

APPROVED

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BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

January 3, 2013
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Prior to the scheduled reorganization meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education at 7:30 p.m. held at Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, 505 Morris Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Board President Fernando Nazco welcomed all to the meeting.

Mr. Francisco González gave the invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Erika Gomez and Nithaelle Poinvil, fifth grade students at Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27.

The *Star Spangled Banner* by Francis Scott Key was performed by the fourth grade choir from Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27.

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Erika Gomez and Nithaelle Poinvil, fifth grade students at Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27.

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

Board members elect Charlene Bathelus, Elcy Castillo-Ospina and Tony Monteiro took the oath of office administered by Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., School Business Administrator/Board Secretary. Each newly sworn in Board member thanked all for support given during the School Board Election.

Mr. Nazco recognized dignitaries including Elizabeth Mayor Chris Bollwage, Second Ward Councilman Nelson Gonzalez, and former Board President Armando DaSilva.

Mr. Nazco introduced seventh and eighth grade students from Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27 who performed a Columbian dance, *La Pollera Colora*, by Wilson Choperena. Mr. Nazco thanked the students for the wonderful performance.

Mr. Nazco introduced kindergarten students from Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27 who performed a Haitian dance to *Dekole*, by J. Perry. Mr. Nazco thanked the students for the wonderful performance.

Mr. Nazco introduced kindergarten students from Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27 who performed a Portuguese dance to *Bate O Pe*, by Roberto Leal. Mr. Nazco thanked the students for the wonderful performance.

Mr. Nazco introduced seventh and eighth grade students from Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23 who performed a Caribbean dance to *Zouk Style Medley*. Mr. Nazco thanked the students for the wonderful performance.

Mr. Nazco recognized dignitaries visiting including Roselle Mayor Jamel Holley, Roselle Council President Yves Aubourg, Roselle Board of Education Member Archange Antoine, Linden Councilman Derek Armstead, and Jesus Galvez from the Hackensack Sheriff Department.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. congratulated Board members Charlene Bathelus, Elcy Castillo-Ospina, and Tony Monteiro and presented them with a plaque of commemoration, a letter from the County Clerk and a Certificate of Election.

The members of the Board of Education met for the purpose of reorganization on Thursday, January 3, 2013 at Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, 505 Morris Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. presented the following statement at 8:15 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is the annual reorganization 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 sent to Worrall Community Newspapers, The Star Ledger, and Cablevision of Elizabeth on December 21, 2012. In addition, this notice is posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Mitchell Building, 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion 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, telephone number and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment.”

Present: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Monteiro, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Pablo Muñoz, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Board Attorney Kirk Nelson, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Jennifer Barrett, Assistant Superintendent for Family and Community Outreach Jerome Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Olga Hugelmeyer, Comptroller William Greene, and members of the public were in attendance.

Kirk Nelson, Board Attorney, stated that tonight the Board is meeting for the purpose of reorganization. Mr. Nelson stated that the Education Act requires that at the organization meeting the Board shall elect from its members a President and a Vice President who shall serve for terms of one year. Nominations will be made from among the membership of the Board present. Elections shall be by the majority of the vote present and voting which means this is the majority of the quorum. When nominations are made they do not require a second, however, in order to close nominations there must be a motion to second and then a vote to close nominations for the office of President or Vice President. To conduct the election for President and Vice President, there will be the election of a President Pro Tem, and the same rules will apply for the voting process in that regard and the election of the President Pro Tem will be conducted by the Board Secretary. President Pro Tem is elected solely for conducting the election of a President.

Mr. Kennedy called the first order of business for nominations for President Pro Tem.

Mr. González nominated Mr. Perreira for President Pro Tem.

A motion was made by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Mr. Trujillo, that nominations be closed.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Monteiro, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 9

Negative: None

The following vote was taken on the election of Mr. Perreira for President Pro Tem.

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Monteiro, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Perreira having received the required number of votes was declared President Pro Tem.

Mr. Perreira thanked the Board for the vote of confidence in electing him President Pro Tem.

President Pro Tem Perreira called for nominations for Board President.

Mr. González nominated Mr. Monteiro for President.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Donoso, that nominations be closed.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Monteiro, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 9

Negative: None

The following vote was taken on the election of Mr. Monteiro for President.

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Monteiro, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Monteiro having received the required number of votes was declared President.

