



THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Michael Nitti, Superintendent Ext. 1102

mnitti@ewingboe.org

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

2099 Pennington Road, Ewing NJ 08618

Phone 609-538-9800 Fax 609-538-0041

www.ewing.k12.nj.us

Immediate Release

The Ewing Public Schools Board of Education BOE Briefs: April 27th, 2020 Meeting

The Ewing Township Board of Education held its monthly meeting this April virtually as a result of the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 public health crisis. The virtual Board of Education meeting opened at 7:00PM and the only action the Board took at that time was to move to a closed session where it reviewed a limited number of confidential items. The public session of the Board of Education meeting was live streamed to the public beginning at 7:30PM. Communication and links to view the virtual meeting were disseminated widely.

The public had the opportunity to comment twice during the Board meeting. The first public comment session was prior to voting on agenda items and was dedicated to Agenda items only. Submitted comments were read live prior to the Board voting.

The second public comment was prior to adjournment and was open to any item of relevance to the Board and school district.

Public comments were submitted to the following email: boecomments@ewingboe.org

Comments could be submitted and were accepted both prior to the meeting and during the live stream. Submitted comments included the name and address of the public commenter.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact djn@ewingboe.org

Superintendent Michael Nitti began by expressing his thoughts and concerns to the members of the Ewing Township community who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. He then thanked all the members of the school community for their help, support and understanding as the district has moved to a Virtual Learning Program as the nation navigated the public health crisis. He also shared his appreciation to the many members of the staff who have helped out with food and technology distribution. Mr. Nitti concluded by reading an update from Ewing High School student ambassadors to the Board of Education, Nathalia Davila and Anujin Ariunbold, on how EHS students have adapted to the changes at Ewing High School.

The Superintendent and Board then conducted the Public Hearing on the 2020-21 school budget.

Ewing Board of Education Approves 2020-21 Final Budget

On April 27th, at the regular Board of Education meeting held virtually and live streamed to the public, the Board conducted the mandated public hearing on the 2020-21 final school budget, then approved the budget by a vote of 9-0.

The spending plan will now go into place on July 1st, 2020.

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According to Mr. Nettleton, District Business Administrator, the 2020-21 Budget was a daunting budget to build, as the Ewing Schools has been faced with a sharp increase in three key areas of the budget: Special Education, Transportation, and Employee Health Benefit costs.

Programs maintained in the budget include full-day kindergarten, middle and high school athletics, gifted and honors education, K-12 music and art, and after-school activities and programs. The budget also supports increase focus and training on students' emotional and psychological health, an area of emphasis for the Board and administration.

Again, the school budget is not presented to voters, as the Board does not need to have budget referendums for spending plans that fall within the 2 percent tax cap.

Superintendent Nitti thanked Mr. Nettleton and the Board of Education for their work on the budget. "Each year, the Board and the administration meet in a retreat to prioritize values and evaluate budgetary options" he stated. "Each Board member makes vital contributions to this process and Mr. Nettleton is very good at explaining variables and challenges."

The final budget reflects an approximate 3.5% increase in the budget and represents the first overall tax increase in two years. Due to steady increases in tax rates over the last few years, the preliminary tax rate is estimated to be approximately \$1.85. This is only a 1.38% increase in the tax rate year over year. With the average assessment for a household in Ewing also going up the impact to the average homeowner in town is an increase of approximately \$4.18 per month for the 2020-21 School Year.

All information pertaining to the 2020-21 budget can be found on our website www.ewing.k12.nj.us under the Board of Education tab.

For more information, please contact: Theresa Hullings (609) 538-9800x1102 or thullings@ewingboe.org

The Board then conducted its annual April **Appointments, Approvals, and Adoptions**.

The Board then moved into the "**Superintendent Recommendations**" section of the Agenda. Some items of note:

Curriculum and Instruction

The Board approved the continuing Agreement with the Mercer Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction which supports the ASYSST program at Ewing High School.

In **Old Business**, the Board reviewed the progress of Referendum '18 Phase 2, which has been impacted by the global pandemic. The district will be releasing a detailed update to the school community shortly.

The following policies and regulations were approved by the Board as "Second Readings" and are now formal Board policy:

Policy and Regulation 6112 Reimbursement of Federal & Other Grant Expenditures
Policy and Regulation 7440 School District Security

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Policy 9210 Parent Organizations

The following policies and regulations were approved by the Board as “First Readings”. After review and approval by the Board at its next meeting in May, they will become formal Board policy:

- Policy and Regulation 8600 Transportation
- Policy 86301.6 Bus Driver/Bus Aide Responsibility
- Regulation 86301.6 Emergency School Bus Procedures
- Policy 8630 Transportation Safety
- Policy 8670 Transportation of Disabled Pupils

The next meeting of the Board of Education will take place on Monday, May 18th, 2020 and the meeting will be conducted virtually. A Ewing Schools Community Update will be released the week prior to the Board of Education meeting and include the live stream links so the meeting can be viewed by the public.