

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

October 10, 2019
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular agenda meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on October 10, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., in the MultiPurpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Stephanie Pestana presented the following statement at 6:17 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 was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on October 4, 2019. In addition, this notice is posted 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.”

“We want to welcome everyone present and our television viewers to this October 10, 2019 meeting of the Board of Education. We are here to govern, provide management oversight, and make policy for the district. The Superintendent manages the district. This is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

“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. We also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, we may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. We are pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us here for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.”

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion may sign in up to the 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: Mrs. Barbosa (arr. 6:20 p.m.), Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega (arr. 9:31 p.m.), Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 7
Absent: Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres – 2

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedenno, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch Johnson, Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP and members of the public were in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance
National Anthem
Pledge of Ethics

Mrs. Pestana introduced a video presentation of the core beliefs.

Board President Pestana presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in. 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.”

Mrs. Pestana called upon the first public participant, Danielle Fienberg, to address the Board.

Danielle Fienberg, 631 North Broad Street, spoke about special education and SEPAC.

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

Maria Lorenz, 103 Murray Street, spoke about SEPAC and stated that there is a special education PTA meeting on October 21st at the Peterstown Community Center.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Echavaria, to address the Board.

Maria Echavaria, 321 Westfield Avenue, stated that this is vaccine awareness month and asked about policy exemptions.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Jason DeSousa, to address the Board.

Jason DeSousa, student and Junior Class President at Bollwage Finance Academy, stated that he sent a request for student dismissal time to be changed to 2:29 for students and stated that he hasn't received a response to his request.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked him for coming forward to speak and stated that she spoke with the principal regarding this. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she would be glad to speak with the Junior Class tomorrow.

Mrs. Pestana thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Luis Muriel, to address the Board.

Luis Muriel, student at Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy, thanked the Board for their help for a math tutor that has already begun to help him and his fellow students.

Mrs. Pestana thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Kason Little, 225 S. Seventh Street, spoke about the incident last month and an OPMA violation.

Mrs. Pestana thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Ana Texeira, to address the Board.

Ana Texeira, 575 Second Avenue, spoke about the problems with the lunch bill for her children.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be investigating this matter.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Sawsan Alwan, to address the Board.

Sawsan Alwan, student, spoke about not having bus transportation.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch Johnson speak with the student.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Gladys Quadrado, to address the Board.

Gladys Quadrado stated that her daughter is in high school and spoke about the problem with not having teachers in two different classes.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mrs. Quadrado and stated that we will look into this matter.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments. Since there were no other public participants signed in to address the board, Mrs. Pestana closed this portion of the meeting.

Board President Stephanie Pestana requested a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of personnel, specifically, appointment of supervisor and vice principal, supplemental personnel report; legal matters, specifically, special education procedures, settlement agreements – Central Jersey Roofing, K.D., H.R., award of contracts for Trinitas School of Nursing Teddy Bear Clinic, and athletic equipment, resolution for contract for physical education weight training equipment; and workers' compensation matters, specifically, C.P., A.R. The board will reconvene in public and may add to the agenda.

A motion was made by Mrs. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Neron, to go into private session at 6:53 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Hernandez, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 5

Abstain: Mr. Jacobs – 1

Negative: None

Mrs. Barbosa excused herself from the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Ms. Bathelus excused herself from the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, seconded by Mrs. Hernandez, to reconvene in public session at 10:10 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 5

Negative: None

Board President Stephanie Pestana stated that this is an agenda setting meeting. Mrs. Pestana stated that we will go tab by tab and each board member may ask questions. The board reviewed the agenda.

Minutes of the Agenda and Business Meetings of September 12, 2019
Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of August 2019

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Personnel Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he would like to table this report.

A motion was made by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Neron, to table the report.

The motion was defeated by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Neron – 2

Negative: Mrs. Hernandez, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mrs. Pestana – 3

Mrs. Hugelmeyer gave a summary of the Personnel Report.

Supplemental Personnel Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Pestana added the Minutes of the Agenda and Business Meetings of September 12, 2019, Secretary/Treasurer's Report, Personnel Report, and Supplemental Personnel Report to the agenda.

Tuition Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Superintendent's Report – Considerations

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer highlighted the opportunities for social workers to attend professional development, administrators from School Nos. 3, 7, and 50 to attend the 2019 Character.org National Forum, and teachers to attend the College Board Advanced Placement workshops in Statistics, Italian, English Literature, Composition, and Biology. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 has been selected as a 2019 National Blue Ribbon School and the principal, assistant superintendent, and staff member will be attending the National Ceremony in Washington D.C.

Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Supplemental Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Superintendent's Report – Field Trip Requests

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedeno speak about the field trip requests.

