

APPROVED
Bd. Mtg. 4-14-11

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

March 29, 2011
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A public hearing on the 2011-2012 Board of Education Proposed Budget was called on March 29, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., in the John E. Dwyer Technology Academy Auditorium, 123 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Carlos Trujillo presented the following statement at 7:30 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a special meeting of the Board of Education pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was published in The Star Ledger on Tuesday, March 22, 2011. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

I wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone present for this March 29, 2011 meeting of the Board of Education. This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. In order that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking. I also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, I may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. I am pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.

We are here this evening to hear the public express their views regarding the proposed 2011-2012 budget, in accordance with New Jersey Statute 18A:22-13, and I quote, ‘On the date and at the time and place so fixed, the Board of School Estimate or the Board of Education as the case may be shall hold such public hearings at which time the taxpayers and other interested persons shall have an opportunity to present objections and to be heard with respect to said budget and the amounts of money necessary to be appropriated, and the various items and purposes for which the same are to be appropriated for the use of public school in the district for the ensuing school year.’

Those wishing to speak for or against the budget must sign in one hour prior to the advertised start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, and telephone number of the person wishing to speak.”

Present: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso (arr. 7:40 p.m.), González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo— 7

Absent: Pastor Burgos, Mr. DaSilva – 2

Superintendent of Schools Pablo Muñoz, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Board Attorney Kirk Nelson, Esq. Assistant Superintendent for Schools Jennifer Barrett, Assistant Superintendent for Family and Community Outreach Jerome Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Aida Garcia, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Olga Hugelmeyer, Executive Director of Human Resources/Labor Attorney Karen Murray, Assistant Board Secretary Donald Gonçalves, Comptroller Dr. William Greene and members of the public were in attendance.

Dr. William Greene gave the invocation.

Colors were presented during the Flag Ceremony by members of the Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership Academy Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Michael Reyes, sixth grade student at Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30.

The *Star Spangled Banner* by Francis Scott Key was performed by students from the Ronald Reagan Jazz Ensemble.

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Melanie Rua, eighth grade student at Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30.

Mr. Trujillo introduced a video presentation of the Core Beliefs and Commitments.

Mr. Trujillo introduced students from the Ronald Reagan Jazz Ensemble who performed *Killer Joe* by Benny Golson, arranged by Michael Sweeney. Mr. Trujillo thanked them for the wonderful performance.

Mr. Trujillo recognized community leaders who served the public in the past, our colleague and former Board Member Rafael Fajardo and former City Councilman and former Board Member Tony Monteiro and thanked them for their years of service.

Mr. Trujillo introduced Superintendent of Schools Pablo Muñoz to present the People's Budget for 2011-2012.

Mr. Muñoz stated that tonight the Board of Education is holding a public hearing so that taxpayers and other interested people have an opportunity to be heard with respect to the proposed school budget for the 2011-2012 school year and thanked everyone for attending.

Mr. Muñoz stated that tonight he is presenting The People's Budget 2011-2012 and that this budget will continue to support the education of our children in academics, the arts, and athletics while at the same time being cognizant of what the taxpayers would like to see in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Muñoz stated that this 2011-2012 budget is fighting for the Elizabeth taxpayer and will call for no tax increase, no new taxes, 0% change.

Mr. Muñoz thanked the Elizabeth Board of Education for their vision of becoming one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz stated that through this budget we have been able to incorporate their concern for the taxpayer, the need to hold the line on expenses and to present a budget that is sensitive to the needs of citizens and our children. Mr. Muñoz thanked each Board member individually and stated that this Board has led the development of this budget to be a 0% change, no new taxes.

Mr. Muñoz stated that this is the People's Budget for 2011-2012 for the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mr. Muñoz stated that our vision, like many visions, is guided by famous people in our history who had great visions that at one time seemed insurmountable including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who wanted to fight for civil rights for all Americans, Ghandi who was fighting for independence in India, Abraham Lincoln who had a vision for a united United States preserving the union while at the same time providing freedom for all Americans by ending slavery and Mother Theresa who had a vision of helping the poor and needy in India. Mr. Muñoz stated that we followed their lead and cast a great vision of becoming one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey but that is not where we will stop. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have made progress towards this goal and will not stop there but in July we will cast a vision to become one of the best school systems in America followed thereafter by becoming a world class school system. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board's vision for this school system gives us direction and sets priorities where we will fund our programs to become one of the best school systems in

the State of New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz stated that how we accomplish that is through our mission to provide excellent educational experiences and services to inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. Mr. Muñoz stated that there are five priorities in our strategic plan that we use to guide us in achieving our vision, our mission and funding programs including creating excellence in academics, athletics and the arts and not tolerating anything less, boosting student performance on state tests, increasing school safety and discipline, modernizing and constructing school buildings, and changing our district's culture and increasing staff morale by treating people well.

Mr. Muñoz introduced a video presentation of highlights of our accomplishments of the Elizabeth Public Schools.

Mr. Muñoz stated that to face the challenges ahead we must have goals in service and in life and quoted John Maxwell, "A difficult time can be more readily endured if we retain the conviction that our existence holds a purpose, a cause to pursue, a person to love, a goal to achieve." Mr. Muñoz stated that we have a vision that is a grand, audacious goal but on a day to day basis it can be boiled down to two major goals, academic achievement and fiscal management of our district.

