that would be good as well.

Mr. Moran stated that the only information that he will add as we move forward are some decisions that impact students' grades. One was the courses that we were unable to hold through Edgenuity/Google Classroom. We were able to get those down to two courses. Students were enrolled in those courses and we will honor the work that they have completed thus far. And they will receive credit for those courses that were unable to run. This information and the decisions that we make on grading will go to families so that they can review that information before we start week three starts. Our next step is to continue to collaborate with our administrators and teachers regarding the accountability piece.

Dr. Bonilla stated that one of the pieces that we should make sure that we have daily accountability and connectedness so that the student and the teacher can communicate and stay engaged.

Mr. Moran stated that for week two it was incorporated that the student provides a daily response. We will continue to increase these opportunities as we move forward.

Dr. Bradley added that we have a dynamic design team at the elementary level. We have two technology coaches who have been supporting us in two ways first building master classes so that we can push out equitable content to every child within our district and secondly providing the professional learning support for our staff. It was their request that we phase these elements into the digital learning. With week one being the transitional week and then gradually adding in those communication tools and check-ins and making sure that families can get into the classrooms, navigate those sections we have laid out for the children and the choice boards and the modified activity choice boards, the audio attached to those choice boards. And then week two they felt that they would be available to support teachers who weren't comfortable or used to using those communication tools. Tomorrow they have professional learning for teachers who need that support.

VI.   PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - LIMITED TO ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

Dr. Bonilla stated that we are opening up for public comment and questions.

SAAR thanks everyone for what they are doing for the students and the district.. Her comment was that log-in at 9:00 a.m. is hard to get into the system, so she waited until 11:00 a.m., which was a better timing for her to continue. She stays in communication with the teachers, if something is missing because of internet issues, it continues and it becomes frustrating. Question is will this count as a grade.

Dr. Bonilla stated that several of the programs on the first day did crash.

Mr. Moran stated to address the issue with the network, that wasn't exclusive to East Stroudsburg because of just the number of people that were logging in all at the same time globally. It was on the platforms' end, but one of the things that we did was contact edgenuity directly to request additional attention to increase access. Grading - The purpose of the first two weeks is to provide student feedback, it is to engage them, it is to allow them to participate. Edgenuity gives the students scores, nothing this week will be included in a grade.

Dr. Bonilla stated that we will provide additional support.

Mr. Moran stated that we encourage that students login daily as early as possible, however, the time is not required. Students can login anytime throughout the day up until 11:59 p.m.

Jesica Porter thanked everyone. Her only suggestion is that her daughter is in 3rd grade and suggests that continue to increase opportunities to correspond with the teachers, (i.e. use of facetime, zoom).

Dr Bonilla asked if this is something that we are looking to build in?

Dr. Bonilla stated that we have another question from Ms. Joann Amador.

Ms. Amador has a 4th grader that has an IEP. How would she get assisted for his learning style? How would her child be assisted?

Mr. Moran stated that knowing that your child is in fourth grade, the google classrooms have been built starting with the core teacher and special education teachers. There are also modified choice boards to support students that require modified content/learning. Mr. Baddick and his team are working to provide support to all students. Dr. Bradely shared that from day one we had special education teachers included in the classrooms, all choice boards have modified options and an audio recording for students and families who need the directions read to them.   Continue to work with our special education teachers.

Mrs. Bear stated that the junior level or high school, a concern is every student getting the same video? Is edgenuity done by the speed in which the student learns?

Mr Moran stated all the content in Edgenuity is the same, it is up to the teacher that is working in that Edgenuity course, to decide what additional support is needed for the student. We are working on all these things over the time period.

Ms. Bear is hoping that they can go google classroom or zooms, because the children truly miss their teachers.

Dr. Bonilla asked Mr. Lenhart if he had any comments

Mr Lenhart stated that "All Hands on Deck" our district definitely brought that term to life. Ultimately it's for our students, we know that there is a lot of work to do, and we are striving to get to the goals. Assure that google meets and zoom is in the making. Every question that is being asked by the community we can assure you that we are working on them.

Dr. Bonilla asked Dr. Riker or Dr. Vitulli for any comments.

Dr. Riker stated that he acknowledges all the work of the teachers , Mr. Moran and his team, Dr. Vitulli and his team, and is very proud to be part of all of this, this district and this leadership team is second to none. All the questions and input that we are receiving will help us. We know that there are many challenges moving forward, but as a team we know that we can make it happen.

Ms. Bear stated that other districts are not getting a full education.

Ms. Kulick thanked everyone and is very proud of the school district for all that everyone is doing.

Mr. Moran's closing comment - want to recognize all that Mr. Borosh and his team has done and continued to do to prepare over 1,200 devices over the few days that we had, all while troubleshooting all other problems that the tech team has been faced with. In addition he has technology coaches that have been working with our teachers to provide the necessary professional support to ensure a successful implementation. In addition we need to thank Mr. Schmidt and his team that the food services ensured that all students were fed, providing meals to students within their communities. We also have to thank the Transportation department that also assists with the distribution for meals to our students in their communities.

Dr. Bonilla thanked everyone that our students have still had some consistency and some type of normalcy during this crisis. We thank our members from our District and members from the public.

VII. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

None at this time.

VIII. NEXT MEETING - May 6, 2020

RECOMMENDATION: Motion was made by Ms. Kulick to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously, 4-0.

IX. ADJOURNMENT