

APPROVED
Bd. Mtg. 2-25-21

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

January 21, 2021
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular agenda meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on January 21, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. The Meeting was previously noticed to be held in the Multipurpose Room of Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 51, 544 Pennsylvania Ave., Elizabeth, New Jersey 07208. However, in light of the public health emergency caused by coronavirus and the Governor's Executive Order reducing the allowed capacity for indoor gatherings, the Elizabeth Board of Education will conduct the meeting remotely using on-line platform technology without providing a physical meeting place.

Board President Jerry Jacobs welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr. Jacobs called for a moment of silence for the passing of Antonio Cruz, security guard, and Donna Baumann, personal assistant.

Pledge of Allegiance
National Anthem

Mr. Jacobs stated that this week has been a most momentous week. Mr. Jacobs stated that we started the week with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday and it was so relevant that it was the same week that we had the inauguration. Mr. Jacobs stated that the inauguration was a great event because it represented the peaceful transfer of power, something that has happened the last 200 years in our country and our democracy. Mr. Jacobs stated that it is important for us to reflect on that. Mr. Jacobs stated that he was very impressed with the inauguration ceremony and, in particular, the young poet laureate, Amanda Gorman who for her age displayed maturity beyond years. Mr. Jacobs stated that she captured the essence of the inauguration and it was wonderful that it was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday week.

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer presented information on the updated high school graduation requirements. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Governor Phil Murphy recently signed an executive order pertaining to the high school graduation requirements and the impact on our Class of 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide and stated that our graduation requirements policy calls for, and it is also a state mandate, that our students achieve or exceed a passing grade on NJ DOE approved state-wide high school proficiency assessment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Governor has waived the requirement for our seniors who will be graduating this year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the graduation requirements for community service and stated that students are required to perform a total of 60 hours of community service with a minimum of 30 hours completed by the end of tenth grade. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that last year this requirement was waived and it is also being waived for this year as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the graduation requirement for a senior project. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is a local requirement which was waived last school year and it is being waived for our seniors this school year. Mrs.

Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the graduation requirements for SAT, ACT, or equivalent college entrance exam testing. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are waiting for the decision regarding the SAT, ACT, or equivalent test. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that last year the requirement had been waived as a requirement for graduating seniors. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at this present time, this requirement has not been waived so therefore our graduating class is required to take the SAT, ACT, or equivalent college entrance exam. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will be providing information on the administration of the SAT at our next Board meeting as well as in writing to our parents to keep everyone informed. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at this present time, this requirement is not waived. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for our parents in grades 3-11, the state assessments are still a requirement and the Department of Education has issued the assessment schedule to be administered in March. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at this present time the US DOE has not waived this requirement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we began with our benchmark assessments in December and they will run through the months of January and February in order to prepare our students for the state assessments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that her intent is to keep our families informed with regard to any changes regarding assessment requirements.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer addressed concerns that have been raised by parents. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that some parents have received a paper copy of the lunch application. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there is an online application process for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this was initially communicated to all parents in August and our parents were instructed to access the district website to complete the application process. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we posted notifications on our social media platforms and we sent out communications via text and email and we sent phone calls and push notifications. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as a follow-up, hard copies of the application for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program were mailed to parents and guardians. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this communication started in August and many of our parents and guardians responded to the phone calls and emails as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if you received it in the mail and have already responded there is no obligation to do anything else at this time.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another concern raised by parents is classroom assignments from preschool through high school. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will be setting up roundtables with parents, teachers, principals, supervisors, and most important our students to be able to discuss the current workload that our children are experiencing with a focus on elementary, middle, and high school. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that her intent is to be able to report to the Board for our February Board meeting with regard to the outcome of the roundtable discussions in terms of what the experience has been. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are always interested in hearing from our parents, students, and team members with regard to ways we can better serve our community. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that concludes her presentation.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for the presentation.

Board President Jerry Jacobs presented the following statement at 6:44 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a regular agenda meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting using an online platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on January 15, 2021. 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, New Jersey.