Mr. Muñoz presented the proposed 2011-2012 budget with a focus on our 3L's of Love, Laser-like Focus on Teaching and Learning and Leadership. Mr. Muñoz stated that love is the driving force for all that we do, that it is the foundation of our Pledge of Ethics and it is also the basis of one of our five district priorities, changing our district's culture and increasing staff morale. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have to love what we do, every second of every hour, of every day, of every week, of every month, of every year and that the reason we are here should revolve around the love of the school district we work for and the education we provide our students and that is why we are here. Mr. Muñoz stated that love is believing that all means all and we have been working toward demonstrating an increase in the percentage of students reaching proficiency as measured by each school making state assessment standards which are presently defined as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or Safe Harbor. Mr. Muñoz stated that love also means that we provide our students an excellent education that helps them become proficient for post secondary education. Mr. Muñoz shared two quotes that are about 2,000 years old, "Let love be your greatest aim" and "My children, our love should not just be words and thoughts; it must be true love which shows itself in action." Mr. Muñoz highlighted some of the actions that the Elizabeth Public Schools have taken and will take in this new budget including that the Elizabeth Public Schools made Adequate Yearly Progress district wide, that the Elizabeth Public Schools has a higher academic proficiency than the districts that the state runs, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson, and that the state essentially runs the Camden school district. Mr. Muñoz stated that our performance at 68% proficiency is just a little less than the state average and far exceeds Jersey City at 52%, Newark 46%, Paterson 42%, and Camden 24%.

Mr. Muñoz stated that achievement is up in the Elizabeth Public Schools, that in science our scores in total proficiency have increased dramatically since 2005, that 82.9% of fourth grade students achieved proficiency which is an increase of 49.1% from 2005 and that 63.9% of eighth grade students achieved proficiency which is an increase of 45.2% from 2005. Mr. Muñoz stated that when compared to the state run school districts the Elizabeth Public Schools ranked No. 1 in language arts in grades 3-8 and grade 11 and that the Elizabeth Public Schools ranked No. 1 in mathematics for grades 3-7 and grade 11. Mr. Muñoz stated that among schools in the District Factor Group (DFG) A, the Elizabeth Public Schools ranked No. 8 for percentage of schools making AYP in 2010 compared to our ranking of No. 24 in 2009. Mr. Muñoz stated that the district is ranked No. 1 among Abbott schools compared to No. 12 ranking in 2009 and is ranked No. 1 among the four state run school districts in New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are driven by love and on our way to becoming one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz explained the comparison of Elizabeth Public Schools to school districts in the State of New Jersey, that Elizabeth outpaces all school districts identified as Abbott districts,

that the average proficiency of the Abbott districts is 48% while the proficiency of the Elizabeth Public Schools is 68%. Mr. Muñoz stated that in the summer of 2005 we were ranked No. 15 and six years later we are No. 1 among the Abbott districts. Mr. Muñoz explained that the District Factor Group is a cluster of school districts with similar socio-economic factors including poverty, type of community, people that live in the town and type of education that the adults have and that the state ranks the districts with DFG A being the lowest socio-economic group. Mr. Muñoz stated that Elizabeth is in the top ten, ranked No. 3 in DFG A, that the two towns above us are North Wildwood with 300 students and Dover with 3,000 students, that the Elizabeth Public Schools has over 23,000 students, followed by Quinton with 400 students and Union City with 9,900 students. Mr. Muñoz explained the comparison of the Elizabeth Public Schools to the ten largest districts including Edison, Woodbridge, Toms River, Elizabeth, Hamilton, Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Passaic, and Camden, that the ten largest districts average proficiency was 55%, that the State average was 72%, and that the Elizabeth Public Schools outperformed Hamilton and that we only trailed Edison, Woodbridge and Toms River. Mr. Muñoz explained the comparison of our individual schools to all the Union County school districts and stated that Elizabeth High School is ranked No. 1 among performance in this comparison. Mr. Muñoz stated that School No. 22 and School No. 7 outperform New Providence, Westfield, Berkeley Heights, Mountainside, Summit, Scotch Plains-Fanwood, and Cranford. Mr. Muñoz stated that School No. 26 outperforms Clark, that School Nos. 21, 29, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy, 15, 12, and 20 outperform Springfield and Kenilworth, that School No. 30 outperforms Garwood, that School Nos. 16, 4, and 18 outperform the State average and School No. 14 outperforms the Union County average. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools outperforms Winfield, Union, Rahway, Hillside, Linden, Roselle Park, Roselle, and Plainfield. Mr. Muñoz stated that the performance of the students in Elizabeth has increased with the proficiency similar to school districts in DFG C and D including Bayonne, Belleville, Hillside and Rahway. Mr. Muñoz stated that the performance of Elizabeth's students has exceeded District Factor Group A and B which includes districts such as Newark, Camden, Paterson, Jersey City, Linden, and Plainfield. Mr. Muñoz recognized the members of the team including administrators, teachers, custodians, aides, support staff and stated that this all happens because of the collective effort of the team and not just the superintendent. Mr. Muñoz stated that love is having concern for our children and the taxpayers by demonstrating fiscal responsibility as measured by the district's audit of its financial affairs. Mr. Muñoz stated our fiscal accomplishments including that the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) states an unqualified independent auditors' opinion on the CAFR for the year ended June 30, 2010 and an unqualified independent auditors' opinion on compliance with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants applicable to federal and state programs for the year ended June 30, 2010. Mr. Muñoz stated that most recently the Office of Legislative Services, the Office of State Auditor, gave us a passing audit, a very successful audit which covered from July 1, 2007 through April 23, 2010. Mr. Muñoz stated that the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) rated the Elizabeth Public Schools a high performing district in finance. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board has been very prudent with its resources and very cognizant of how it taxes the residents of the City of Elizabeth.

