

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
April 14, 2021
VIA Zoom
7:00 P.M.
Minutes**

I. **The Chairperson**, Dr. 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 Amy Famighetti called the roll.

II. **Board Committee Members Present:** Dr. Damary Bonilla, Rebecca Bear, Debbie Kulick

III. **School Personnel Present:** George Andrews, Brian Borosh, William Vitulli, Tabitha Bradley, Shawn Wescott, Heather Piperato, Amy Famighetti, Maureen Seidel, Trenee Lurry, William Riker, Craig Neiman, Shahida Jones, Jennifer Marmo, Erin Dreisbach, Phil Lazowski, Phillip Kerzner, Brian Baddick

IV. **Community Members Present:** Jennifer Floyd, Keleisha Phillip

V. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the agenda for April 14, 2021 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 Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously, 3-0.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2021 meeting. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously, 3-0.

VI. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:**

a. **Excellence in Education Awards**

Dr. Vitulli started with exciting news regarding awards that have been won by the district. He then introduced Dr. Bradley to begin with the first award. Dr. Bradley states that on March 13 2020, Dr. Vitulli, Mr. Moran, and Dr. Bradley had the difficult task of swiftly reviewing available premade platforms and determining the best potential choice for our close to 3000 elementary students in light of the pandemic. At the end of the presentation the three of us asked ourselves the question, Is what we have in place appropriate to support teachers with Google Classroom for those that have not yet embraced it? Are the digital tools we already have in place such as Go math and Reading Wonders and others are familiar to our teachers and students as opposed to launching an entirely new platform that would be new to everyone, families, students, teachers. Knowing this was a global crisis and we didn't know what our families were about to face and experience therefore, we opted to take the more challenging path of building our own Learn From Home Program, and that's where it was born. In just three short days a design team of grade level experts and chairs designed remote learning for 3000 elementary students and the cycle continued every week that followed. We insisted on keeping our families at the forefront of

every decision and we knew we needed to keep our students' minds and hands busy. We set weekly themes, incorporated choice and gradually added new features each week. Our Learn From Home choice boards had a narration and language interpretation from Day 1.

This honor of an Excellence in Education Award from the Intermediate Unit belongs to all of our Elementary staff. Whether they participated in designing the district-wide program as a member of our design team, as a distribution team member, or delivering the content in their own google classroom, it was a historic time and a herculean undertaking. To receive this honor, validates that decision that we made that Friday afternoon in March of 2020. We are very excited to find out that our Learn From Home Program received this award. Mr. Wescott and Mrs. Seidel were an integral part of the application process on behalf of our district. Dr. Bonilla also contributed a letter of recommendation as a parent and Board of Director. Thank you to all of you that are in this room and part of that endeavor. I was very excited to have recognition of that program because it was bold for us. It would have been very easy to go with a new program where we said okay we will just teach everyone but we knew that wasn't best for our families and to receive this is a true honor, Thank you.

Dr. Vitulli said congratulations to Dr. Bradley, and to everyone and Mr. Wescott and Mrs. Seidel as well.

Dr. Vitulli states that there are 2 other Excellence in Education Awards I'm also excited to bring news to you about. These awards go to the South High School and the first award is for the MTSS System award. The MTSS is a multi-tiered system support for students and the South High School has received special recognition from the IU 20 regarding their structure and processes they have put together. I do know two individuals that worked really hard and were a big part of that, Asst. Principal, Ms. Polmounter and MTSS coach, Ms. Lee, who really is at the forefront of creating a wonderful program, is a model for our entire district. We are very, very, proud of them for their efforts as well and I want to congratulate them on a job well done.

Dr. Vitulli states that the third award goes to the High School South as well and this is for their amazing work on their school website and the process of how they did it. Mr. Kernan, a teacher at South and a student by the name of Steven Simpson, had the opportunity and pleasure to meet him today, he is a terrific student, a wonderful person. They have been working together in a very unique way to create an amazing website for the school and have won that recognition from the Colonial IU 20 as our third recipient in the Excellence in Education award. I know that Mr. Kernan is a great motivator and provided a lot of guidance to this student. I do want to recognize the student for being extremely talented and he has a rightful future ahead of him. I like to give them at the South High School a shout out for all the work they did with these awards.

b. Robotics Club Presentation & discussion (attachment V. a.)

Dr. Vitulli states the next item we'd like to get into is the Robotics club. We've provided you with a quote and I'd like Mr. Wescott to go through a presentation of the Robotics club and how important it is in our district and the role it plays. Shawn Wescott and Maureen Seidel will begin the presentation. Mr. Wescott and Mrs. Seidel said they are very fortunate and excited to work with the Robotics program and would like to share information regarding Robotics history and where they would like to see the program go in the future. We have a timeline to show you of how the club began.