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedeno gave a summary of the field trip requests.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked if there is any way to engage some schools to participate in more field trips, especially K-8 schools. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she would like to see data on what particular schools did not attend enough field trips. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is based on community concerns and a parent and student approached her and asked if she could request more field trips or if they are too expensive then at least some special places in town.

Superintendent's Report - Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results - None

Authorizations Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this report contains various grant awards that our schools will be receiving including the Union County Dig In Garden Grant, James Patterson and Scholastic Book Clubs Grant, and the Visual Arts Center of NJ through the CALTA21 Professional Development Institute for Bilingual and ESL teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the report contains the authorization to make application in order to participate in the Seal of Biliteracy for the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the acceptance of donations include a basketball shooting machine from legendary basketball coach Bob Hurley, basketball hoops for iPrep Academy School No. 8 from the Elizabeth PBA, and funds from Colonial Pipeline Company to purchase area carpets and instructional resources for teachers and students at Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School No. 28.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch Johnson speak about the fundraising requests.

Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch Johnson gave a summary of the requested fundraising activities.

Supplemental Authorizations Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer highlighted the donation of \$25,000. from Todd and Tamika Bowles for our special needs athletics programs.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that the School No. 19 PTO asked her if they could have a Disney Character Breakfast and a Pumpkin Sale. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that they received a letter stating that they submitted it late and asked if the two fundraisers can be included because they are ready and a lot of parents are engaged in these activities.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they will review with the Principal of School No. 19 any fundraiser requests that were submitted after the deadline. Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked the Board for permission to add the two additional fundraisers to the agenda after they are reviewed with the principal.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated she has another concern about the fundraisers. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she identified some school PTOs that have many activities and some schools don't. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she knows that some schools are more active than the others. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she wants to see data on how many times per year the principals send letters after the PTO requests. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that some schools didn't have PTO meetings yet and she wants to see more engaging of the PTOs. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that some schools have less meetings than others. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that some parents approached her and said they want to participate more but they are waiting and waiting for the meeting. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she wants to find some way that we meet with administration and say that they want more consideration of the PTO. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that if we pay attention we have wonderful fundraisers including a school store inside the school, pretzel sale, doughnut sale, Fall school pictures, and candy sale. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that other schools have wonderful activities like School No. 19 had a festival and another school wants to do the same festival. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she knows it is not the administrators, it is the Parent Teacher Organization but she wants to make sure the parents receive the letter for an invitation for the PTO.

Mrs. Finch Johnson stated that we will look into that. Mrs. Finch Johnson stated that we have a lot more in our office but we don't put them through because sometimes the event is in January or February. Mrs. Finch Johnson stated that sometimes the schools submit a large amount of requests at once and others submit the requests monthly. Mrs. Finch Johnsons stated that these are in the window for this Board meeting.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that her concern is that the community comes to her and says that they want to be engaged but they can't. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is her approach and she wants to make sure that every administrator supports the Parent Teacher Organization. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is her concern right now.

Mrs. Pestana stated that last year she approached our superintendent and we had a PTO/PTA Roundtable. Mrs. Pestana stated that last year a lot of schools had brand new PTO/PTA Presidents and they needed a little guidance from the previous PTO/PTAs or other schools that are very active. Mrs. Pestana stated that it was great to have that last year where they shared some different information, how to approach certain matters, and different ideas that were brought to the table. Mrs. Pestana asked Superintendent Hugelmeyer if we can try to put that back on the calendar and even have them two times a year. Mrs. Pestana stated that it is very informative especially for the new PTO/PTA Presidents. Mrs. Pestana stated that it is a new task for them and it can be very hard not to have much support and not to have much parent participation. Mrs. Pestana stated that we will look into that and help our parents.

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

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Pestana added the Tuition Report, Superintendent's Report – Considerations, Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities, Supplemental Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities, Superintendent's Report – Field Trips, Superintendent's Report - Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results, Authorizations Report, Supplemental Authorizations Report, Finance and Accounting – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, and Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds to the agenda.

Award of Contracts Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this report includes contracts that support a variety of software programs, contracts for professional development as it relates to language arts literacy and mathematics, and a wide variety of initiatives to support teachers in our schools.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked Director of Staff Development and Innovative Programs for the staff development workshops. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she is very proud and impressed every time about Mrs. Badalis' great work.

Supplemental Award of Contracts Report

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer highlighted the contract with Aspire Technology for Cisco networking equipment, installation, and support which is based on the district's data and wireless E-Rate Application.

Miscellaneous Communication - None
Claims List

Mrs. Pestana added the Award of Contracts Report, Supplemental Award of Contracts Report, Miscellaneous Communication, and Claims List to the agenda.