Mr. Muñoz explained a comparison of the tax levy of the Board of Education as compared to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Elizabeth and stated that supporting city services is more costly than supporting our schools. Mr. Muñoz stated that for city services the Mayor and City Council increased taxes for 2002, increased taxes for 2003, increased taxes for 2004, increased taxes for 2005, increased taxes for 2006, increased taxes for 2007, increased taxes for 2008, increased taxes for 2009, increased taxes for 2010 and probably will increase taxes for 2011, that time will tell but the trend is clear. Mr. Muñoz stated that for the same period of eleven years the tax levy for the Elizabeth Board of Education in 2001 was about \$38 million, that in 2010 it was \$48.6 million and in 2011 because we will not raise taxes, there will be no tax

increase, a 0% change, it will be \$48.6 million. Mr. Muñoz stated that we need to look at our pattern, that the Board of Education decreased tax levy for 2002, decreased tax levy for 2003, decreased taxes for 2004, decreased taxes for 2005, taxes remained the same for 2006, and that for 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 as a result of the State law, a direct order by the NJDOE which sent us a letter that required us to raise the tax levy. Mr. Muñoz stated that in 2011 the new governor and administration allowed us to make a choice and the Elizabeth Board of Education chose not to raise taxes. Mr. Muñoz commended the Elizabeth Board of Education for fighting for the taxpayers and the children of the City of Elizabeth and stated that there is no tax increase for the Elizabeth Board of Education in 2011.

Mr. Muñoz explained a comparison of the tax levy of the Board of Education as compared to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Muñoz stated that over the last 11 years the Board has raised the tax levy only 29%, \$10.9 million dollars, while over the same period the City of Elizabeth Mayor and City Council have raised taxes 121% which equals \$60.4 million dollars in additional taxes which the Mayor and City Council have imposed upon the property owners in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Muñoz stated that last year the state told us we have to raise our tax levy by a certain amount and there were members in the community that voted it down with the understanding that City Council could lower the tax, that City Council did not, that the tax levy remained the same, but what City Council did not tell you was that soon after that they raised their taxes. Mr. Muñoz stated that full disclosure, full information, and that this is what happened over time, the Board 29% and the Mayor and City Council 121% increase or \$60.4 million dollars increase for the Mayor and City Council for city services and \$10.9 for the Board of Education.

Mr. Muñoz stated that the budget goal for 2011-2012 is to support student achievement through the development of a budget that provides excellent educational experiences and services to inspire every child to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are presenting a budget that provides for a 0% increase for the taxpayers of the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Muñoz stated that the 2011-2012 budget total expenditure is \$402,505,871. and the vast majority of that, \$329,144,730. is coming from State aid, that federal aid is \$20,580,952., miscellaneous revenue is \$946,172., balance appropriated is \$3,160,694., and our local taxes general fund remains the same at \$48,673,323. Mr. Muñoz stated that the proposed 2011-2012 People's Budget has the lowest per pupil cost in the last five years, that the per pupil cost was \$15,144. for 2007-2008 and next year the 2011-2012 per pupil cost is \$14,655. Mr. Muñoz stated that the budget largely comes from State aid, that 81.8% of the budget is provided by the State of New Jersey which helps keep the local tax down, federal aid is 5.1%, that the local Elizabeth tax levy is 12.1%. Mr. Muñoz stated that 99% of our budget comes from state aid, federal aid, and the local levy. Mr. Muñoz stated that the vast majority of the budget goes directly toward instruction in the classroom, that \$314,395,393. or 78.1% is for instruction including regular education, support services, special education, bilingual, and contribution to whole school reform that go directly to the classrooms, 10.0% for other including community services, transportation, employee benefits, and capital outlay, 8.4% for operation and maintenance of plant, and the smallest portion of our budget, 3.5% is for administration. Mr. Muñoz stated that when you break down the school budget for the 2011-2012 school year on a per pupil cost basis, that \$8,828. of the per pupil cost is for classroom instruction, and the next largest is \$2,386. for support services, and that almost \$11,000. of the \$14,655. per pupil cost goes to support our children whether in the classroom, or through guidance, child study team, social worker, or librarian which are direct services for our children. Mr. Muñoz stated that \$1,907. is for operation and maintenance of plant, and \$1,336. is for administration. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Board of Education is fighting for the taxpayers and there is no tax increase, zero tax increase, for the 2011-2012 budget.

Mr. Muñoz explained a comparison of the proficiencies of 15 Abbott districts, the Elizabeth Public Schools is No. 1 at 68% and that the other districts are less proficient with

Camden at 24% and Newark at 46%. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools cost per pupil is less than those same 15 Abbott districts, that the cost per pupil is lower than Hoboken, Keansburg, Camden, Pemberton, East Orange, Jersey City, Newark, Trenton, Union City, Vineland, New Brunswick, Burlington, Paterson, and Passaic. Mr. Muñoz stated that this Board has done an excellent job at providing our students with an education to get them proficient and outperforming other communities and doing it at a less expensive cost. Mr. Muñoz stated that from an administrative perspective the Elizabeth Board of Education has one of the lowest administrative costs when compared to the State of New Jersey regional cost, that \$1,336. per pupil for administrative cost is below the State regional figure of \$1,768. per pupil. Mr. Muñoz stated that we cut costs by promoting economies and efficiencies and shared services including Alliance for Competitive Energy Services (ACES) to reduce our energy costs, Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI), E-Rate Discounts for telecommunications and internet service which provides reduction in hardware costs for the classroom and administration, Cooperative Purchasing Contracts which obtains competitive pricing, health insurance through the State Health Benefits Plan, State Health benefit Opt-Out Plan, and participating in cooperatives which allow for reductions and efficiencies in transportation and educational services including Union County Educational Services.