It began in the school year 2015-2016 with two advisors, Mrs. Seidel and Mr. Wescott. It was done at Smithfield Elementary, just one building. We began with thirty 5th graders and we borrowed Robotics equipment from the IU at that time. They had Lego storm robots available that we borrowed for the year. They were kind enough to loan them to us on a temporary basis to see how the program would succeed. In our pilot program we had about 30 students that came before school started and learned how to build the robot, as well as how to program it. They took part in challenges to write the code so the robot could perform certain tasks. It was a big success and we received a lot of positive feedback from students and parents alike and administrators. We wanted all students to have the opportunity. In the school year 2016-

2017, we offered the program for all 6 elementary buildings and the district purchased robotics kits for each school. There was shared equipment and there was usually a pair of students using one kit. There were about 30 students in each club, composed from 5th grade in most buildings depending on population and size. If it was a little smaller, it would be opened up to 4th grade. Due to the nature of the coding and building we needed higher grade levels. Over the next several years we continued the program with advisors at each building running the clubs and we have had over 700 students now to date that have participated in our elementary Robotics program. This year we had to transition to a totally online platform. We found a similar program that could be done on the computer. Virtually where the advisors are holding virtual google meets after school hours so students and families can join the program. We are hoping that next year we can return in some capacity to our normal Robotics program and we are hoping that possibly we can replace the equipment. The equipment is getting fairly dated, the brains of the robot and some of the units are not working anymore. The mindstorm Lego program is phasing out so we have some discussion that we'd like to proceed with.

Impacts we have seen are definitely a highly effective way to foster essential work skills like collaboration when the students work together to build the robot and to problem solve together and manage projects on how they are going to construct the robot or complete the tasks together. It exposes them to stem skills and computer programming. Which we do not really offer in the elementary school. It's a great introduction for them, as well as engineering and computational thinking. It's very motivational for a lot of students and engaging. This reaches a population of students for clubs that may not be artistic or musical or athletic, this offers another opportunity for these students. We've received a lot of feedback from the students on how much they enjoy it, that it's a wonderful opportunity and we should allow it for other students. We have also heard from the parents as well how impressed they are about the experiential learning and the self-motivation and problem solving that they've seen from their students in this program. The one that I love to see is that parents have noted that on days when it is Robotics day, students have been more excited to go to school so they do not miss the club.

Mr. Wescott talks about the Robotics Competition that we have each year. Mrs. Seidel and I found this to be very enjoyable because as we've been working, we started the program. Then we don't get too much hands on work with the kids anymore because our advisors do that. Every now and then we get called into assist but we don't get to see the growth. Every year we have a culminating district wide Robotics competition, it is typically held at Middle Smithfield Elementary, a central point in our district. We use the gymnasium there. We have student teams from each building and they have to work together to solve challenges that we give them on the spot. They don't know what they are going to be doing before they get there. We make up challenges based on the skills we know they've acquired over the course of the year. Then we invite the caregivers and community members to come. The first year we thought who would come, and watch a robotics competition. We could not believe the amount of spectators we had there and the cheering and the joy in the room. It was great! We also invited our intermediate school advisor, Mr. Lazowski, to come and promote the transition onto the next level, the intermediate school, so he can talk about that during our competition and he can try to get some kids to come to his program when they move onto the intermediate school.

Next, Mr. Wescott shows a video about one of the challenges they had at a competition and he explains what the students were expected to do. Students had to start with a robot in a box on the board on the floor. Then they had to proceed straight to touch the box using a touch sensor and then they had to have the robot back up, turn, go through the passage, and when it got to a redline, it had to spin around in a circle and then go and park in the box. There is quite a bit of programming to do because this is all hands off so they have to program it and make it do these things. Of course it doesn't happen on the first attempt. Then he plays the video of what the robot did. They successfully completed that challenge. You can see the kids are jumping up and down very happy that they did that. We give them 3 challenges during the event and it keeps them very occupied.