There will be an online public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must register online up to the start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The public participation form states the name and email of the person who wants to comment. Members of the public who prefer not to or do not have the means to participate using the online platform may continue to participate by emailing statements relative to agenda items and/or educational matters to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org. All statements received will be read into the record during the meeting's public comment portion. All emails must be submitted and received by the Secretary of the Board up to the start of the meeting and, as is always the case, must include the public member's full name for the record. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The time limit will be strictly enforced and audio transmission will be terminated at the end of three minutes. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. Emails received but not read after the 60-minute duration will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this meeting."

Present: Nathalie Alcaide-Hernandez, Diane Barbosa, Charlene Bathelus, Maria Carvalho, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron, Stephanie Pestana, Jerry Jacobs – 8

Absent: Iliana Chevres – 1

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP, and members of the community were present via an online platform.

Mr. Jacobs introduced John Swisher, Partner, Suplee Clooney & Company to present the Independent Auditors Report for the district.

John Swisher, Partner, Suplee Clooney & Company presented the Independent Auditors Report for the year ended June 30, 2020 inclusive of the Auditor's Management Report and reported that the District's financial statements are fairly stated and an unmodified opinion in the report. Mr. Swisher read the findings and recommendations contained in the Auditor's Management Report and the Corrective Action Plan to be adopted as required by N.J.A.C. 18A:23-5 to publicly review and discuss at a public meeting of the Board of Education. Mr. Swisher stated that concluded his report and asked if there were any questions from the Board members.

Ms. Bathelus asked if we will receive the documentation in the mail so we can review it.

Mr. Swisher stated that the hard copies will be delivered to the District and then distributed. Mr. Swisher stated that a PDF copy of the report will also be provided.

Ms. Bathelus asked about the comment.

Mr. Swisher explained the comment about the transfers.

Mrs. Carvalho asked how many transfers.

Mr. Swisher responded that two transfers were not submitted to the County Office.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mr. Swisher and the staff at Suplee Clooney for their work on the audit. Mr. Jacobs thanked Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Malhotra and their respective staff for their work on the audit. Mr. Jacobs stated he remembers his first year on the Board there were approximately twenty findings and now we are down to one. Mr. Jacobs stated that going from a qualified position to an unqualified position is something that should be noted as well. Mr. Jacobs stated that having one finding shows what a phenomenal job our finance and business department is doing and should be commended for that.

Mr. Jacobs presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the meeting is open for public comment to those who have registered with the online participation form prior to this session. I shall call individuals to participate 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: time limits will be strictly enforced, no personal attacks on individuals, no vulgar or indecent language, a person may address the board no more than once during a single meeting, speakers should refrain from naming individuals, and comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated. As a reminder, this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.

If the 60 minute public comment period expires before all registered online participants have been called, remaining participants can email their statements to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org and they will be spread in full in the Official Minutes of this meeting. The Secretary of the Board will read into the record all emails that have been submitted up to the start of the meeting. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration.”

Mr. Jacobs called upon the first public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Christina Moreira spoke about specials services and the special education committee.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz spoke about the chief medical inspector.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Lynda Dellipoali, to address the Board.

Lynda Dellipoali spoke about students’ laptops not being fixed in a timely manner.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments and requested that she call the Superintendent’s office tomorrow to address this matter.

Mr. Jacobs called twice upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board. Kason Little did not respond.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he did not receive any emails prior to the start of the meeting.

Since there were no other participants for public speaking and no emails received, Mr. Jacobs closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Jacobs stated that we will go tab by tab to review the agenda and each board member may ask questions.

Minutes of the Meeting of December 2020

Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of November 2020

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Personnel Report

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Jacobs asked Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta to provide a summary of the report.

Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta gave a synopsis of the report.

Mr. Jacobs congratulated those retiring and thanked them for their dedication and service to the Board.

Mrs. Barbosa asked about the Adult Basic Skills program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the program.

Mrs. Carvalho asked how many participants and the cost of the program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded that there are 74 students in the program and it is grant funded.

Tuition Report

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Superintendent's Report – Considerations

Superintendent's Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Authorizations Report

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc.

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Award of Contracts Report

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions.

Miscellaneous Communication – None

Claims List

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Resolution – Authorizing Nursing Staff as Covid-19 Vaccination Volunteers

Resolution – African American Heritage Month

Resolution – Career and Technical Education Month

Resolution – Children’s Dental Health Month

Resolution – Honoring Harriet Tubman

Resolution – National School Counseling Week

Resolution – Revised Schedule of Meetings

Resolution – Appointment of Construction Managers

Resolution – Appointment of Engineers

Resolution – Appointment of Environmental Consultants

Resolution – Appointment of Architects

Resolution – Appointment of Special Counsel

Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days

Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days

Mr. Jacobs asked if there were any questions on the above resolutions.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she is happy to see the resolutions and asked Superintendent Hugelmeyer if we can see these resolutions engaged in our daily instruction. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she is happy to see this week different kind of activities based on African American Heritage Month and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday and is very proud of our teachers and staff. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked Superintendent Hugelmeyer if there is any way, especially this month because it is Career and Technical Education Month, that we can invite guest speakers or if the teacher has time to speak. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that sometimes we speak about some resolutions more than others. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked if the principal receives the resolutions as soon as we pass them and is there any way they implement them to teach our students about these resolutions that we pass every month.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mrs. Moreno-Ortega for her comment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that although we are still living through a pandemic she would like to be able to restore the Excellence News. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Excellence News is information that we share with our community on a monthly basis at our Board of Education meetings and it really aligns well to our Board resolutions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it allowed our teachers to showcase the work that they are doing with their students each and every day and that there is great work that is taking place virtually in our school district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we want to be able to highlight and acknowledge that great work across the board. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she

will present to the Board our Excellence News which will reflect the embodiment of all of our resolutions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month we have five of our teachers that are going to be featured in the NJ Department of Education CTE Celebration podcast including Thomas Urban from Jefferson Academy, Faheemah Walton from Halsey Academy, Donnielle Tuturro from Edison Academy, Michael Westervelt from Edison Academy, and Alyssa Milanese from Bollwage Academy. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our CTE Department is going to be celebrated also by participating in NJ Safe Career Exploration courses. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are sharing with our parents and our community the importance of our resolutions and how it is that they live in our classrooms all throughout the month.

Mrs. Barbosa stated the importance of the resolution for the authorization for the nursing staff to be volunteers for the Covid-19 vaccine. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are incorporated with what is going on in our outside world as a district. Mrs. Barbosa applauded our nurses for helping our children and our community at large.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mrs. Barbosa. Mrs. Hugelmeyer acknowledged the amazing work that our nurses have been doing since the beginning of this pandemic. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our nurses were involved in the development of our reopening plan and establishing the procedures and protocols and how we were going to assure the safety for all our team members and students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated the resolution reflects the partnership with our City of Elizabeth and how it was a call to have our nurses assist with the rollout of the Covid vaccination. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our nurses volunteered to be able to assist at the Peterstown clinic and have been working from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. four days a week administering the Covid vaccine and it has been a true success. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as the Peterstown clinic expands their hours and days our nurses are working right alongside our City of Elizabeth Health Department to ensure that members of our community have access to the vaccine. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this resolution is reflective of that collaboration and commitment to do whatever it is that is needed to be able to serve everyone well and ensure the health and safety of all.

Mr. Jacobs added the above to the agenda.

The President requests a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of personnel, contracts and legal matters. The Board will reconvene in public and may add to the agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, to go into private session at 7:31 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Alcaide-Hernandez, Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 8

Negative: None

Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez excused herself from the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, to reconvene in public session at 10:08 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron,
Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 7

Negative: None

Mr. Jacobs added the following to the agenda:

Personnel Report – Appointment

Authorization Report – Authorization to Use Dunn Sports Center as Covid-19 Vaccination Clinic
Site

Authorization Report – Authorization to Use School No. 28 as Covid-19 Mobile Testing Site

Mr. Jacobs requested a motion and second to approve the Resolution – Authorizing
Nursing Staff as Covid-19 Vaccination Volunteers.

Resolution – Authorizing Nursing Staff as Covid-19 Vaccination Volunteers

A motion was made by Mrs. Barbosa, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, that the resolution be
adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron,
Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 7

Negative: None

On a motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, the meeting
was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron,
Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 7

Negative: None

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