Mr. Muñoz stated that the second L is for laser-like focus on teaching and learning, that our priority is to provide our students an excellent education in academics, athletics and the arts, that we plan to include more students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, provide more college preparation classes and continue with more rigor in the classroom, and that we need a laser-like focus on teaching and learning that helps us to increase student achievement and eliminate the achievement gap. Mr. Muñoz asked if you believe in the mission at hand because he does. Mr. Muñoz asked what are our fiscal priorities and what are our educational priorities and that they match up and we budget through our program needs for our students. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are building an excellent school district with no tax increase for 2011-2012.

Mr. Muñoz stated that we are creating excellence in academics and that we will continue to provide our high school students with a personalized and broad course of study at our six independent high schools, that each high school focuses on a college preparatory program with a particular academic and/or career theme, that we have moved forward with applying through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools for proper accreditation, we have been accepted by the National Academy Foundation thereby creating the Academy of Information Technology, Academy of Finance, Academy of Hospitality and Tourism and have recently received authorization to move ahead with the Academy of Engineering for the John E. Dwyer Technology Academy. Mr. Muñoz stated that our partnership with the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy has resulted in a more expanded approach encompassing all four years of instruction, a continuation with SkillsUSA initiative which has reached various medals at all levels with grant funds from Lowe's, expanded opportunities for Advanced Placement (AP) course work for high school teachers and it is offered to middle school teachers, expanded curricular options in the area of science for high school teachers, and implemented the literacy framework Literacy is Essential to Adolescent Development and Success (LEADS) in grade 9. Mr. Muñoz explained expanded offerings of curriculum and teaching methods that are non-traditional at alternative high schools including Hillcrest Academy North and South, Somerset County Educational Services Alternative Academic High School, Essex Campus Academy, and Middlesex Academy. Mr. Muñoz stated that we will establish the National Academy of Finance (NAF) at Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership Academy to be located at the site of Aboff House and expanding the R.O.T.C. Program at Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership Academy. Mr. Muñoz stated that we will continue with our graduation policy requiring students to earn 160 credits in order to graduate. Mr. Muñoz stated that in the lower grades there are new kindergarten and grade 1 reading and language arts series, we will expand under Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement

Act (IDEA) a service delivery model of early intervening services in general education in grades K-3, expanding the literacy framework Literacy is Essential to Adolescent Development and Success (LEADS) in grades 4 and 5, provided after school and summer programs for students in K-8 for year round instruction in literacy and mathematics, expanding in-school academic support by implementing Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in grades 6-8, and will be applying to become authorized as an International Baccalaureate World School through the implementation of the primary years program of international education at Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have a strong partnership with Merck Institute for Science Education (MISE) which sponsored a three year project named The Academy for Leadership in Science Instruction and that we have expanded the participation in the Merck Academy for Leadership in Science Instruction with five additional schools including Nos. 1, 7, 16, 27, and Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership Academy. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have continued partnerships including FMA Live! an innovative stage show to teach Newton's Laws of Motion, Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29 continued with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) partnership for its NASA Explorer School, partnership with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation which is helping to cultivate a generation of healthier children by providing programs that help communicate the need for healthy living and good eating habits and creating environments where physical activity and healthy eating are accessible and encouraged and the 2009-2010 National Recognition Bronze Award Recipients were awarded to School Nos. 6, 7, 14, 21, 22, 25, 29, and 30. Mr. Muñoz stated that excellence in athletics includes the sports developmental clinics to develop fundamental athletic skills in gymnastics, golf, volleyball, tennis and swimming for grades PreK-8 and that the Minuteman Stars Program is an initiative spearheaded by football coach John Quinn which is a new educational program geared towards high school athletes that develops qualities of leadership and scholarship with the aim to improve grade point average, increase the number of students taking the SAT while working to increase the graduation rate and opportunities for higher education. Mr. Muñoz stated that excellence in the arts includes summer school programs in art and music through the Summer Arts Institute for grades K-10, Education Law Centers' Annual Kid in Concert, Teen Arts Festival garnering many honors, partnership to support high quality professional development for art teachers with new methods and techniques and students at Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy attended symposiums led by accomplished artists that provide for hands-on workshops at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz stated that we continue our partnership with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra as the Elizabeth High School instrumental orchestra performed with them in a side-by-side rehearsal followed by a full scale concert for children from our schools. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are moving ahead with the development, engagement and communication of the 2011-2016 Elizabeth Public Schools Strategic Plan and the Elizabeth Public Schools Two Year Action Plan, that we are continuing to adopt reform policies that are conducive to student success and effective governance and promote fidelity to the theory of action managed instruction through lesson plan reviews, benchmark analysis, and walkthroughs and accountability systems. Mr. Muñoz stated that we will continue to hire, retain and develop results driven teachers, that team members participated in the first full district leadership program run by the Disney Institute which offers continuing sessions on organizational leadership and that Disney conducted a case study recognizing Elizabeth Public Schools as their first school district case study, that we continued professional development on the district's definition of rigorous instruction to administrators and instructional coaches in an effort to deepen the understanding of high quality teaching and learning, provided support through an online system called My Learning Plan that facilitates the management of offerings as well as completed courses, expanded support through an online system called iObservation that collects, manages and reports longitudinal data from classroom walkthroughs and teacher evaluations, and that the Institute for Teaching and Learning continues to provide over 300 hours of professional development opportunities during the summer, after school and weekends. Mr.