The future of the program, as Maureen mentioned, our robots are 5 years old and our hardware is beginning to fail so the brains of the robot aren't working as well as they should. Some of the buttons were breaking on them. I've repaired quite a few but I'm getting to the point where they can't be fixed

anymore. The batteries are starting to die and won't take charge. Some of the software I try to update and it's just not taking. As we researched mindstorm, it is on the Lego list of being retired. So it's not a smart move to buy something that is on its way out. We talked to Mr. Lazowski at the intermediate school and they are using the Vex IQ robot. We thought that would be a great replacement for us to use the same platform as they are using at the secondary because they are using it both at the intermediate and at the high schools. It would be a smooth transition for us to move our students to. The new program includes both a physical robot and there's a virtual robot sort of like the program we're using this year. They can actually program and test some things right on their screen and then plug it into the physical robot or do it at home where they don't have the physical robot. It will also allow our students to participate in a regional event that is hosted at JTL by Becks Robots. The winners of that move onto state and national competitions. It would give our elementary students a chance to participate in that competition also.

Dr. Vitulli thanks Mr. Wescott and Mrs. Seidel. Dr. Vitulli addresses Dr. Bonilla stating we are looking to purchase new robots for this program. You can see the presentation warrants our future commitment although this was not a budgeted item. However, it clearly falls into our ESSR's III grant requirement part of which we must provide after school programming, 20% of the ESSR's III money must go to provide things like this, afterschool programming, extended school year programs and summer school. This clearly falls under that section. It also falls under the section of purchasing educational technology for students served by the LDA. I'm hoping to get you to consider moving this forward to the Finance Committee. It is a rather large sum, \$40,600.00, the quote I have in front of me. Mr. Wescott tells Dr. Vitulli that the tax can be removed from that quote and would be around \$38,000. Dr. Vitulli confirmed it would be \$38,312.00 once the tax is removed. Dr. Vitulli asked if there were any questions regarding this program. Dr. Bonilla says thank you for the presentation and for the history. I'm excited that we are not just thinking about replacing the materials but also thinking ahead as how to better prepare our elementary students and give them access to more competitions and to really ensure that we are preparing them for the future. We've talked a bunch in this committee about what we need to do to prepare our kids in terms of stem and this is one way. Dr. Bonilla thanks them for the work they have been doing and for the update. She then asks Ms. Bear and Ms. Kulick if they have any questions. Ms. Bear said she thinks it's a great program and it's amazing to watch the kids navigate and figure out just by programming. Ms. Kulick states she thinks it's a step in the right direction to develop programs for kids to choose career paths. This is a good base. Dr. Vitulli states excellent points. Dr. Bonilla states they will address this request during the recommendations.

c. DEI Committee Update-Mrs. Trenee Lurry

Dr. Vitulli introduces Ms. Trenee Lurry for the DEI updates. Mrs. Lurry begins, it's good to see you all. Our last meeting was April 8th and we continued to increase our membership and we continued to train individuals. Training is at the south high school this month concluding at the end of the month. Then we will be moving to the north campus for the last group of training, which will be in May which will end our school year. Our meetings continue to provide a robust amount of information. Our school climate group, who was in charge of training, will be looking to put out a video to begin to showcase our group membership and that is something I will be looking to do as soon as possible. We are also looking to have a book club this summer. We put that on our agenda so that if we wanted to do so at the end of the summer. Then our HR committee is looking to do a virtual seminar with the community. Our diverse curriculum group, which is very excited, has their multicultural class that we've been working on so diligently. Multicultural perspectives add to the program of studies, that continues to be the work that we are doing that we are seeing coming to fruition. We also discussed protocols for delicate issues and Dr. Riker continues to provide the support to us and we are very grateful for that. Dr. Bonilla would like to thank her colleagues on the Board who have participated in the past couple of meetings because it helps you understand the work that is happening and be able to translate that to the way we approach decisions on the Board. "Thank you for that." Dr. Bonilla also would like to thank Dr. Riker for sharing your why at

our last meeting as a reminder that this is not just because you're the Superintendent. It is something that is important to you personally and that you're doing a lot of work behind the scenes that people don't always know. This includes the time that you spend with Angela and Dr. Vitulli and several others who wrote a proposal that unfortunately we weren't granted the funds for but now we have a framework to hopefully access external funds to support this work to continue to position in our district as leaders in the DEI work, thank you all. Dr. Bonilla thanks Ms. Lurry for her work and her patience and the approach that you take with delicate circumstances that arise because the more we talk about these issues the more information will emerge about sometimes what doesn't go well. We want to hear those things. We want to hear of incidents that arise and uncomfortable situations because we want to create a better culture of communication and transparency and this is the foundation to help advance that. Thank you all for the hard work that it takes on a day to day and those of us that are not on the front lines on the day to day to support you but I just want to make sure we acknowledge the work that you all are doing in your respective roles. Ms. Lurry says thank you for your support as well for all that you do for us by keeping us moving, keeping us focused. We definitely appreciate it. Dr. Riker states that he agrees with Ms. Lurry, and thanks Dr. Bonilla. Your leadership in this is very welcomed and greatly appreciated.

