

APPROVED  
Bd. Mtg. 2-25-21

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
(Official)

January 7, 2021  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The members of the Board of Education met virtually for the purpose of reorganization on Thursday, January 7, 2021. 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. Voice conferencing technology for the Thursday, January 7, 2021 Reorganization Meeting at 6:30 p.m. was available to the public at <https://www.facebook.com/epsnj> and <https://www.youtube.com/user/epschools>.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. welcomed everyone to the reorganization meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Pledge of Allegiance  
National Anthem

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. presented the following statement at 6:50 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 using an on-line platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on January 4, 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 on-line public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must register on-line 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 on-line 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](mailto: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 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.

As included in the aforementioned January 4, 2021 public notice of this meeting, the oath of office to the three re-elected Board members, Maria Carvalho, Jerry Jacobs, and Rosa Moreno-Ortega, was previously administered privately via video streaming technology by persons duly authorized to give oaths. The oath is accompanied by a signed certificate required for swearing into office and seating of elected Board members and accordingly qualifies each of them to be seated at this meeting. The oath of office and accompanying certificates will be herby entered into the record of this meeting."

The certificate of oath of office for school board members states that “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and this State, under the authority of the people. So help me God.\* I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I possess the qualifications prescribed by law for the office of member of a board of education, that I am not disqualified as a voter pursuant to a revised statute N.J.S.A. 19:4-1, that I am not disqualified due to conviction of a crime or offense listed in N.J.S.A. 18A:12-1, and that I will faithfully, impartially and justly perform all the duties of that office according to the best of my ability So help me God.\*”

*\*No individual shall be required to swear or affirm that part of the oaths which states “So help me God.”*

Present: Diane Barbosa, Charlene Bathelus, Maria Carvalho, Iliana Chevres, Nathalie Hernandez, Jerry Jacobs, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron, Stephanie Pestana – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, and members of the public were in attendance via the online platform.

Mr. Kennedy stated that tonight the Board is meeting for the purpose of reorganization. Mr. Kennedy 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.

Mr. Kennedy called for nominations for Board President.

Mr. Neron nominated Mr. Jacobs for President.

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, that nominations be closed.

The motion to close nominations was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 9

Negative: None

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

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 9

Negative: None

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

Mr. Jacobs thanked his colleagues for their support and stated that he will do the best possible job that he can as President.

Mr. Jacobs called for nominations for Vice President.

Mrs. Barbosa nominated Mrs. Moreno-Ortega for Vice President.

A motion was made by Mrs. Carvalho, seconded by Mr. Neron, that nominations be closed.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

The following vote was taken on the election of Mrs. Moreno-Ortega for Vice President.

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega having received the required number of votes was declared Vice President.

Mr. Jacobs congratulated Vice President Moreno-Ortega and asked if she would like to speak.

Vice President Moreno-Ortega thanked Board President Jerry Jacobs and her fellow Board members and stated that she has appreciation for the confidence they have in her. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked God for this opportunity and stated that without him she would not be here. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked her father who is not here tonight and stated that his strength inspired her to help her community. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked her husband for supporting her passion for education and service to the community and stated that she doesn't say it frequently that she loves him. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked her children for being patient with her and stated that it is not easy when you have a mommy with a passion for education. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega state that when she has a passion for something she works 24/7. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the community who voted for her and stated that she will not let you down. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated to her Board family and friends that when she immigrated to this wonderful country she didn't have family here and they became part of her family. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she appreciates them and they will work together for the best of our community.

Mr. Jacobs asked re-elected Board member Maria Carvalho if she would like to speak.

