



Mountain Lakes Board of Education meeting, 4-4-22

SGA Report, SGA Vice President, Ms Abby Maute

There will be a Jazzfest Pop Concert on April 6 at 7:30. The following night, MLHS hosts a College Fair featuring 70+ colleges. List of schools is on College and Career bulletin. National Spanish exam 4/12, Coffee House Open Mic night hosted by the Environmental club on 4/13.

Presentation of 2020-2021 Audit, Michael McGuire of Samuel Klein and Company

No findings. Audit report will be posted on the district website.

A community member asked why Lake Drive over or under payments come from the District Wide accounts, which are funded by the Mountain Lakes taxpayers, rather than the Lake Drive accounts, which are funded by the sending districts and should be tied to Lake Drive expenses. The auditor answered that all of the expenses are district wide expenses, and although they may be categorized as Lake Drive expenses, everything comes out of the District operating budget. If the Lake Drive school lost 10 students, the difference would have to be made up from the taxpayer funds.

Dr. Driscoll commented that the LD budget is set, and we don't let teachers go if student enrollment goes down. When that happens, we have to fund the difference from the taxpayer side, but the true-up will come later on and pay back to the district side. The auditor agreed and said that the true-up can happen over a two-year period.

President's Report, Mrs. Joanne Barkauskas, President, MLBOE.

Mrs. Eileen Ludwig is retiring. She served as counselor at Briarcliff. She is an incredibly gifted educator and has been an extremely special member of the Briarcliff staff.

Superintendent Update, Mr. Fetherman and Dr. Sumit Bangia

Julie Levine and the central office have engaged in a partnership with Enrollhand, an online marketing firm, to attract tuition students. Together they have developed a profile of the student that would thrive here. Crafting a "fresh message" to brand the district with them to reach 30K "best fit families" in the area via social media. We are in a 6-month trial program with Enrollhand. If we get 5 tuition paying students, it will have paid for itself.

Dr. Driscoll encourages the administration to promote the business curriculum. Requests an update on DECA and the Lore Entrepreneurship program, specifically what remains of the original Marc Lore donation. Mrs. Lewis recommends highlighting that we have many services and resources for hearing impaired when marketing our school. The BOE will get to see the marketing campaign when everyone else does, when it goes live. Dr. Don asks how we track the efficacy of the partnership.

Proposed State Education Legislation:

1. Suspend the new graduation requirement, the NJGPA test, from going operational, and instead allow this year to serve as a pilot.



2. Mandatory filing of a FAFSA report as a graduation requirement, with an opt-out form being allowed for those who don't wish to file the FAFSA.
3. Expanding remote instruction. Currently, only allowed if the school is closed for three or more days. Proposed legislation (S464) would allow schools to pivot to remote for single-day closings (snow day).

College and Career fair on Thursday. Parents are welcome and encouraged. Summer Academy enrollment is open K-12. Classes are filling up.

Mrs. Lewis encourages the administration to push to eliminate the NJGPA as a graduation requirement because our kids have so much testing already, and we have so many other metrics to determine whether they are ready to graduate.

Mrs. Tucker asks what the driver behind a mandatory FAFSA is. Mr. Fetherman will find out and report back.

Final Coffee Talk of the year on 4/27/22, 9 am, virtual delivery.

Report from the Business Administrator, Alex Ferreira

None

Items Minutes approved for 3/21/22

Comments from the Public on Agenda only

A community member asked for Mr. Fetherman to report out to the public what the motivation behind the mandatory FAFSA requirement legislation is. Also stated that the website is not a good destination for prospective students because it is not current or in good shape. Why were hand carried motions not made public before they were voted on after exec last meeting. *New director of IT will work on the website. Sometimes the hand carry motions are a result of the executive session so maybe that is why it was done that way last time. Board members suggest using the students to help update the website.*

A community member asked why summer academy is only 5 weeks? Regarding Enrollhand, is there a selection process or a limit to the number of tuition students we will take? School media is often on one channel – it is best to use multiple channels with school media. *We switched from 6 to 5 weeks in 2019. There is an acceptance process. The HS is focusing on Instagram, not Facebook.*

A community member stated that we don't decrease our teaching staff when our LD enrollment drops. But if a student leaves 2 months into the year, does the sending district pay for the whole year or only 2 months. When might we see a change in the "agenda items only" public comment. *We are not bound to keep teachers for 10 months, if necessary we do cut teachers if enrollment changes require it. We don't like to but we can. The sending district pays only for the time their student attends. Policy committee has discussed changing the agenda. They are sticking to agenda items only for the first comment session, but they are adding a comment session for students after the SGA report.*



Boonton Township Report, Johnathan LeVar, BT Representative

April 7 Shake Shack fundraiser, code "25donation" sends 25% of purchase goes to RVS. BTED Golf Outing on May 9th.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee – Mrs. Parker reports that a revised Code of Conduct (not including honor code) was presented by Mr. Mangili and Mr. Searles. They updated dress code, no major changes. They will present at BOE and the public once it is finalized. They will work on honor code next. Adding student comment section to agenda. Policies for first read tonight are all mandatory updates from Strauss Esmay. The political activities policy was not changed but for changing the word "grounds" to "premises." They have also adopted updated regulations for Political Activities, which are separate from policy.