d. Review of the 95% Program and Purchase (attachment V. c.) -Dr. Tabitha Bradley

Dr. Vitulli moves on to the next item, Phonics Booster Bundles. Due to time constraints related to the printing of this particular program, we had to present this to the Finance Committee last night. We wanted to bring it to you as well. We are requesting the purchase of a phonics program to be utilized some during the summer in our summer program but also mainly in the fall to help us address the anticipated learning loss from this year in the area of reading. This program will be delivered to all our first-third graders in the district. Dr. Bradley has researched the program and has had some of our coaches and department chairs working on and trying it out within the district before we make a decision. We found it to be a very solid program to utilize with our kids. Dr. Bradley states first we started with the vetting process with the instructional coaches and myself and then moved on to our 3 elementary leaders who are also on our ELA committee, that's Dr. Kulick, Mr. Sadowsky and Mrs. Moriarty. We then asked them to review this resource. Then finally after it passed through their channels we asked our reading department as a final check to take a look at this resource and tool. This is what I like to call a booster shot, it follows the continuum of foundational reading skills that are rising for 2nd and 3rd grade students that absolutely need to continue on as fluent and successful readers. The 95% organization, if you are not familiar with it, Dr. Susan Hall is the owner and her passion and her start in the company was her own son had reading struggles so she made it her life goal to help 95% of students get to reading benchmark. It is an ESSA level to moderate level of evidence which is the second highest you can get she said it will never get first level because you need a randomized study for that and she in her philosophical beliefs refuses to have one set of children get a tool that she knows will help them and not provide that to another. She's very content with a level 2 from ESSA in terms of research based and evidence. As far as the quick timeline, that was two-fold on their part. First they had made a deal with the publishing company to do one run and that was it and they had to stick to that timeline which I was able to get them to slightly tweak, the second was they needed to get this printed and into schools by mid-May for schools such as Arizona that start their summer programs sooner than us and just to know that you have it, its tied up in a bow and ready. Not on the invoice is training, but our local rep has graciously offered to support our teachers in the summer and fall at no cost, which she has typically done in the past. Although it's not in writing I assure you she will follow through with that support. Dr. Vitulli addresses Dr. Bonilla reminding her that it was presented to the Finance Committee the night before, they moved it forward and we are hoping that the Education Committee will support it as well. This is also a purchase that is eligible through the ESSR's III grant which we are required to spend 20% of that grant on programming such as this to help close that learning gap and help all of our students get caught up next year as quickly as possible. Dr. Bradley adds the data from mid-year 2020 to mid-year 2021. We are not looking at spring data from last year because it would be invalid, definitely shows dips and I have lots of notes that I could share with you on that but it

would probably become a little overwhelming for everybody, at a surface level I can tell you it's an average of about a 20% dip in our rising 1st and 2nd and about a 15% dip in our 2nd grade students. This does come with a pre and post assessment. We will be able to document the growth of our students at the start and at the end. And should we determine there are students who don't need this booster shot with the pre assessment we can make other arrangements for them to have enrichment instruction when our other students are receiving that. Dr. Bonilla states she was going to ask you to have high level highlights. We don't want to get into the wheat of things in this committee. We trust that you are doing the due diligence, thank you for that. I'm glad that our district is being proactive in terms of the learning loss conversation because it's really upsetting to hear individuals talking about how there is no learning loss, I'm glad we are thinking ahead and figuring out what programs are able to support. Dr. Bonilla asked, are we going to look at the data with a DEI lens in terms of the racial and ethnic breakdown. Dr. Bradley said we do have the ability to run those types of reports through Sapphire because all data is uploaded to Sapphire at the completion of each sweep so we can absolutely take a look at that. Dr. Bonilla says okay, excellent and we can definitely follow up on that as we progress into the work. I would love for us to take that and I'm sure Heather, and the way she likes to chop things up, will be thinking about that. Dr. Bradley says that was a question we asked of the product also and it was vetted by internal and external editors on cultural diversity and they also looked at gender equality in the materials as well as non-nuclear families. Dr. Bonilla replies excellent, that's what we want to hear.

e. North HS Resources Purchase Funded by ATSI Grant Money (attachment V. d.)