Resolution – National Parental Involvement Day

Resolution – Puerto Rican Heritage Month

Resolution – Veteran’s Day

Resolution – National French Week

Resolution – Anti-Litter Campaign

Resolution – National Principals Month

Resolution – Revised Payment for Medical Health Insurance Waiver

Resolution – Application for Change of Use of Educational Space for 2019-2020

Resolution – UCESC Environmental Safety Program 2019-2020

Resolution – Approving Renewal for Max Plumbing and Heating, Inc. for Snow Plowing/Removal Services

Resolution – Capital Reserve Funds

Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days

Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days

Mrs. Pestana asked if there were any questions on the above resolutions.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that there are wonderful resolutions for National Parental Involvement, Puerto Rican Heritage Month, and National French Week. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she wants to make sure that we recognize that it is National French Week and asked what kind of activities can we do. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that at least we can make every school make an announcement with greetings in the French language and state in the morning announcement that this week we are celebrating National French week and this is how we say good morning in French or a student who speaks French should speak during the morning announcement. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that for Puerto Rican Heritage Month we can call a student who is from Puerto Rico and have them make the morning announcement, celebrate the Puerto Rican community and say this is our typical food. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she wants to hear all the wonderful information in the morning announcements. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated it is wonderful to pass the resolutions and some schools do an amazing job but she wants to see every school do the same thing. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she wants to see students from Puerto Rico make announcements to recognize Puerto Rican Heritage Month and for Veteran’s Day have the student in the morning explain and invite a veteran to come to school to speak with the students. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that when we pass a resolution she wants to see that we make an impact in our student community.

Mr. Neron stated that he echoes the sentiments of Mrs. Moreno-Ortega in regards to the type of execution that has to happen with our resolutions on a regular basis. Mr. Neron thanked the Superintendent and staff for acknowledging these resolutions and often, not only the district but the Board has these initiatives that we put forth and would like to see implemented. Mr. Neron stated that they would like the staff to recognize them and roll them out throughout the district. Mr. Neron stated that he would like to particularly point out the Anti-Litter Campaign and National Principals Month. Mr. Neron stated that with the Anti-Litter Campaign we really need to get our district to become a little bit more conscious and a lot of people really need to get on board with making sure that we go green and that we recycle. Mr. Neron stated that there are recycling bins that have been put in classrooms for paper and we partner with the County to do that. Mr. Neron stated that we have been working with a lot of different partners and we do Estuary Day, Environmental Day, and we do a lot of gardening and green work with Groundwork Elizabeth. Mr. Neron stated that we really want to make sure that these messages do not fall on deaf ears and that they start happening in the classrooms and they start happening in the schools. Mr. Neron stated that they want not only teachers but staff, in general, to really start to understand that this is a litter-free school district. Mr. Neron stated that we want to make sure that it starts, not only in the home, but it starts here in school. Mr. Neron stated that if we can implement this

with our students we can start to create greener communities and environmentally conscious communities which is so important. Mr. Neron stated that his second point is National Principals Month and we really need to emphasize the importance of our teachers and principals and really make sure that our kids are celebrating the leadership of their school. Mr. Neron stated that often it is a very thankless job that the principals do and they really need to be celebrated for the work that they do. Mr. Neron stated that we need to make sure that all of our staff celebrates our principals and teachers and recognizes them. Mr. Neron stated that we really want to make sure that when we put these resolutions out it's not just a formality but a reality and is actually implemented.

Mrs. Hernandez asked if there is a possibility that we can have our Food Services Department look into a Share Bin for our schools. Mrs. Hernandez stated that some teachers have told her that there are students who don't have enough money to buy food or their houses are not providing it.

Mrs. Pestana thanked the Board members for their comments.

Mrs. Pestana added the above resolutions to the agenda.

Mrs. Pestana added the following to the agenda:

Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2017-34213) – C.P.

Resolution – Appointment of Supervisor

Resolution – Appointment of Vice Principal

Second Supplemental Personnel Report

Award of Contracts – additional contract for Trinitas Nursing Student Teddy Bear Clinic

Award of Contracts – additional contract for BSN Athletic

Resolution – Settlement Agreement and Release – H.R.

Resolution – Settlement Agreement – Central Jersey Roofing

Resolution – Settlement Agreement – K.D.

Resolution – Physical Education Weight Training Equipment

Resolution – Amend Contract – ESS

Mrs. Pestana requested a moment of silence for the loss of the father of Board member Iliana Chevres.

On a motion by Mrs. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Neron, the agenda meeting was adjourned at 10:41 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron,

Mrs. Pestana – 5

Negative: None

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