Mrs. Carvalho thanked the children of Honorable Judge Jubilo Afonso for allowing him to swear her in. Mrs. Carvalho stated that it is a privilege and an honor for the opportunity to be here virtually to address our students, families, and community. Mrs. Carvalho thanked her family, especially her two boys and stated that yesterday as she was being sworn in she realized that they have grown up with her as a Board member. Mrs. Carvalho stated that the first time she was sworn in they were holding the bible and she was looking down at them and yesterday they were looking down at her. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she is very proud of her two boys. Mrs. Carvalho acknowledged and thanked her Board colleagues, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, advocates, friends, and all of you who continue to support her and her Board family on this journey that we are all on. Mrs. Carvalho stated that this is not the kind of year that any of us imagined and has turned our lives upside down and inside out. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we have all missed many firsts and many lasts, and many experiences that we can never get back. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we can't pretend to know what you are going through but she wants you to know that we are all going through this together. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we are living in a time where we have no choice but to be resilient and we need to use it to be determined, persistent, and unstoppable. Mrs. Carvalho stated that there is a silver lining to overcome such difficulties and challenges especially the ones we are going through right now. Mrs. Carvalho stated that a writer named Terry Fallis once said, "A life without challenge, life without hardship, a life without purpose, seems pale and pointless. With challenge come perseverance and gumption. With hardship come resilience and resolve. With purpose come strength and understanding." Mrs. Carvalho stated that being elected to serve as a Board of Education member has been and continues

to be one of the more difficult yet rewarding experiences of her life. Mrs. Carvalho stated that had she not decided to pursue it, she would not have met some of the most incredible friends and would not have been able to have a major influence on the education that we provide to our children in Elizabeth. Mrs. Carvalho stated that looking back on all of the adversity, sleepless nights, and stressful days, she doesn't regret any of it. Mrs. Carvalho thanked everyone for supporting her, supporting her team, supporting our schools, and more importantly for believing in all of us and believing that we come together to do the best for the children of the City of Elizabeth. Mrs. Carvalho stated that may God bless each and every one of you, God bless our schools, and may you all stay safe at home and be together soon.

Board President Jacobs stated that he is so proud to be given this opportunity to serve his community and our children. Mr. Jacobs stated that the challenges ahead may be the greatest of our lifetime but hope and change are on the horizon. Mr. Jacobs stated that we, the Board family, administration, employees, are in this together and we are doing this for our children. Mr. Jacobs stated that our greatest priority is returning all of our children to school and their classrooms safely. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is our number one priority for all of us on this Board, for all in administration, for each and every teacher and staff person. Mr. Jacobs stated that this pandemic has impacted our children beyond measure and we as a community will need to work together to bring a sense of normalcy back into their lives. Mr. Jacobs stated that things will never be the same as they were before the pandemic but we must work together with what we have and strive to make things better. Mr. Jacobs stated that he knows the commitment of his fellow Board members and administration and we will achieve this goal. Mr. Jacobs stated that all of our children are capable of reaching their fullest potential and they deserve a safe and nurturing school community where they are valued, respected, and encouraged. Mr. Jacobs stated that our vision is to ensure that all of our students are given an education that allows them to thrive, succeed, and lead in a global society. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are committed to making the changes needed to provide our students, our educators, and our leaders with the tools to make this vision real. Mr. Jacobs stated that he truly appreciates the passion, dedication, efforts, and hard work that our teachers, administrators, support staff, and all the staff of the Elizabeth Board of Education have done to get us through 2020. Mr. Jacobs stated that it has been a most difficult year and it goes without saying that they all have performed admirably under the conditions the pandemic has put us through and we truly appreciate them. Mr. Jacobs stated that we cannot say enough about the dedication and commitment of the team at the Elizabeth Board of Education and we are blessed to have them in our City. Mr. Jacobs stated that he also wants to acknowledge again, our past President Diane Barbosa for doing an outstanding job last year under the conditions that we were in. Mr. Jacobs stated that no one could have expected that this year would have turned out this way and being able to be at her side during this time was priceless. Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her service because she has a heart of gold and so much more. Mr. Jacobs stated that our parents have had to step up in so many roles in order to ensure that their children's education continues. Mr. Jacobs stated that we had to become math, science, language arts, coaches, and everything in between to help our children with their education. Mr. Jacobs stated that many parents now have a new appreciation for the job that the teachers do every day. Mr. Jacobs stated that nothing can replace the inherent benefits of in-person learning that has been the mode of learning since the beginning of time. Mr. Jacobs stated that we truly appreciate everything that you have done and as he said before, hope is on the horizon. Mr. Jacobs stated that working together we will get there. Mr. Jacobs stated that Elizabeth is a diverse and vibrant community that he is proud to be a citizen of and he is so thankful to have been able to raise his children here in this City where they have the opportunity to interact with people from all over the world. Mr. Jacobs stated that our City is truly the definition of a melting pot and so descriptive of what our country stands for. Mr. Jacobs stated that yesterday was a day that many of us will never forget but we have to remember for the future of our children which is so important. Mr. Jacobs stated that we have to come together as a country, as a state, as a city, and as a whole for us to be able to move forward. Mr. Jacobs thanked the citizens of Elizabeth for all of their support and stated that he wants to promise as the Board of Education President that he will do everything in his power and work as hard as he can for every child, for every parent, for every staff member, and for every citizen of our great City. Mr. Jacobs stated that we, as a Board, and he, as President, will support our

Superintendent, administration, and the staff in the days ahead as we diligently work toward our goals. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are all here collectively to ensure our children receive the best education possible and improve our community. Mr. Jacobs stated that he knows he owes a debt to the people before him. Mr. Jacobs thanked his family, his parents, his sister, and his sons and daughter who he is proud of. Mr. Jacobs thanked his fellow Board members for their support and stated that they are all working together to try and provide the best for our children and our community. Mr. Jacobs stated that the administration is also on Board to do the best for our children and our community. Mr. Jacobs thanked our elected officials who are there to help us in any way. Mr. Jacobs thanked the many friends in Elizabeth and the many volunteers. Mr. Jacobs stated that he has been fortunate throughout his life, from his mother on, to always have a strong woman behind him. Mr. Jacobs thanked everyone for their support and love.

#### Resolution – Appointment of Co-General Counsel

Mr. Kennedy read the resolution.

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mr. Neron, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

#### Resolution – Introduction of Rules of Governance

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Jacobs recognized NJ State Senator Joseph Cryan, NJ State Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, and NJ State Assemblyman Jamel Holley who were present via the online platform.

NJ State Senator Joseph Cryan congratulated Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Carvalho, and Mrs. Moreno-Ortega. Senator Cryan congratulated Mr. Jacobs as President this year and stated that it is a tough year ahead. Senator Cryan thanked every member of the Board of Education for the work they do. Senator Cryan stated that Mrs. Carvalho, in her comments, mentioned the purpose and the purpose that they all have in terms of impacting young people's lives and setting a path for the future. Senator Cryan stated that doing it with the stewardship of the City is something that should not only be envied but appreciated by all. Senator Cryan stated that all we have learned with the difficulties of Covid and everything that has gone with it is the importance of the partnership with the State. Senator Cryan stated that he is proud that all three legislatures who have the honor of representing the 20<sup>th</sup> District of the State of New Jersey are on this call so they can work together to provide whatever they can to support the City's schools, Board members, staff, and leadership team. Senator Cryan stated that they are here for them and want to be part of the success that is the Elizabeth school system and the success of each of you. Senator Cryan thanked them for their dedication and service and stated that when we look back on one of the most incredible years we will ever see, let us look forward to a year of positivity, growth, and success for the children of Elizabeth.

NJ State Assemblyman Jamel Holley wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked them for all the service they have given to this community, parents, children, educators, and advocates. Assemblyman Holley thanked former President Diane Barbosa and her Vice President for what he calls one of the most challenging years in our lifetime that we will experience. Assemblyman Holley stated that having to deal with that crisis, she led with distinction and her partnership with the Superintendent, staff, parents, advocates, and partners of Elizabeth. Assemblyman Holley stated that he is very proud of the work that they performed during this time. Assemblyman Holley congratulated Board President Jacobs and Vice

President Moreno-Ortega in their new positions and stated that it has been a long time coming. Assemblyman Holley stated that when you look at the history of Elizabeth you see the diversity and individuals who serve the community actually come from the community are in leadership positions. Assemblyman Holley stated that he is proud of them and they have overwhelming support from the 20th Legislature District. Assemblyman Holley congratulated Mrs. Carvalho and Mrs. Moreno-Ortega on the work that they have done before they were Board members and tonight was just another prime example of the appreciation that people have for you and while you continue to serve them on the Board of Education. Assemblyman Holley stated to the partners, parents, advocates that this is one of the most unique things that we have to see is what we are living in today, despite yesterday's unfortunate circumstances, that the community has to come together as a whole. Assemblyman Holley stated that as Board members said earlier, we have to come together even more as a community to single focus on our community and this is a demonstration of that. Assemblyman Holley congratulated everyone.

NJ State Assemblywoman Annette Quijano wished everyone a Happy New Year. Assemblywoman Quijano echoed her colleagues' words and thanked them for their dedication and service. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that 2020 was not an easy year, we learned how to do things a new way, and sometimes we had to crawl before we could actually walk. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that the State Assembly was the first body in the country to do remote voting and we have Zoom phone conferences and we were there to work for the residents of the State. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that the Board of Education members were always ready for whatever came and wanted to make the best possible circumstances for the students, teachers, and paraprofessionals. Assemblywoman Quijano thanked all the teachers and paraprofessionals who went out of their way to make sure our students got the best service possible. Assemblywoman Quijano thanked the parents who also helped and pitched in to learn the different subjects. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that it is important that we come together and one of the City of Elizabeth's greatest strengths is diversity and thanked our elected officials who are committed to the betterment of our citizens. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that she is excited because this is the first year that she served on the Assembly Education Committee. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that she learned a lot and the Governor signed the Commission Bill today which is going to give more autonomy and support to the Amistad Commission. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that the fact is that Black History is American History and it is important to learn the achievements of black Americans so that we can build a more tolerant, inclusive society and it is one step in getting us closer. Assemblywoman Quijano stated that she appreciates all of their work and congratulated President Jacobs and Vice President Moreno-Ortega.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Senator Joseph Cryan, Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, and Assemblyman Jamel Holley and stated that this is exactly the type of assistance we can always count on from our 20<sup>th</sup> State Legislature District. Mr. Jacobs stated that we truly appreciate them and he is excited to hear about the passing of the Amistad provision for more resources allocated to that.

Board President 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](mailto: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 twice upon the first public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board. Kason Little did not respond.

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz spoke about special education.

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

Danielle Fienberg spoke about special education.

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

Christina Moreira spoke about special education.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments and stated that there were no other public participants registered to address the Board.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he received one email prior to the start of the meeting.

Mr. Kennedy read the following email received from Maria Echavarria:  
“Hello, my name is Maria Echavarria and I live in Elizabeth and I'm here representing Freedom Angels. I dropped this off with Annie McNair, Union County Director of Health with several supporting documents on October 29, 2020. In the original letter that's attached to this email it does have a phone number and a website to contact Freedom Angels.

To the Agents in charge of County Public Health: Nationwide Public Health is holding the reign on the Covid-19. To date there has not been an adequate or appropriate course correct and the response has caused more suffering and destruction then the virus. Therefore; as a community, we declare the end to the pandemic and will peacefully engage in non-compliance with the unwarranted and unjust restrictions. We demand Public Health participate in the course correct by doing the following:

1. End Local Health Emergency \*IF APPLICABLE\*
  - a. Work with local officials to bring an immediate end to the local Public Health emergency
2. Open the Doors
  - a. Participate in a public town hall series with all community stakeholders to directly address grievances and find solutions through a transparent due process, to include burden of proof and liability.
3. Defund Testing and Tracing
  - a. Limit CARES money allocation for testing and tracing to symptomatic cases.
  - b. Participate in expert panel investigation on efficacy and function of testing.
4. Fund Healthy Communities

- a. Make access available, at the earliest point of contact, to the entire spectrum of natural and allopathic therapeutics and fund programs on immune health.
- 5. Free elders and Disabled
  - a. Immediate process for in person access to comfort and advocate for loved ones in care facilities.
- 6. Free our kids
  - a. Remove barriers to the immediate opening of in person education with no mask or social distancing requirements.
  - b. Education and support programs addressing the health and psychological risks and effects of the lockdown restrictions.
- 7. Stop Violating Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - a. Rigorously ensure that supportive services for children with IEPs and adults with disabilities are being adequately honored.
  - b. No mask Mandates. Denounce mask shaming and protest ADA privacy and rights.
- 8. Stop Destroying Small Businesses
  - a. Stop and/or do not allow partnering with state licensing to harass small businesses.
  - b. Remove restrictions on occupancy and mask requirements.
- 9. No Vaccines Mandates
  - a. Immediate public community Bio-ethic and safety panel discussions on all developing Covid-19 vaccines including mRNA and DNA.
  - b. No Covid-19 vaccine mandate to ensure for the full and equal access of children and adults to participate in society ( e. g., school, work, entertainment, travel, church)
  - c. Education programs on risk and exemptions to the Covid-19 vaccine.
- 10. Public Health is Liable
  - a. You are in violation of fundamental human and constitutional rights and you will be held accountable for reparations.”

Mr. Jacobs stated that public participant, Kason Little, was now on the online platform and called upon Kason Little to address the Board.

Kason Little spoke about transparency, justice, and equity in the school system.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments. Since there were no other citizens signed in to address the Board, Mr. Jacobs declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he is deferring the appointment of the standing committees and designation of representatives until a later date.

#### Resolution – Official Results of the School Board Election

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

#### Resolution – Designation of Official Media Services

A motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None



Mrs. Chevres excused herself from the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Resolution – Designation of Depositories for School Funds

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Insurance/Health Benefit Consultant

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Auditor

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector

Ms. Bathelus asked Co-General Counsel if this resolution could be tabled until the next Board meeting.

Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq., stated that the Board of Education is required to have a Chief Medical Inspector. Mr. Williams explained that the resolution could be amended to appoint the Chief Medical Inspector for a certain period of time and then reconsidered at another meeting.

Mrs. Chevres returned to the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she would like to amend the resolution to be in effect through the end of January 2021. (Prior to the end of the meeting the amendment was rescinded)

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, that the amended resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Medical Inspectors

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Treasurer of School Moneys

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mrs. Carvalho, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Schedule of Board Meetings

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Lourdes Leon

Mrs. Barbosa read the resolution.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega read the resolution in Spanish.

A motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Union County Commissioner Lourdes Leon thanked the Board and stated that she is honored to receive this resolution from the great Elizabeth Public Schools. Ms. Leon thanked the Board members, Superintendent, and the entire staff members of the Elizabeth Public Schools. Ms. Leon stated that, as an educator, she knows the importance of education and that it is the passport to the future for every student. Ms. Leon stated that teachers, aides, paraprofessionals, and the entire staff make this happen daily in the schools. Ms. Leon stated that she is very excited to embark on this new journey as the first female Union County Latino Commissioner and she is looking forward to representing all the residents of the county and her loving home of Elizabeth. Ms. Leon stated that she is looking forward to working closely with the Board members and staff to do whatever she can for them. Ms. Leon stated that she clearly remembers how One Dream, One Team started and has witnessed what all the Board members have done and how they are moving the Elizabeth Public Schools forward. Ms. Leon stated that she is honored to call all of you my friends. Ms. Leon congratulated Board President Jerry Jacobs, Vice President Rosa Moreno-Ortega, and Board member Maria Carvalho. Ms. Leon thanked them for this honor and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Union County Commissioner Lourdes Leon and stated she is someone who helps so many and gives so much and we truly appreciate that she has the chance to serve.

Ms. Bathelus congratulated Union County Commissioner Lourdes Leon.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she received clarification to the resolution for the chief medical inspector.

Ms. Bathelus made a motion to rescind the amended Resolution for Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector for appointment through January 2021 and adopt the Resolution for Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector through the Reorganization Meeting 2022.

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, to adopt the rescission of the amended Resolution for Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector for appointment through January 2021

and adopt the Resolution for Appointment of Chief Medical Inspector through the Reorganization Meeting 2022.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Jacobs asked if any Board members would like to comment.

Mr. Neron wished the entire district a Happy New Year and many successes to our youth, our families, our students, our staff, and all who worked with us throughout the year to make it successful. Mr. Neron saluted outgoing President Barbosa and congratulated our re-elected Board members Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega on her vice presidency, and Jacobs on his presidency. Mr. Neron stated that he wanted to comment about the job that we do and we all take the oath of office when we step into serve as public servants and serve our community, our local community, and more importantly, our nation. Mr. Neron stated that when you look at what happened yesterday, it is an outright shame and disgrace to our nation to see elected officials abusing their power and inciting the untruths in our nation. Mr. Neron stated that he wants to be very clear that it is oftentimes you hear us saying about our police officers that they protect and serve. Mr. Neron stated that they do due diligence for all of our elected officials to understand that we protect and serve our society especially the children that we serve here in this district. Mr. Neron stated that we have a due diligence to do that and we tell our children the truth. Mr. Neron stated that the most precious cargo that we deal with every day is our children. Mr. Neron stated that the information that we give them, the type of resources that we provide them, the environment that we set forth in their lives is vital to their success in the future and everything that they decide to do, whether they get along with their family members or friends or being able to transition into a professional life. Mr. Neron stated that we have to make it possible to set that forth for them and as elected officials, they look at us everyday on television, they look at us on Zoom, they look at us when we come into the buildings, and we set that example. Mr. Neron stated that he wants to remind all of our elected officials, local, federal, state, county, wherever they may be that we have the ultimate responsibility to represent for our community and be the example and lead by example. Mr. Neron stated that what we see happening on a national level is not by example, especially by those sitting in the current White House right now, the White House administration. Mr. Neron stated that it is a disgrace and we should stand together to denounce the actions of our current occupant of the White House. Mr. Neron stated that it is not something that our children should stand by or even replicate or even think that is the example of leadership or an example of how we bring our nation together. Mr. Neron stated that it is not how we bring our nation together and it is not how we create peace and harmony. Mr. Neron stated that when we take the oath, we take the oath to honor the Constitution, our laws, and our policies that we set forth and we should do that. Mr. Neron stated that we need to speak clearly and use proper language as we have in our Ethics Pledge and it is something that we talk about in our Code of Ethics at the beginning of all of our meetings and we tell them that they should dress appropriately for teaching and learning, speak properly and use proper language. Mr. Neron stated that he doesn't see that on a federal level and we see a divided country. Mr. Neron stated that moving forward we have to set the tone in our district to make sure that we are leading by example. Mr. Neron stated that he is talking to all of us, our teachers, our parents, and he is talking to all those who our young people look up to. Mr. Neron stated that we have to be the example if we are going to help change this nation and it is going to take a step in the right direction. Mr. Neron stated that we may have new elected officials that are in office but if we don't lead in our homes or in our local governments, we are not doing any service to our children or community by setting them in the wrong direction. Mr. Neron implored everyone that we take heed to this and use this as, not a step backwards but a tool to learn from. Mr. Neron stated that often times in life you learn from your mistakes and, hopefully, as a nation we understand the mistakes that were made and won't make them again and this should never ever happen in our nation, it definitely should not happen locally, and not on a state level. Mr. Neron stated that we need to make sure that our families are protected.

Mr. Neron stated that we want you to know that we have your back and we are going to stand with you and work with you here in the City of Elizabeth and the Board of Education. Mr. Neron stated that there are many teachers, counselors, administrators, Board members to talk to when you are distressed and need to release and really share your thoughts and opinions. Mr. Neron stated that we want to know that we care, we love you, and God bless you, and Happy New Year to everyone.

Mrs. Barbosa wished everyone a Happy New Year and wished our families the best. Mrs. Barbosa congratulated Board President Jacobs and Vice President Moreno-Ortega. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are a team and we continue to work hard and try to make all of our education decisions for the agenda and look at everything in a global way. Mrs. Barbosa thanked all of our staff and Superintendent. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she will stand by all of our Board members, staff, community, and our children as we progress into a new year. Mrs. Barbosa stated that this is another year of the unknown but now we have more known and we are going to make it better. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she will be right by the President's side working as hard as she can.

Mr. Jacobs thanked them for the opportunity to be Board President. Mr. Jacobs stated that Board member Neron always puts things in perspective. Mr. Jacobs stated that we know that yesterday was a dark day. Mr. Jacobs stated that 2020 was somewhat of a dark time but we can see that there is light at the end of the tunnel and that is something that we have to hope for and we have to work for together as a team, as a community, and as a country. Mr. Jacobs stated that we can do anything that is possible as long as we set our minds and our hearts to it. Mr. Jacobs introduced the 2021 Board of Education members including Diane Barbosa, Charlene Bathelus, Maria Carvalho, Iliana Chevres, Nathalie Hernandez, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron, Stephanie Pestana, and himself.

On a motion by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

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