Dr. Vitulli presents the list of resources from High School North that they wish to purchase with the ATSI grant money. These are items that are going to support their interventions as part of the ATSI programming. We are hoping we can move this forward. These are the final expenditures related to that grant. Dr. Vitulli asked if there are questions regarding this. Dr. Bonilla states, just to clarify, after this purchase this grant is going to be closed out? Dr. Vitulli replies that this is his understanding. He said he thinks it was about \$7,000-8,000 per school I believe around there and that this finishes that grant out. Dr. Bonilla replies, thank you then asked Ms. Bear and Ms. Kulick if they have any questions. Ms. Kulick replies no, I got it.

f. Create a Reader-Program Update

Dr. Vitulli begins the update on the Create a Reader Program. He states that Dr. Bonilla assisted us in getting the word out. We had our first virtual session last Thursday, and Dr. Viney did a wonderful job with lots of energy. We had about 70% of our families there. Right now we are looking at about 60 families registered. That's about 3 times as much as we've ever had before. There were 67 different children. It went over very well, lots of kids, lots of families. We were getting a lot of thumbs up and lots of participation. We look forward to the next session this Thursday night. I want to say it is from 6:00-7:00 pm. Dr. Bonilla responded excellent, we did a reading program with our boys when they started in the district and it was fabulous. It was great family time, it taught us new things about having kids officially in school and we appreciated it. Dr. Vitulli would like to show the package that was put together which is wonderful. This comes from the Title I grant, look at these books, this is just a few of them. Each family gets a set of multiple books to share with their children and help teach their children to read. Dr. Viney started a process to teach the parents how to teach their children. It was really wonderful. In addition, there were art projects that she incorporated within it and all the supplies that are necessary in the folders not to mention the manuals to go along with it, comes in a nice little bag. I am very excited and I want to thank you too for your assistance in getting the word out. We are very happy with the number of people we have this year. We didn't quite hit our goal of 100 but we are still way ahead of the typical 20 people. Pretty excited about that. Dr. Bonilla says it is exciting, we still have some of our books from the program, so you definitely provide resources and that's something that we do well in our district.

We don't just give the assignment we give the materials and make sure everybody has access to be able to do the work.

g. Local Author

Dr. Vitulli states there is one last item before moving onto the next section. I am going to ask Dr. Bradley to speak about this, about the local author. Dr. Bradley says thank you Dr. Vitulli, I saw your message Dr. Bonilla but it said chat disabled so I don't know if I broke the rules at some point and got that taken away but I wasn't able to reply to you. Dr. Bonilla responds I was asking you about this so that was perfect. Dr. Bradley continues, I had the pleasure of meeting with Ms. Karisma Page last week, she is a local author of a children's book called "I can do it, Mom, First Day of School" she is also a parent of a student at Middle Smithfield and one at High School North. The main character of her book, Maya, happens to be modeled after her daughter who is a 2nd grader at Middle Smithfield. So I asked her, and she graciously read the book to me last week over our google meet. It's quite a lovely book with lots of repetition. I can't wait for the moment where we can get her back into buildings safely and have her reading the book to the students so they get to the point where they joyously join in with the chorus of voices repeating that line. It is going to be an exciting and inspiring moment for her. In the meantime, Dr. Riker had reached out to myself and Mrs. Piperato to get the book ordered for our libraries. Our library chairs completed that task. It is in our libraries and it is being tagged to be placed into circulation at this time. But all 6 of our elementary schools, I have shared that with Ms. Page, that has already been taken care of. I've also asked our school counselor chair to take a look at the book as a possible resource for school counseling lessons because it's a great story about self-awareness and building confidence. So I asked them to take a look to see if it would be something they would like to add to their repertoire of books for our elementary students. And then of course the goal would be to, not just with Ms. Page, but we have other local authors. There was one that visited Smithfield during my short tenure there. We have our literacy fair every year, we are definitely looking forward to having opportunities where community members and role models can read and reach out and share their talents with our students. K-12, we might have high school students who aspire to be authors who would really enjoy learning from folks in their own communities who have already completed that insurmountable task to me. It has been a great opportunity for us to connect with those folks, thank you Dr. Bonilla for making that connection it was a real joy to get to watch the author, a real author read to me, one on one, her book, it's a delightful story that our students will really enjoy and I can't wait for her daughter Maya to be part of that because she is a student in our schools. What an amazing honor as a student to have your mom write a book about you and you get to be there when other folks get to hear it for the first time. Thank you, Dr. Bonilla says I love it, it is exciting to have our own community members and students and parents featured and I'm glad that we're able to make that happen. I remember some years back the library, Hughes library, used to have an event where they featured local authors but it would be fun to do that in our own school district and I like the idea of the Literacy Fair, I actually miss that event we used to go every year thank you for following up with that and making it happen. It's worth noting that she is an African-American woman and at a time where the conversations about African-Americans are about social unrest, it's great for us to be able to have a positive conversation and promote a mother and a member of our community who is doing something good. Definitely happy about that, thank you. I donated my book to the local libraries so we should put it in our High School libraries too. We actually have three members of our community right within Bushkill to Shawnee area that are part of a series called Today's Inspired Latina and there are different volumes. I'm in volume 2 and Lilliana Perez is in volume 3 and one other person who just moved here right before the pandemic is volume 2, so that would be fun. Thank you for the update.