Muñoz stated that we expanded the instructional rounds training for district leaders facilitated by Tom Fowler-Finn former Superintendent for Cambridge Public Schools, Massachusetts, and expanded the literacy training for district leaders and teachers facilitated by Fred Carrigg former Special Assistant for Literacy to the New Jersey Department of Education. Mr. Muñoz explained the Hedgehog Concept, which is our Core Commitment No. 1 that will prepare all graduates for post secondary education. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are building an excellent school district with no tax increase for 2011-2012, zero percent change, no new taxes.

Mr. Muñoz stated that we will boost student performance on state tests, that our achievement is up and continues to be up over this last five year period, that in mathematics grades 3-8, as well as grade 11, there has been growth over the last five years, and that in language arts there has been growth in grades 5-8 and grade 11. Mr. Muñoz stated that there were 330 Perfect Scores on the NJ ASK in 2009-2010 which is an increase of 55% over 2009 and over 2000% increase since 2005 when there were only 12 perfect scores. Mr. Muñoz stated that we provide supplemental educational support programs to increase student achievement including HSPA Intensification Program and Credit Recovery, After School and Saturday Intensification Program, before school/after school/lunch time tutoring and we contract with Supplemental Educational Services provider. Mr. Muñoz stated that your college preparation begins at early childhood and that the Early Childhood scored 5.67 using the ECERS-R rating scale indicative of a good quality program. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are building an excellent school district with no tax increase for 2011.

Mr. Muñoz stated that one of the priorities is increasing school safety and discipline and this past year the crisis team had training in the National Incident Management System, that we updated crisis procedures, installed and updated more cameras and DVR/ recording systems, provided nonviolent crisis intervention training to general education and special education staff to increase their capacity to implement a behavior management system and manage crisis situations, continued the partnership with the Elizabeth Police Department and the D.A.R.E. program, and that the New Jersey State Police partnership included Top Physical Challenge Fitness, Read Across America, Career Day and Child Safe Identification Program. Mr. Muñoz stated that we conduct refresher training workshops for security personnel in American Red Cross CPR training, anti-terrorism, gang awareness and prevention, public relations, bomb threats, chemical, biological, and radiological hazard, and the Union County Prosecutor's Office for gang awareness. Mr. Muñoz stated that we provided training by a noted security consultant, Ken Trump, who is working with the school district on school security and emergency preparedness training to security personnel and administrative team members. Mr. Muñoz stated that increase in school safety and discipline includes the district's Code of Student Conduct Policy and administrative process, training to address bullying and cyber-bullying, harassment, violence and gang activity, continued use of the Elizabeth Public Safe Schools Tip Line, and continue our partnership with the Union County Prosecutor's Office and Guardian Angels. Mr. Muñoz stated that one of our initiatives that the Board brought in during 2006 and has continued to grow through our years is our student uniforms and we have implemented the uniform policy in 29 schools with over 19,000 students wearing school uniforms. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are building an excellent school district with no tax increase in 2011-2012 school year.

Mr. Muñoz stated that we continue to modernize and construct school buildings, that Blueprint II Expanding Excellence was implemented expanding the gifted and talented programs by adding 400 students in grades 2-8 to the program at Terence C. Reilly School No. 7, that we created an extended day environment at our lowest performing neighborhood schools which will raise achievement and expand excellence including School Nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 13, and 28, which will continue again next year and that we added preschool classrooms for over 400 more students by using Blessed Sacrament, St. Hedwig, and St. Adalbert's as annexes for School Nos. 1, 5, and 16. Mr. Muñoz stated that John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy, Elizabeth High School, Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership

Academy, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy and Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy all officially opened their doors as independent high schools for the first time in September 2009, that the High School Welcome Center continues to provide members of the community with one location to receive information and register for the six high schools, that we are moving forward with the assistance of the Schools Development Authority and Governor Christie on the construction of the new Academic High School and moving ahead with construction of Victor Mravlag School No. 21. Mr. Muñoz stated that our schools have laptop carts and Tablet PCs are used by students at Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29 and John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, and the schools continue to expand the use of white board technology interfaces, AlertNow to automatically call parents of absent students within minutes of attendance being taken and provide web-based electronic scheduling for all students PreK-12, supported administrative oversight of class size and adherence to prescribed curriculum. Mr. Muñoz stated that an element in the theory of action managed instruction is the use of formative and summative data and to use a student information system to make informed decisions and that we continue to use PowerSchool and have added Inform which is used for student assessment collection and data analysis. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are environmentally conscious with the introduction of our new initiative Green Leap, that we have an energy savings plan and adjust summer occupancy hours and reduced set temperatures. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are building an excellent school with no tax increase in 2011-2012.

Mr. Muñoz commented on the fifth priority, changing our district's culture and increase staff morale by treating people well, including that much of the activity in the schools has been contributing to the greater community through school fundraisers including donations to organizations such as St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, Children's Hospital, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, American Heart Association, Food Bank of New Jersey and the Haitian Relief Effort. Mr. Muñoz stated that we will continue to facilitate the Bilingual Parent Advisory Council/Committee with parent liaisons, the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC), continued the Backpack Program in conjunction with the Food Bank, coordinate, monitor, and collaborate with technology to improve the on-line fall, spring, and summer tuition program, support school team members with world-wide 24/7 access to schedule, grade and attendance data, conduct Food Service workshops to increase knowledge of basic nutrition information, promoted online registration for gifted and talented program grades 2-8, high school registration, and summer sports clinics, and we will continue to recognize staff and students for academic excellence both at monthly Board meetings and in the Excellence News. Mr. Muñoz stated that the electronic connections have been updated, that the Elizabeth Public Schools website has been redesigned, added electronic communications such as AlertNow, Facebook, YouTube, EPS email, EPStv, and a new website address www.epsnj.org. Mr. Muñoz stated that we continue to work on improved customer service and district staff morale by providing prompt, timely and courteous response and attention to all district personnel as well as outside applicants via telephone calls and face to face meetings, and for next school year a new Keystone Human Resources System. Mr. Muñoz stated that we will continue council and cohort leadership teams and maintain our partnership with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Mr. Muñoz stated we are building an excellent school district with no tax increase in 2011-2012.