Mr. Monteiro stated that it is with great pleasure that he takes this opportunity to thank all the Board members and that he looks forward to serving as President this year. Mr. Monteiro thanked Mr. Nazco for his leadership and contributions during his tenure as President last year. Mr. Monteiro stated that his mom always used to say that you don't need a title or position to be a leader you need passion to make a difference in the world and he hopes that is what he brings to this board, passion and some experience in public service. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is a great honor to serve with hard working men and women on this team and he looks forward to continuing the progress and all the achievements that we have yet to accomplish in this district. Mr. Monteiro thanked his colleagues and Superintendent Muñoz for this great opportunity.

Mr. Monteiro called for nominations for Vice President.

Mr. Perreira nominated Mrs. Castillo-Ospina for Vice President.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Ms. Bathelus, that nominations be closed.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

The following vote was taken on the election of Mrs. Castillo-Ospina for Vice President.

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina having received the required number of votes was declared Vice President.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina thanked the Board for the vote of confidence in electing her Vice President and commented that we are the No. 1 Urban School District in the State and on our way to being the best in the country.

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the existing Rules of Governance be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Nazco, that Mrs. Castillo-Ospina represent the Board on the Union County Educational Services Commission.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Monteiro stated that he would be appointing Board members to represent the Board at the New Jersey School Boards Association, Urban School Boards Association, Union County School Boards Association and Board committees.

Resolution – Official Results of School Board Election

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Official Media Services

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Mr. González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 8

Abstain: Mr. Donoso – 1

Negative: None

Resolution – Designating Depositories for School Funds

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. González, Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 6

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus, Mr. Donoso, Mrs. Munn – 3

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Special Counsels

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Munn – 2

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Insurance Consultant

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. González, Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 6

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus, Mr. Donoso, Mrs. Munn – 3

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Auditor

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Perreira, 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, Monteiro – 8

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus – 1

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Perreira, 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, Monteiro – 7

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus – 1

Negative: Mr. Trujillo – 1

Resolution – Appointment of Medical Inspectors

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo (negative- Guillermo Munoz), Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Treasurer of School Monies

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Abstain: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Munn – 2

Negative: None

Resolution – Schedule of Meetings

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Donoso asked why there are two meetings scheduled in June.

Mr. Kennedy explained that the first meeting is the regular meeting and the second meeting is for the closing of the fiscal year.

Mr. Monteiro presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphones 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 sixty 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 participants 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.”

Mr. Monteiro called upon the first public participant, Jose Rodriguez, to address the Board.

Jose Rodriguez, 618 Jackson Avenue, congratulated the newly elected and re-elected Board members. Mr. Rodriguez commented that Elizabeth is the fourth largest district in the State and does not have a school dedicated to special education and requested a committee be formed to discuss the benefits of having a school dedicated to special education.

Mr. Monteiro thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Medeiros, to address the Board.

Maria Medeiros, 161 Livingston Street, congratulated Charlene Bathelus and spoke on general issues to make our schools safer.

Mr. Monteiro thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Luis Rincon, to address the Board.

Luis Rincon, 164 Bellevue Street, congratulated the three Board members and thanked the Board members for the progress and development and commented that he is very proud to have a Columbian as Vice President.

Mr. Monteiro thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, James Carey, to address the Board.

James Carey, 212 Inslee Place, congratulated the three newly elected Board members and commented that he would like the Board to adopt a resolution to open dialogue with the parents in the City of Elizabeth to educate the parents and citizens on the procedures of safety and security in the schools.

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

Mr. Monteiro stated that Mr. Trujillo is one of our strongest advocates for security and safety in our schools and in light of what took place in Connecticut we are all aware of what is going on now throughout the school systems in this country and there is going to be a lot of dialogue going forward not only with our district but hopefully with many others. Mr. Monteiro stated that one of his goals besides continuing the progress that these great men and women have done on this board is opening the dialogue and extending the olive branch to City Hall and opening the opportunity to work together and unite the

community to make it a better place for all of us to live. Mr. Monteiro stated that instead of having to close doors and walls it is better to build bridges and he is hoping to do that in the coming year.

Mr. Trujillo stated that in response to the special education comment there is no one here who does not support special education and we are trying to provide that to the parents of special education students. Mr. Trujillo stated that there is a wide spectrum in special education and he doesn't think one school could do it. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have to open dialogue, be cognizant of the needs of the community, listen to the parents and understand what they want for their children and treat them case by case because each situation is different and it is a very difficult decision. Mr. Trujillo stated that we are already constrained by the amount of children we have and there are so many children in the City of Elizabeth that need services so bringing in more children from other districts just for money is not the answer.

Mr. Trujillo stated that security in our schools is so very important, we spend so much on security and we need to revisit it. Mr. Trujillo stated that this is an urban district and people have guns and they are in the wrong hands. Mr. Trujillo stated that he is a strong advocate of school security not only for our children but our staff also needs to be safe and in order to provide a good learning environment security plays a key role. Mr. Trujillo stated that the Superintendent has done a good job with security but the dialogue has to be created as well and he hopes to call for public forums as we have in the past, that we listen to them and learn a lot from what the public wants. Mr. Trujillo stated that many people cannot come to the meetings so we have to make ourselves accessible and go out into the community and listen in smaller groups with open discussion and hopefully we can get the sentiments of the community as a whole and formulate a plan of how we can better secure our schools. Mr. Trujillo stated that the best case scenario would be to study best practices throughout the country and if we are going to be the best academically, athletically, and artistically then we want to be one of the safest schools, if not the safest school in the State of New Jersey and be a model throughout the rest of the country. Mr. Trujillo stated that going forward he hopes we can work with our counterparts on the City level and hopefully they will come to the table, that he has reached out to them in the past and will continue to do so if it is in the benefit of our City and our children. Mr. Trujillo welcomes the input from the public and he is sure his colleagues do as well.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she is a strong advocate for special education and that is what she has been doing for a living for more than twenty years. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that when the team decides a child should go out-of-district it is based on the child's needs, not the parents, not the staff, not the budget, that it is according to the child's needs and explained the procedure. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that the Union County Educational Services Commission is a special education board where every town is represented and she is the representative from this Board.

Mr. González stated that Mrs. Castillo-Ospina is an advocate for special education and he is as well and that one of the programs we brought back to the district is the Autism program at three or four schools. Mr. González explained that we are no longer sending those children out of district, saving the district money and keeping our children within the town. Mr. González stated that the special education department is looking at ways where we can bring the children back but as Mrs. Castillo-Ospina explained we do what is best for the child.

Mr. González stated that the weekend of the Connecticut incident the Board members were in contact with the Superintendent and administrators with regard to our procedures and on Monday morning Mr. Nazco and he met with the district crisis management team to make sure the policies are reviewed and audit the buildings to make sure everything is in place. Mr. González stated that we continue to be active on this to make sure that everyone in our district is safe and that the safety of our children is our number one priority.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she will definitely take on the challenge to work with Mr. Trujillo and the other Board members on school safety so that we can ensure that what happened in Connecticut will not happen in the City of Elizabeth. Ms. Bathelus stated that when she was running for the Board of Education many residents shared their many concerns with things going on in the City and she will share those concerns with her fellow colleagues so we can ensure that the schools move forward.

Mr. Perreira stated that since he has been on this Board one of his main focuses and the team collectively has been security. Mr. Perreira stated in the beginning of this year we made it a point to make sure that we notify the community of the effort that the Board of Education is doing in regards to how to report issues that are going on around the community whether they see kids doing something or something suspicious, who you should contact, how to do it, and so forth. Mr. Perreira stated that in every child's backpack we also provided a guide as to what the district currently does, what the rules are, what the different steps are in case of an emergency that we do today. Mr. Perreira stated that there is room for improvement and as everyone states it is not only this group that is going to be essentially the only voice, that it needs to be collectively the community to also come and make sure they take part in this process. Mr. Perreira stated that it is not only us putting two or three security guards in there that is going to stop a gunman we need to make sure we work collectively with City Council to make sure that we create programs to get guns off the streets. Mr. Perreira stated that the issue is not how to stop them, but to stop the guns from being out there. Mr. Perreira stated that it's not only about how we are going to stop them from coming in and he doesn't think that even having a police officer out there would make much of a difference. Mr. Perreira stated that we need to work all together, find ways, create programs, whatever it may be to get the guns off the streets and try to tackle it in a different approach. Mr. Perreira stated that as long as he and his colleagues are here as Board members they will continue to fight to make sure they are as safe as possible.

Mrs. Munn stated that she is also an advocate and supports all of her colleagues efforts in securing our buildings and that parents want to know that their children are safe in the schools. Mrs. Munn stated that she agrees with Mr. Perreira that we do need to come together, district, City and everyone else to make sure that we provide community awareness and to bring programs that will help the students and parents. Mrs. Munn stated that we need to partner with City Councilmembers, community organizations, faith-based organizations and as Mr. Trujillo stated earlier we are open to any input and any ideas that may help. Mrs. Munn stated that we can always do better and we will work collaboratively to make sure our children are safe in our community.

Mr. Monteiro thanked everyone here tonight for taking time from their busy schedules to participate in this reorganization and on behalf of this Board of Education wished everyone a healthy, happy, prosperous, and peaceful new year.

On a motion by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Ms. Bathelus, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Mrs. Munn, Messrs. Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo, Monteiro – 9

Negative: None

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