Dr. Bonilla asked if Dr. Vitulli had anything else on his end. Dr. Vitulli responds that is all we have for tonight.

Dr. Bonilla opens the meeting up for public participation. Of course focusing on the items up for discussion, we have 5 items that were on the agenda and 2 more items that Dr. Vitulli added. Please go ahead and unmute yourself and share your thoughts and questions, comments you may have. Mr. Andrews has a question on the 9th grade books for the north, are they the same books we are using for the south? Dr. Vitulli addresses Mr. Andrews' question stating that these programs were really oriented to the specific issues of that school. I cannot guarantee that this is the same that is going to be at South. This is really just an intervention class that they are creating for what they feel they need their students to have. Mr. Andrews responds with So this is something special for the north. Dr. Vitulli says it is. Mr. Andrews says he is just curious, because he knows we try to keep both schools as close as possible to the same curriculum, and that is why I was asking. Dr. Vitulli says that is a good question and that is true we do try to do that. But this is something a little bit different. It's more of an intervention then it is a class. We are going to monitor it and see how successful we are with it. If it is successful we will probably end up using it in further situations. Dr. Bonilla says she would like to say something because you both triggered something for me. This is a really good example of the difference between equity and equality as we talk about issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. We want to be sure that we are thinking about this across the Board. The difference between giving both schools the same book verses giving one school what they need is the difference between equality and equity so equality is we provide the same book to all the schools because we want to make sure they have the same information, but equity is understanding there is a particular need at one of the schools that might mean they need an extra book, they might need a different book, that they need different information and we want to provide that to ensure students have access to what they need even if it's a little bit more than the other school. I just want us to think about that and shift the mentality as we advance in our DEI work, that being equitable across schools is not going to look the same. Dr. Riker or team if you have anything to chime in there feel free. Ms. Kulick says she thinks this is a very important thing we should stress probably in every meeting because I think the more people hear it the more they'll start to understand. It's not equality. It's the equity portion. I did want to ask Dr. Riker a question. It's not necessarily what's on the agenda but it is concerning schools for next year and the ability for parents to know what their choices are. I wondered what the response was for the survey and how we have planned for Dr. Vitulli to explain and offer some more information on next year's school focus brick and mortar, ESACA and the other. Dr. Riker responds saying as you know we have 3 options that we presented to our families in the community, you just said them all, brick and mortar, ESACA and our newest approach is the remote learning option which is a synchronous approach to instruction where the students would have a teacher with them every day, unlike the ESACA which is more asynchronous, independent, self-discipline to get through. We received just over 2000 responses to that survey which closed on Friday. We're analyzing the data this week. By the middle of next week, we will be sending out a reminder to and information to every family to indicate which model their child or student has been assigned based on either their election of one of those three or as the survey indicated that if someone did not respond their student would automatically be assigned to brick and mortar. The information next week that they receive to verify that they will have one other opportunity between then and the end of the month, April 30th, to change whatever that assignment is. So if someone is in brick and mortar and wants to do the remote learning program, then they can make that change. If someone's in ESACA and wants to go to brick and mortar they can make that change. That flexibility will still be in place until April 30th the reason we have to look at that is because in May we have to start scheduling, we have to start looking at staffing needs and we need to be sure of everything before you as a Board have to approve a preliminary final budget in May, which of course gets finalized at the June Board meeting. There's a lot of timelines there, the other thing we are doing is working hard to try to develop ways to entice our cyber charter students to come back to our schools in one of those options as I've shared with the Board on numerous occasions. Every student that leaves our district to go to a cyber charter school costs the district on average \$20,000. Fifty students cost the district \$1,000,000 and we currently have just over 500 students currently in a cyber charter program, which is costing the district approximately \$10,000,000.00. We would hope that these options will encourage our families that have students in a cyber charter school another opportunity to come back to the East Stroudsburg Area School District and