Mr. Muñoz stated that leadership is our last L, that all of us are leaders and we all have an important part to play, that as an organization the phrase 'no excuses – just excellent results' is part of our SOP, standard operating procedure. Mr. Muñoz stated that for us to realize our vision of becoming one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey, then turning our sights on becoming one of America's best school systems, there will be moments where we will be challenged, that you need to ask yourself as to whether we will find reasons to succeed or reasons to fail, that leadership is about taking a stand for what is right. Mr. Muñoz stated that we believe in our team members and our students and we believe in the City of Elizabeth requiring great

public schools. Mr. Muñoz asked if you will join the fight for the students of our schools. Mr. Muñoz stated that we continue to hire, retain, and develop results-driven leaders, that we are using internet websites NJHire.com and NJSchools.com, we continue to reappoint and non-renew non-tenured staff to ensure that high quality professional and support staff are retained in our schools. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are developing and implementing a process to assign staff to positions throughout the district based on need, enrollment and qualifications for the realignment and restructuring of our district. Mr. Muñoz stated that the district has also continued its ten year partnership with the Panasonic Foundation which has been very beneficial to our Strategic Plan, theory of action managed instruction and the five strategies in our achievable results. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Board of Education was one of five in the country selected to participate in the two year training program with the Center for Reform of School Systems (CRSS) and the Broad Foundation, that the district has continued its participation in the Reform Governance in Action[®] with a Sustainability Institute offered by the Center for Reform of School Systems and that the Elizabeth Public Schools developed and recommended 24 new and revised policies. Mr. Muñoz stated that one of the new policies is the Data Dashboard Policy consisting of a limited number of carefully selected indicators for which data are gathered and analyzed by district staff and presented on a regular basis to the Board and public. Mr. Muñoz stated that another new policy is the Accountability Policy that will align employee incentives with the interests of children and taxpayers to improve student achievement and district performance in all areas. Mr. Muñoz stated that through our efforts and support the Elizabeth Public Schools continues to be represented on the George Lucas Educational Foundation (GLEF) National Advisory Council, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Hispanic-Serving School Districts (HSSD), and Hispanic-Serving Institutes (HIS) Advisory Council. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is developing partnerships to achieve excellence and that we have done an outstanding job at managing our time and energy and have effectively administered our responsibilities and have gone beyond for the sake of realizing our vision. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have accomplished a great deal of tangible, measurable results across a broad range of initiatives, with the great assistance of team members and the Board and that we will continue to push tirelessly to make our vision a reality. Mr. Muñoz stated that our goal is to Reach 90% and that is the big goal toward which we keep reaching. Mr. Muñoz stated that goals inspire and knowing where we have been and knowing where we want to go to Reach 90%. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board of Education and Central Office Administration believe in an open and transparent budget process, that all Board of Education meetings are open to the public, and agendas and meeting minutes are available at www.epsnj.org, that copies of the proposed 2011-2012 budget will be on file at the Board of Education Administration building and a copy of the proposed budget will be posted online at the district's website www.epsnj.org. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools are fighting for the taxpayers and our children and there will be no tax increase for the 2011-2012 school year.

Mr. Trujillo thanked Superintendent Muñoz for an excellent presentation and stated that it is a very informative for all those that came tonight to learn about the Elizabeth Board of Education and the direction we are going with the Superintendent's leadership.

Mr. Trujillo presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for those wishing to speak for or against the budget who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. The following rules for public participation shall apply:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced;
2. No personal attacks on individuals;
3. No vulgar or indecent language;
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting;
5. Speakers should refrain from naming individuals;
6. Comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated.

As a reminder this is not a debate nor an audit but an opportunity for citizens to present objections and to be heard with respect to the budget.”

Mr. Trujillo called upon the first participant, Rose Carreto, to address the Board.

Rose Carreto, President of the Elizabeth Education Association, encouraged everyone to vote on Election Day to pass the school budget, that last year there were quite a number of large layoffs and that not passing the budget did not help our students. Ms. Carreto encouraged the citizens of the City of Elizabeth to vote for the school budget this year.

Mr. Trujillo thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Trujillo called upon the next participant, Rafael Fajardo, to address the Board.

Rafael Fajardo, 131 Palisade Road, stated that he is here tonight as a citizen and congratulated the Board members and staff members who worked on this budget. Mr. Fajardo commented that it is great to be a citizen in the City of Elizabeth, that he sent his three children to the public schools and that he believes in the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mr. Fajardo stated that a year ago people said to vote no on the budget and some of the people that said vote no for the budget don't even send their children to the public schools. Mr. Fajardo stated that the Superintendent explained very clear that when you compare the Elizabeth Board of Education budget to the City of Elizabeth budget, that the City of Elizabeth budget increased 121% as compared to about 29% for the Board of Education. Mr. Fajardo stated that is a great job and at the same time built all the schools making sure that the people of Elizabeth did not have to pay for them. Mr. Fajardo thanked the people of the State of New Jersey for giving us the money. Mr. Fajardo encouraged the Board President to call on the Mayor and challenge him to a debate to talk about his budget and the Elizabeth Board of Education budget and the three members running for re-election should challenge their counterparts running against them to a debate, to challenge them to see how much they know about education and see what they have to prove to the people of the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Fajardo thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve the people.