Personnel Committee – Dr. Don reports that they discussed the hiring timeline for Director of Guidance, Assistant Principal, and Supervisor of STEM. Plan to fill all roles mid to late May. The Director of Guidance posting was open for 10 days. There were 19 candidates in the initial pool, and we are interviewing 6 candidates. Once this job is filled, they will move on to posting for the High School Assistant Principal role. Mr. Fetherman will provide tenure recommendations by 4/15, in advance of 5/15 statutory deadline. Discussed overages and impact of decreasing enrollment. They are hoping to not cut any offerings, only sections offered. The board requests that the administration share with them which classes are not being offered next year and allow them to be a part of that deliberation.

Finance committee – Dr. Driscoll reports that they heard the audit report, no findings. Discussed the fund balance and how to maintain. Budget for 2022-23, appropriations are coming in over \$37million for fund 10, which is equal to our revenue. Discussed how to best share information on Lake Drive budget to increase transparency.

Negotiations – Dr. Driscoll reports they met with MLEA, proposals were exchanged, then had a face to face to clarify proposals. Will meet again on 5/3, and have scheduled 5/17, 5/25 to be available as needed.

Facilities – Mrs. Tucker reported that the tennis courts need work. To patch and repair will cost \$105K, resurfacing will cost much more, so the plan is to patch and repair. Wildwood playground dinosaur is gone. The playground committee continues to work on their plan. Inspection of bleachers is scheduled for the week after graduation. Integrated pest management records had to be remediated. That was done and they were reinspected last week. Category 13 license is now required for fertilization application. Mr. Dunn is looking into this. Referendum kitchen items will be ordered soon. Auditorium asbestos abatement over spring break. Lead water testing completed and awaiting results. Mr. Ferreira is in discussions with shared services committee to share the costs of the tennis courts repair.

Liaison Reports



Home and School – Dr. McIntyre reports that they voted on their proposed slate for the 2022-23 year. Planning The Annual Teachers Recognition on Friday, June 3rd. School supplies fundraiser underway. HSA scholarship is open.

MLEF – Mrs. Erinn Tucker reports that the annual gala is planned for 4/29. Will auction off a Junior parking spot for next year, thanks to Mr. Mangili. Applications for grants will open after 4/29. Applications for micro grants launch after spring break. \$500 or less, teachers please apply.

Motions

All voted on and approved. President Barkauskas expressed sincere appreciation and thanks to those teachers and staff resigning and retiring.

New Business

Mrs. Parker asks the public to send comments to the board via email so that all board members are aware, not just the one you happen to see at the store. Participation fee for BC was initiated this year. Wants to be sure that it is being collected consistently. Asks Mr. Fetherman to report on that. Asks for follow up on activities and number of students. Policy states 10 students is the minimum to run an activity. Would like to track this.

Pending legislation about changing school start time, is there any news on this? Mr. Fetherman replies there are no imminent changes.

Dr. Don learned in governance training that many Boards review board goals every quarter as a good practice. What do we do? Mrs. Barkauskas feels they should engage in regular goal review.

Comments and Requests from the Public

A community member stated that she agrees with Dr. Don that board goals should be reviewed regularly and in public. They used to be on the agenda for every meeting. Board retreats are great for boards. Regarding Code of Conduct, she hopes that Mr. Searles and Mr. Mangili met with students, parents, and staff in developing it. *Mrs. Parker says she thinks they have a group they were working with over the past year.*

A community member who is an incoming freshman parent has not heard that any classes are not offered. Please tell us if anything isn't running for planning purposes. Let us know if a class is close to being able to run, maybe friends can help fill it out. On page 5 of agenda, item 5, estimated tuition rate, why is tuition rate lower than the cost of each student. *We round the tuition down to attract students.*

A community member asks what is the standard minimum and maximum for a class, or an activity to run? *For activity, it is minimum 10. For sports, it is "a team" (depends on the sport). Mr. Fetherman will email the classroom numbers.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:59 pm



Presentations Link

All presentations will be posted here:

https://www.mlschools.org/board_of_education/board_meeting_presentations