participate in one of those 3 options that we are offering for next year. Dr. Riker said Debbie if you asked something that I didn't touch on let me know. Mr. Andrews has a question, the 3 options we have are brick & mortar, ESACA, and is it going to be 5 days virtual? Dr. Riker replies all of them are 5 days, that is correct. Mr. Andrews asked if this is for when we start school next August. Dr. Riker said yes it is. Mr. Andrews wanted to make sure everybody understands that. Dr. Riker states and if we have to pivot into something more like what we are doing this year in terms of a 4-day option we will be well prepared to do that. We're excited about the synchronous model, that really is a district model. What I mean by that is let's just say we have 20 third grade students across the district that want to participate in a remote learning model they will be assigned to a class with a teacher. That class would be an East Stroudsburg School District third grade class. We're excited, we think it gives our families just another opportunity. I've said from the beginning we have to take what we have learned from the past year and apply that as we move forward and really not look back to saying how do we get back to where we were but how do we take the things we've learned in the past year plus and really re-think and be innovative and creative on how we approach our educational opportunities for our families moving forward in the future. Ms. Kulick asked Dr. Riker if we had any feedback from that survey, was there a place where they could comment and ask questions or pose questions. Dr. Riker responds that we did not in that survey, but what we are doing is Dr. Vitulli is having an informational session. It's probably going to be, we thought, next week but it may be the week of the 26th where we will have a zoom call in or check in, where families that have questions on any of those 3 models, have any concerns about any of that will be able to log in. We will be live there to respond and answer any questions. We will likely put out an opportunity for families to submit questions that we could post an FAQ on the website as well and if families still have any questions or concerns about those models of course they can always reach out to the building administration in the school that their student attends or Dr. Vitulli or myself. Ms. Kulick asks if she can make a suggestion. My suggestion is based on the fact I talked to a parent that had no idea the survey was out there. I'm not sure how well you want to deliver that message but whether it goes out in several different forms as well as have a press release that might go out. Dr. Riker says we will look at that. I can tell you that the survey went out to over 6300/6400 families which is pretty much where we're at in terms of our number of students. Anyone who has a student in the portal and has updated their information, when we send something out through our student information system the information is only as good as the families have kept it up to date so clearly if they changed an email address, changed a phone number and didn't update that in their student portal in the student information system that could be really the only reason why someone should not have received the survey. But we will definitely look at how we communicate in the next week or so and follow up on all of that. We'll look at trying our best to ensure we're reaching everybody. I appreciate that. Ms. Kulick says she also thinks it's an opportunity for us to be able to shine and to put out positive information about the district which is another prong of the whole story. Thank you. Dr. Vitulli adds that as he hasn't advertised it. All the videos related to the message that went out explaining the various models that we have for next year are on our website under Curriculum & Instruction. I just recently put them there so I haven't really promoted it in any way. I'll work on bringing some attention to them by putting something in the rotator page to at least direct some information there and as Dr. Riker said I'll work on the FAQ. We already had in the works a family night we're just debating on the times. We also want to do a similar idea for the cyber charter schools. Try to get those people in a separate meeting. Ms. Bear says the survey was through Sapphire, correct, if I remember where I did it. So one of the complaints I got similar to what Debbie, is when they heard about it in Sapphire they forgot their pin number so they couldn't get into Sapphire and it took days for them to get a response to get their pin number and by the time they got their pin number the survey was closed. Mr. Andrews adds that another issue could be that a lot of the parents do not look at Sapphire that often Ms. Bear says exactly George and once they did they realized they didn't have the pin number and went to get in and couldn't get in and then finally got the response 3 or 4 days later. Mr. Andrews says one thing we might want to do in the future is if we send somebody into Sapphire we do what we do for when schools are closed for weather we just send out a phone call saying check your sapphire for such and such when its important if it's just routine I wouldn't do it but for the survey you may have gotten more people doing

it if they had known. Jennifer Marmo states we actually did get a connect ed and emails telling us to check Sapphire. I did hear from parents that there were a lot of issues, students were telling me, but as a parent I got that information and I did the survey that night as soon as I got that information. There are a lot of things I wanted to touch on because Dr. Riker brought it up and then I want to get back to the Robotics thing because that's really cool. A lot of parents were confused about what ESACA pre-COVID meant so knowing that those instructional videos are coming out to them is really good. I do want you to be prepared for a long zoon question and answer night because there were a lot of questions out there on social media from parents about what things would look like. Especially what pre-COVID ESACA meant as well as what remote learning is going to look like. I'd say be prepared for a long night everybody because the parents are going to show up once they know about that. The other thing listening to what you said, the families for cyber charter, did they also get the surveys? I did have a couple of moms that did go to cyber charter asking me questions about what survey I was talking about. Dr. Vitulli responds, Jennifer, they did not because they are not currently registered in our district. That's why we are making a special effort, I just drafted a letter, it was just approved by Dr. Riker that will go to them personally leading them to pages to get this information. We are also looking at refining that plan. We are looking at connecting that letter with a family forum night as well. Jennifer Marmo responds thank you cause this way I can say to them that's coming because when I was trying to explain to them the choices I was making for my children they were asking what are you talking about so now at least I have some kind of thing I can go back to.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIMITED TO ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

Jennifer Marmo- my daughter was in that first, 16-17 cohort, the one that expanded to all the schools because my children are in Bushkill, well my daughters in High School North now, she absolutely fell in love with everything and Mrs. Seidel, she's worked with my children and she knows how crazy about Robotics they are. Iliana actually worked with a High School North TSA student when she was in 3rd grade to learn how to pilot Oswald, their robot that goes to their TSA competitions. The high-schoolers were fantastic. I would bring her to school to meet them and talk to them because she was always interested in that. They actually trained her how to drive Oswald and then went over with her to Bushkill to do a presentation. She was like the best 3rd grader ever. Everyone was so excited about that. So when the robotics club opened up for her in 5th grade she jumped right on that. The competition that they had at Middle Smithfield, that we go to and watch, was amazing and the coaching from Mr. Lazowski at that point, because I talked to him and said Iliana is coming over. She is super excited that she joined the Robotics club at Lehman, went to competitions, and her first partner from the Lego robotics from Bushkill he's gone very, very far with TSA, Carson Peregrin. If any of you ever heard of him, he's won so many awards with TSA so the fact that you're looking at Vex so they get that continuity is going to be amazing and I think it's going to do so much more for everyone in the district. I just wanted to say I was super excited to see everything that Mrs. Seidel and Mr. Wescott put out there. I was there for some of that and it was really cool for the parents and to have my daughter into Stem and be treated so well. Mr. Lazowski gave her a tech award last year. It's really something for our district to just keep shining with this, thank you for that consideration and for backing that because it's really amazing! Mrs. Seidel replies thank you Mrs. Marmo. Dr. Bonilla states that's awesome, those testimonials are the best thank you. You have both lenses that you bring so it's always great to hear your perspective.

Dr. Bonilla asks if there are any other comments or questions.

VIII. PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO FINANCE COMMITTEE

a. 95% Program and Purchase

BY THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE: Dr. Bonilla states that the 95% Program and Purchase went before the Finance Committee the night before as Dr. Vitulli said and mentioned that it is part of the ESSR's grant. Dr. Bonilla asks for a motion to move that forward, at this point it will go before the full board. Motion made by Ms. Kulick seconded by Ms. Bear and carried unanimously 3-0.

IX. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

a. Robotics Purchase

BY THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE: Dr. Bonilla asks for a motion to move the Robotics Purchase forward, this is also coming from the ESSR' grant. Motion was made by Ms. Kulick. Motion was seconded by Ms. Bear and carried unanimously 3-0.

b. North HS Resources Purchase Funded by ATSI Grant Money (attachment V. d)

BY THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE: Dr. Bonilla asks for a motion to move the North HS Purchase forward, last purchase on the ATSI grant Motion was made by Ms. Kulick. Motion was seconded by Ms. Bear and carried unanimously 3-0.

Ms. Bear states that there is going to be a Smithsonian exhibit at the North High School right after the next meeting. I know Dr. Riker has been working on that with one of our community members and I'm also part of the planning committee to help do that. It's going to be an exciting event and there are going to be two Smithsonian exhibits presented at the North High School. Dr. Bonilla says I remember seeing that what are the dates? Ms. Bear says it is going to be May 14, right Dr. Riker? Dr. Riker states yes May 14th, I believe it's going to be from 4-5:00. Ms. Bear says if anyone from the Board would like to attend it's going to be that night. Ms. Kulick says it's open to the public, correct? Ms. Bear replies yes. Dr. Riker says limited public. Dr. Bonilla confirms with Dr. Riker that we will share the details of that, Dr. Riker replies absolutely. Dr. Bear states with the exhibit it should be good exhibits. I was talking to the person planning it. It's going to be really nice. Mr. Andrews asked, is it the 14th, Ms. Bear confirms May 14th.

X. **NEXT MEETING**-Wednesday, May 12th at 7:00 p.m.- Via Zoom

BY THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Ms. Bear to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Ms. Kulick and carried unanimously, 3-0.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT: 8:07 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Newberry