Mr. Trujillo thanked Mr. Fajardo for his comments and for taking the time and interest.

Since there were no other citizens that signed in to address the Board, Mr. Trujillo declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Resolution – School Budget for the 2011-2012 School Year

Mr. Perreira read the resolution.

A motion was made by Mr. Nazco, seconded by Mr. González, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs.

Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 7

Negative: None

Mr. González stated that he would like to acknowledge the budget with respect to our number one priority being the children and what is best for the children of the City of Elizabeth, that is the number one priority that the Board members have in mind whenever discussing Board business and decisions and this budget shows that our number one priority is the children. Mr. González stated the next priority is the staff including teachers, assistants, custodians, security guards, nurses, support staff who make the children what they are. Mr. González stated that the third priority is the taxpayers making sure that we do not pass any tax increases of any kind in order to provide the excellent services that we have. Mr. González commended his colleagues, the Superintendent and staff helping with this budget that our children, our staff and our taxpayers have top priority.

Mr. Nazco thanked everyone for coming this evening and commended Superintendent Muñoz for the very thorough and informative presentation. Mr. Nazco thanked the staff members who worked on this budget as well as his colleagues on the Finance Committee that worked hard to make sure that this budget was presented in a way that was foremost for education with the least amount of impact on the taxpayers in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Nazco stated that the budget process can be very challenging especially in these economic times. Mr. Nazco stated that he, his colleagues, and specifically his running mates, Francisco González and Paul Perreira, pledged that they would not support any increase in the local school budget. Mr. Nazco stated that tonight they have delivered on that promise. Mr. Nazco commented that a friend said to him that you can't join the band if you don't blow your own horn. Mr. Nazco highlighted the accomplishments of the last few years and what we will continue to accomplish with this new budget that has 0% tax increase including making AYP as a district, new schools opening, children in uniforms, expanded the PreK opening, and expanded the Gifted & Talented program. Mr. Nazco stated that we have partnerships with Fortune 500 companies and large organizations that do not partner with just anyone, that they look at the entire organization making sure the organization is dedicated, fiscally responsible and looking at the best interest of the community and that we have partnerships with NASA, Panasonic Foundation, Disney Institute, Hewlett Packard, Merck, Conoco Phillips, New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and Broad Foundation which are very large companies and organizations that we are very proud and honored to work with on a daily basis and congratulated the staff for allowing us to enter into those partnerships. Mr. Nazco stated that April 27th is Election Day and it is of utmost importance and critical that the citizens of the City of Elizabeth approve this budget. Mr. Nazco stated that approving this budget will allow the Board, the Superintendent, and the staff to continue to provide that laser-like focus that will not only make us one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey but one of the best school systems in America.

Mr. Perreira thanked Superintendent Muñoz and staff members who worked on this budget, one of the most demanding tasks because we are not putting any more burden on the taxpayers of the City of Elizabeth, that in this economic time when people are unemployed, losing their homes, and that this is the worst time to ask or demand anything. Mr. Perreira stated that we are providing all the services that we currently have and not raising taxes.

Mr. Trujillo commended the Superintendent and staff members who worked on the budget and stated that what a difference a year makes, that last year we gave our budget presentation and felt the pressures of a Trenton administration who over the last 3 years put a burden on us to raise taxes on the citizens of the City of Elizabeth, that as the economy worsened we were forced to raise taxes and that it was an incredible burden as people lost their homes, lost their jobs. Mr. Trujillo asked if you know what it is like to sit here and raise your own taxes and then go home and tell your wife that you raised your own taxes. Mr. Trujillo stated that it was not nice but what we were forced to do. Mr. Trujillo stated that is what leadership is about, it is about making hard decisions, and more importantly it is standing up for what you believe in and being honest to the people you serve. Mr. Trujillo stated that about this time last year the Mayor and his colleagues started to circulate beautiful, very expensive, glossy, 8 x 10 cards scaring everyone to vote against the kids' budget, telling everyone that their taxes would go up by \$400., that they calculated that everyone's house would be an extra \$400., and even though we were raising taxes that just wasn't true. Mr. Trujillo stated that after thirty years of politics the Mayor has been very wise and learned a few tricks and blamed the school board for raising taxes knowing very well that the same governor that he supported for so long forced us to raise taxes. Mr. Trujillo stated that the taxpayers were up in arms and demanded that we vote down the school budget and he turned around and raised his own taxes, that while you were stunned by the amount of taxes that we had to put on, that he levied his along with his friends in the County, and then maybe the taxes got up to \$400, but he didn't tell you that, and that is just dishonest and the lesson was learned. Mr. Trujillo stated that we know that it is election time again and April 27th will be here before you know it, and our Mayor, City Council and esteemed Senator, Mr. Lesniak, who have no interest other than taking over the school board except for their own personal gain will be at it again. Mr. Trujillo stated that he suspects that they will be attacking Mr. Muñoz because they feel that Mr. Muñoz makes too much money, but I am here to tell you that I support Mr. Muñoz and his salary because he has given us the results that our children deserve. Mr. Trujillo stated that he will compare Mr. Muñoz's results to any other superintendent throughout the State of New Jersey, and that he is proud to sit next to Mr. Muñoz and that he will defend him when the attacks come. Mr. Trujillo stated that you may ask why would they attack Mr. Muñoz. Mr. Trujillo stated that they would attack him because this year there is no increase in the tax levy and the Mayor needs something in his hand to distract you, that now there is a new administration in Trenton and they have capped the Mayor at 2% increase which is not enough for them to keep going, that you have seen the history, that they have raised taxes 121% in 10 years and they can't do it with 2%. Mr. Trujillo stated that they have another trick that is called bonding, that they borrow against our children's future, that this town has seen in the last 20 years our Mayor raise taxes 121%, sell the landfill that used to make money, sell the water company that used to make money and now they just bonded to fix the sewer system that is not ours because they sold it and asked why we are fixing it. Mr. Trujillo stated that it stops here. Mr. Trujillo stated that he does challenge them and will compare our budget dollar for dollar with their budget. Mr. Trujillo stated that if you live in this town, work in this town or drive through this town then you see what is happening to this City's infrastructure and asked where is the money going and don't you wonder? Mr. Trujillo stated that he has the utmost respect for anyone who wants to choose any school district for their children, that's America, that if you want to choose a private school and can afford it then good for you, but this Board of Education, those of us that have children in school, we send our children to our schools and asked if they can say that? Mr. Trujillo stated

that they sit there and criticize us but we pay their salaries and they send their children to other schools and yet they want us to pay for it. Mr. Trujillo stated that no one on this Board of Education gets paid anything, not one dollar, nothing. Mr. Trujillo stated that we go to training and we expense our own accounts from our own pockets and we don't ask for reimbursement. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has never asked for one dollar reimbursement because he would be ashamed to, that this Board of Education represents the City of Elizabeth with honor and dignity. Mr. Trujillo stated that nothing like that is compared to City Hall and challenged the taxpayers of the City of Elizabeth to wake up. Mr. Trujillo apologizes if he seems angry but that you shouldn't confuse his emotion for anger because it isn't anger but that it is frustration, and that he loves this City and his colleagues do also. Mr. Trujillo stated that you see what is happening to our City everyday and that they play partisan politics with our children's future. Mr. Trujillo asked if you know who buys the municipal bonds and stated that China purchases the bonds, that they are selling our future to China and there is nothing less un-American than that. Mr. Trujillo stated that we built 11 new schools and asked how much money could you borrow against the 11 new schools. Mr. Trujillo stated that it has to stop. Mr. Trujillo stated that he is interested in seeing their budget this year because it has to be at 2% but that they bonded for \$20 million and that they are in the hole for \$100 million. Mr. Trujillo stated that the taxpayers of the City of Elizabeth are in the hole for \$100 million dollars. Mr. Trujillo stated that the Elizabeth Board of Education owes zero and that the taxpayers own their schools outright. Mr. Trujillo stated that the County is in debt for \$550 million. Mr. Trujillo stated that is reality, that the taxpayers have to wake up, that the taxpayers have to come out and vote and if you want to vote it down then that is your right. Mr. Trujillo stated that he supports your right to vote, that he is going to vote for this budget, that he is going to fight for this budget and support his colleagues who support this budget and that it is the right thing to do. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have good people in this district who work very hard for our children every day and educating children costs money. Mr. Trujillo stated that you can see what the other Abbotts are doing, it's time that we separate ourselves from the other Abbotts because we basically aren't in the same league anymore, we are better than those other Abbotts. Mr. Trujillo stated that the time has come for us to get together and decide are we going to sell our future to China or are we going to reinvest in our children here in America, that it is towns like Elizabeth, one town at a time, one state at a time across the union, where these decisions are made. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is folks like you, hard working Americans, struggling every day to make ends meet so their children have a future, who make these decisions. Mr. Trujillo challenged the parents to turn off the television and do homework with your children and challenged them to go out and vote on April 27th. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is easy to stay home and think the other guy will do it but we learned last year when our budget was cut and we had to let go of so many good people. Mr. Trujillo asked do you think our children were not impacted by those losses. Mr. Trujillo stated that they should ask a child if he doesn't know the name of his first teacher, or when they see a familiar teacher or a friendly security guard, or the cafeteria attendant who serves them lunch with a smile and asked do you think that doesn't affect them. Mr. Trujillo stated that the children know and that these are real decisions. Mr. Trujillo stated that he hasn't seen this many people in City Council in the last five years collectively and they meet twice a month, that no one goes there and they do whatever they want. Mr. Trujillo stated that our Mayor has the audacity to say that we don't have a gang problem, that the Prosecutor tells us we have a gang problem and officers off the record tell us there is a gang problem. Mr. Trujillo stated that the Mayor is living in a bubble, for thirty years of politics, he lives so removed from the rest of us in this town he might as well be the Mayor of Union, and commented that this can't go on any further, that it has to stop. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has only been here 4 years, that he may not be as experienced as the Mayor and commented that he knows there is a gang problem, drug problems and that we are a big city with a lot of problems. Mr. Trujillo stated that we solve the problems with education, that we teach our children right from wrong, that it starts at home, then school with the best education possible

and then send them back to the parents, and we continue to repeat, that we build good citizens from the ground up starting when they are three and all the way to college, become working adults and good citizens. Mr. Trujillo stated that it starts with education and not denial, not lying and misrepresenting the truth. Mr. Trujillo urged the citizens to support this budget because the children are counting on you.

On a motion by Mrs. Munn, seconded by Mr. Perreira, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 7

Negative: None

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary