

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Official Minutes

Pending Board Approval

November 14, 2024
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Prior to the start of the regular agenda/business meeting of the Board of Education, which was held on November 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, School No. 51, 544 Pennsylvania Ave, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Board Members, District Administration, School Staff members and the public audience were treated to student performances in honor of Puerto Rican Heritage Month and Veteran's Day

Board President Charlene Bathelus welcomed everyone to the November 14, 2024, regular agenda/business meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Ms. Bathelus called the meeting to order and read the following statement at 6:15 p.m. "Good evening and welcome to our Board of Education Meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education. This is a combined regular agenda and business 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 31, 2024. 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."

"We want to welcome everyone present here at School No. 51 and to our television viewers to this November 14, 2024, 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. So that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking."

"We 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."

"There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must personally sign in prior to the start of the public participation portion 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." We are pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools."

Present: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, (arrived at 6:32 p.m.), Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, (arrived at 8:17 p.m.) Ms. Bathelus-8

Absent: Mr. Neron-1

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Rafael Cortes Jr., School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy Jr., Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, Deputy Counsel. Heather Savage Ford, and Co-General Counsel, Edward Kologi of Kologi Simitz Law Office, were in attendance.

A Moment of Silence was held in memory of:

Sonia Patricia Martinez, Cafeteria General Worker, Woodrow Wilson School No.19

Virginia Prileau, Retired Dood Service Worker, Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23

Marlene Velasquez, School Nurse, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy 9th Grade Annex

Colors were presented during the Flag Ceremony by members of Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member, Jerry Jacobs

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Board Member, Maria Carvalho

The Star-Spangled Banner by Francis Scott Key was played.

Board President Charlene Bathelus introduced District Superintendent, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, and asked her to present the Student Representative to the Board of Education for the month of November. Dr. Hugelmeyer introduced Josselyn Jaramillo, a senior at John E Dwyer Technology Academy, where she is an outstanding student and the epitome of a well-rounded student. Josselyn is involved in many activities and participates in multiple organizations. She is often seen in a leadership role at any important event at Dwyer Academy. Miss Jaramillo initiates a sense of community and caring at Dwyer by modeling kindness and making the school experience the best it can be for all students. She is the President of the Portuguese Spanish Honor Society, as well as being president of the senior class at Dwyer where she has been working since her sophomore year to make her classes' senior year the best it can be. In addition, she is a member of the National Honor Society, the English National Honor Society, the Science National Honor Society and the Math Honor Society. Josselyn serves as the Vice President of the GSA club which promotes inclusivity for all. She is admired for her "We can get it done" attitude and work ethic. Dr. Hugelmeyer said it was her pleasure to ask Miss Jaramillo to come forward and take her seat on the Dais.

Ms. Bathelus asked Mr. Kennedy to memorialize Miss Jaramillo's attendance in the official proceedings of the meeting. This was noted and Miss Jaramillo's attendance is recorded in the official minutes of the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus then read the following statement:
Citizens may address the Board.

"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 microphone based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All comments shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. Each speaker shall comply in all respects with Board Policy 9322 (copies were provided next to the sign in sheet)".

The following rules shall apply:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced.
2. No personal attacks on individuals or the naming of individuals.
3. No vulgar or indecent language.
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting.
5. Comments will not be debated.

Any person in violation of the Policy will be warned, and their comments terminated if needed. If such violation continues, this individual may be escorted from the meeting.”

“As a reminder this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

Since there were no public participants signed up to address the Board, Ms. Bathelus closed this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus introduced the October Board Initiative Hispanic Heritage Month.

As Board President, my continued vision is to promote community engagement and to unite board members as a team. As I had mentioned in my January opening remarks as Board President, each board member was asked to contribute and sponsor a specific initiative each month throughout the year.

During the month of November, Stephanie Goncalves Pestana chose to sponsor World Kindness to emphasize the importance of compassion, empathy, and positive human connections. It encourages people to engage in small acts of kindness by fostering goodwill, reducing stress and promoting mental well-being. Celebrated on World Kindness Day (November 13), it reminds us of the power of kindness in creating a world where everyone feels valued and respected.

The full video will be made available on the district website at the end of the month.

Ms. Bathelus introduced the video prepared and narrated by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana. The video highlighted how kindness and character education is paramount in the Elizabeth Public Schools. Each day, school begins with the a recitation of the Pledge of Ethics and kindness and respect for each other in a multicultural environment is emphasized throughout the school day.

Board President Charlene Bathelus asked Schools Superintendent, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, to present the announcements for the month of November. Dr. Hugelmeyer showed a series of Power Point Slides that highlighted the following:

Thanksgiving Recess – Schools will close at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, November 27th. The Schools and the District will be closed on November 28 and November 29.

Schools will close at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20, for Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Report Cards will be available on Power School on November 25.

Through the use of the District’s web site (www.EPSNJ.org/flu-rsv) or the Flu-RSV icon on the District homepage students, families and staff may avail themselves of resources to protect themselves from flu and RSV this school year.

Dr. Hugelmeyer presented a series of Power Point Slides that were part of the Inside EPS New from our Central Administration.

Nineteen Elizabeth Public Schools high school students earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Program. College Board's National Recognition Programs create pathways to college for students from underserved communities by awarding them academic honors and connecting them with universities across the country. For the first time, the academic honors recognized first-generation students, in addition to rural and small town, Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic/or Latino students. Colleges use these honors to identify students from underrepresented groups who have excelled in classrooms and on College Board assessments such as the PSAT/NMSQT, the PSAT 10, or AP Exams. The following EPS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievement:

Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy:

- Greenwood Antwi
- Tyler Bailey
- Ronya Concepcion
- Fausto Del Carmen
- Isidra Hernandez
- Yusrah Lawal
- Anthony Lemes
- Kimberly Martinez
- Luis Molina
- Isaiah Moran
- Katherine Olavarria
- Andrew Persuad
- Thomas Peters
- Leonardo Quintero
- Jonathan Rodriguez
- Nathalie Ruiz
- Wilber Sanchez
- Joanna Santos

John E. Dwyer Technology Academy

- Diego Perdomo

Juan Pablo Duarte- Jose Julian Marti School No. 28 Student Samantha Moreno was one of three students named a winner of the ELA Honor Society Fall Creative Challenge. Students in grades six through nine were asked to read and listen to the poetry of Benjamin Zephaniah before writing their own poem, a maximum of 200 words, that is suitable for performance and discusses an issue of social justice the student feels passionate about. Once written, students were then required to record themselves performing the poem. Moreno's poem titled "Women's Rights" passionately expresses her thoughts and feelings about the undeniable strength of women and calls for women to continue their ongoing fight for respect and acceptance in society. The poem written by Moreno, along with her video performance, will be published in the ELA Honor's Society's November newsletter.

During the Month of November, the Elizabeth Public School District will be celebrating:

- Native American Heritage Month
- Puerto Rican Heritage Month
- National Family Literacy Month
- National French Week November 6-12
- Veterans Day, November 11
- World Kindness Day, November 13
- American Education Week, November 18-22
- National Parental involvement Day
- National family Week, November 24-30
- Thanksgiving, Thursday November 28

Dr. Hugelmeyer spoke about and showed a series of Power Point slides summarizing the EPS Promise Goals and the High School Graduation Pathway. Shown below is a summary of the total district and broken down by individual high schools.

The Promise Goal was that 90% of EPS Students will Graduate on Time. - Preliminary Federal calculation as of 10-8-2024.

- District 88.4 %
- Bollwage 89.2%
- Cicarell 99.1%
- Dwyer 83.9 %
- Edison 78.3%
- Halsey 78.6%
- Hamilton 97.7 %
- Jefferson 91.1%
- JVJ STEM 93.1

The High School Graduation Rate from Cohort 2021 to Cohort 2024:

- 2021 78.7%
- 2022 78.5%
- 2023 87.9 %
- 2024 88.4%

On-Time Graduation by Academy 2021-Present

Hamilton

- 2021 97.1%
- 2022 93.3%
- 2023 97.5%
- 2024 97.7%

Bollwage

- 2021 90.0%
- 2022 81.0%
- 2023 92.1%
- 2024 89.2%

Halsey

- 2021 63.4%
- 2022 77.1%
- 2023 79.1%
- 2024 78.6%

Cicarell

- 2021 95.1%
- 2022 93.6%
- 2023 97.4%
- 2024 99.1%

Dwyer

- 2021 71.4%
- 2022 67.9%
- 2023 83.0%
- 2024 83.9%

Edison

- 2021 63.3%
- 2022 63.3%
- 2023 86.0%
- 2024 78.3%

Jefferson

- 2021 81.6%
- 2022 74.7%
- 2023 88.3%
- 2024 91.1%

JVJ STEM

- 2024 93.1% (First Graduating Class)

On-Time Graduation Rate by Ethnicity

Asian

- 2021 86.2%
- 2022 85.3%
- 2023 84.6%
- 2024 100.0%

Black

- 2021 70.8%
- 2022 72.1%
- 2023 84.8%
- 2024 85.0%

Hispanic

- 2021 79.5 %
- 2022 79.9 %
- 2023 88.7%
- 2024 89.0%

White

- 2021 87.3%

- 2022 77.4%
- 2023 85.2%
- 2024 86.3%

On-Time Graduation Rate by Gender

Female

- 2021 84.3%
- 2022 84.3%
- 2023 90.2%
- 2024 91.2%

Male

- 2021 73.6%
- 2022 73.0%
- 2023 85.7%
- 2024 85.7%

On-Time Graduation Rate by Economic Status

Free/Reduced

- 2021 79.3%
- 2022 79.0%
- 2023 88.3%
- 2024 88.8%

Full Pay

- 2021 74.7%
- 2022 75.6%
- 2023 84.9%
- 2024 85.9%

Post-Graduation Plans by Academy

Bollwage

- College 79.5%
- Technical/Trade School 6.8%
- Military/ Police or Fire 5.7%
- Workforce 5.7%
- Undeclared 2.3%

Cicarell

- College 95.4%
- Technical/Trade School 2.6%
- Military/ Police or Fire 1.4%
- Workforce 0.6%
- Undeclared 0.0%

Dwyer

- College 59.3%
- Technical/Trade School 15.7%

- Military/ Police or Fire 4.3%
- Workforce 16.3%
- Undeclared 4.3%

Edison

- College 59.0%
- Technical/Trade School 20.5%
- Military/ Police or Fire 8.2 %
- Workforce 9.0%
- Undeclared 3.3%

Halsey

- College 66.5%
- Technical/Trade School 12.2%
- Military/ Police or Fire 5.7%
- Workforce 11.0%
- Undeclared 4.6 %
-

Hamilton

- College 82.9%
- Technical/Trade 6.0%
- Military/ Police or Fire 1.6%
- Workforce 9.6%
- Undeclared 0.0%

Jefferson

- College 84.0%
- Technical/Trade 5.0 %
- Military/ Police or Fire 6.8%
- Workforce 3.7%
- Undeclared 0.5%

JVJ STEM

- College 88.4%
- Technical/Trade 4.3%
- Military/ Police or Fire 2.9%
- Workforce 4.3%
- Undeclared 0.0%

District Overall

- College 77.1%/1279 students
- Technical/Trade 8.9%/148 students
- Military/ Police or Fire 4.2%/69 students
- Workforce 7.9% /131 students
- Undeclared 1.9%/ 32 students

Elizabeth Promise Goal – EPS Graduates Will Maintain at Least at 3.0 GPA

- District 53.8 % Average GPA 3.062
- Bollwage 46.5 % Average GPA 2.935
- Cicarell 92.7 % Average GPA 3.832
- Dwyer 45.8 % Average GPA 2.940
- Edison 32.1% Average GPA 2.652
- Halsey 50.0 % Average GPA 2.979
- Hamilton 45.2 % Average GPA 2.857
- Jefferson 46.9 % Average GPA 2.887
- JVJ STEM 49.5% Average GPA 3.033

Elizabeth Promise Goal – 90% of EPS Graduates Will Enroll In At Least 1 Advanced Placement Course

- District 58.0%
- Bollwage 37.2 %
- Cicarell 100.0 %
- Dwyer 64.3 %
- Edison 20.0%
- Halsey 25.2 %
- Hamilton 86.2 %
- Jefferson 42.9 %
- JVJ STEM 60.2 %

Dr. Hugelmeyer summarized the Graduation Cohort for the Class of 2024

- Total Students in Cohort 2024 – 2,007
- Total number of students graduated – 1,789
- Number of students denied graduation from the 12th grade class -218
- Number of students denied graduation...solely because of failure to pass the NJGPA, substitute competency tests, or portfolio appeals process – 0
- Number of students graduated passing NJGPA ELA -1313 Math 867
- Number of students graduated under the substitute competency test process ELA – 101 Math – 379
- Number of students graduated under the portfolio appeals process ELA – 356 Math – 524
- Number of students receiving State-endorsed high school diplomas as a result of meeting any alternate requirements for graduation as specified in their IEP's ELA – 12 Math – 12
- Cohort 2024 students who graduated 2023 (due to age) without an assessment requirement ELA -7 Math-7

Board President Charlene Bathelus thanked Board Member Stephanie Goncalves Pestana for her presentation as well as the Kindness Kits she distributed. Mrs. Goncalves Pestana spoke briefly about World Kindness Day (Wednesday November 13) and believed it just shouldn't be a day in November, but celebrated each and every day, throughout the year. She thanked all the Assistant Schools Superintendents, who accompanied her and the Board President traveling throughout the district celebrating Kindness.

Ms. Bathelus commenced a review of the evening's Agenda.

Tab 1a) Official and Private Minutes (October 17, 2024) were added to the Agenda.

Tab 1b) Treasurer/Secretary's Report (September 30, 2024) was added to the Agenda

Tab 2a) Personnel Report. – Mrs. Chevres inquired about two title changes on page 11. Dr. Hugelmeyer explained that when a student who has required services leaves the district or no longer needs a personal aide, the staff member will be reassigned to another child or program within the district necessitating the title change. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega inquired about the Adult Basic Skills Program, (that was mentioned on page 42), and whether it had an ESL component to it. Dr. Hugelmeyer explained that this program was a partnership with Union College of Union County, New Jersey along with a consortium of other districts. As a result of this collaboration as well as the funding connected to the partnership an ESL module was offered. The Superintendent said she would provide an enrollment report for this program. Ms. Bathelus, after seeing a computer technician position being filled on page 10, she asked how many open technician openings remained. Dr. Hugel responded that at this moment, there are no open positions.

Tab 2a) Personnel Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 3) Tuitions Report was added to the Agenda

Tab 4) Superintendent's Reports

Tab 4a) Considerations – Mrs. Moreno Ortega inquired about the AI education program at Rutgers University, as it was the first time she had seen anything related to AI. Dr. Nunes replied that she will share key points of the seminar with the Board.

Tab 4a) Considerations was added to the Agenda

Tab 4b) Use of Facilities – Mrs. Barbosa questioned the volume of requests and well as the level of denials. Mr. Kennedy replied that the volume varies from 3-5 requests per month and that there are very few denials. Mr. Kennedy reminded the Board that we get additional facility requests that are mentioned in tab 4bb where fees are charged.

Tab 4b) Use of Facilities was added to the Agenda

Tab 4bb) Use of Facilities – Considerations was added to the Agenda

Tab 4c) – Field trip Considerations – Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the principals and teachers who have stepped up and are providing a variety of field trip experiences to students. On tonight's agenda there are 83 field trips listed for approval which is marvelous.

Tab 4c) was added to the Agenda

Tab 5) Authorizations Report was added to the Agenda

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report was added to the agenda

Tab 6a) Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds was added to the Agenda.

Tab 7) Award of Contracts – Regarding the contract with Minding Your Mind, Mrs. Moreno asked how schools were selected to participate in this program and how individual students within the respective schools were

chosen to be participants? Dr. Hugelmeyer said she would provide a report of the schools participating and explained that in the elementary grades it was classroom based while in the middle school grades it was presented through assemblies. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega spoke about the contract/partnership with Hispanics Inspiring Students Performance and Achievement (HISPA). It was her hope that tapes of the presentations would be able to be re-shown to other students. This partnership has proved to be very valuable and has been in place for over fifteen years. Dr. Hugelmeyer said she would have to get approval from HIPSA to share the recordings with non-participating schools, but she will explore those possibilities. Mrs. Chevres asked for some information on the contract with Colgate Bright Smiles Van. Dr. Hugelmeyer said this is a pilot program that will focus on a small number of schools for this year but if successful would be expanded next school year. The schools that have been selected for the pilot program will be provided. Mrs. Carvalho inquired about the amended contract with Steve Markowitz and the Therapy Dog. Dr. Hugelmeyer explained that now that School No. 15 had been identified as the location for the therapy program the contract was amended to reflect this change. Mrs. Carvalho asked that the contract with Vanguard Technologies be tabled until Mr. Marsal could provide more information as to scope and pricing.

On a motion made by Mrs. Carvalho and seconded by Mrs. Barbosa the contract with Vanguard Technologies was tabled.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Ms. Bathelus -7

Negative: none

Mr. Jacobs requested additional information about the contract with the College of New Jersey to allow students to accrue college credits. In addition, he wanted to know what other colleges/universities are under contract to provide dual enrollment programs for Elizabeth High School students. Dr. Hugelmeyer said the District has agreements with five colleges and universities, and she will provide a report with relevant data including enrollment and the subject matter covered in these programs.

Tab 7) Award of Contracts as amended was added to the Agenda.

Board President Charlene Bathelus thanked all the Department Directors and staff who were at the meeting for providing information and insight for the Board members.

Tab 8) Committee meeting Reports

The Board President asked the Student Representative to present her report

Good evening Dr. Hugelmeyer, board of education and community members. My name is Josselyn Jaramillo and I am proud to have been chosen as the Student Representative this school year for John E. Dwyer Technology Academy. Currently, I serve as the Senior and Student Government President. These roles allow me to be incredibly involved in the events, clubs, and activities held at Dwyer. We kicked off the school year with a record number of parents attending our back-to-school night. It was a great night! Parents were excited to be back, to tour the building, to meet the teachers and learn about all the opportunities and exciting clubs the school has to offer. For example, Dwyer organizations have encouraged the opening of doors to their different clubs for the community to unite. Dwyer embraces students from all cultures and backgrounds and their participation in these clubs provides them an opportunity to highlight the uniqueness of their respective backgrounds promoting diversity and acceptance.

Throughout the years, Dwyer has continued to thrive in improving the school culture which has led to improvement in academic success. Thanks to the collaboration of teachers and the support they provide to students Dwyer was awarded the AP School Honor Roll for the second year in a row. This prestigious award recognizes schools that have increased AP offerings to students and the number of students who have received college credit. We upgraded from bronze to silver in this category excelling in College Culture, which includes students having taken at least one AP course in their high school career, a percentage who have taken 5 AP exams or more and a received a score of three or higher on these exams.

Dwyer was also recertified as a National School of Character for the next five years which is a testimony to the decrease of bullying incidents, disciplinary infractions and improvements in student attendance and graduation rates.

Dwyer received the “Promising Practice Award from Character Education.org for the last two years. First for the “No One Eats Alone” campaign. The “No One Eats Alone” campaign promotes inclusion of all students to decrease social isolation. Secondly, for the initiative in the “No One Reads Alone” during Read Across America week. This initiative celebrates the power of literature to bring students together through avenues like book clubs and social discussions. By promoting the notion that reading is a social activity, “No One Reads Alone” encourages a collective exploration of ideas, emotions, and perspectives.

During the month of October we celebrated the Week of Respect which was student led. Students collaborated in creating bulletin boards in which students were able to display positive messages to promote kindness, respect and acceptance.

The clubs and organizations available to students at Dwyer like the Portuguese and Spanish Honor Society allowed different opportunities to students to understand the importance of service learning and the importance of giving back to our community.

As president of the Portuguese and Spanish Honor Society, I often help in organizing, directing, and implementing multiple events. For example, in October, we wrote encouraging notes and letters for cancer patients at Trinità’s. We let them know that they are not alone in this difficult journey and to keep a positive mindset.

We received a response from Trinitas Hospital expressing their sincere gratitude towards the Dwyer students for taking the time to write to patients during Breast Cancer Awareness Month and for showing their support. For Thanksgiving, we are collecting nonperishable items for people in need. In December, we will visit the Cancer unit at Trinitas to spread holiday cheer. The multiple activities and opportunities for service learning at Dwyer are ongoing all year round.

Other high schools have had a busy fall season as well. In FJC students celebrated Breast Cancer Awareness month with a Relay for Life kick off, which is a community-based fundraising event for the American Cancer Society. In addition, students held a “Join the Pink, Wear Pink” fundraiser where students showed their appreciation and awareness of the cause. To honor the military on Veteran’s Day, students participated in “Camo Day” fundraiser, allowing students to show respect to veterans of the United States Air Force. FJC celebrated the induction of sixty-five students into the National Science Honor Society. In addition, Halsey Academy celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by learning about various cultural aspects of Hispanic Heritage in their Dance and Social Studies classes, as well as creating a wonderful display of these activities in a Bulletin Board created by the multi-cultural club. In all the high schools, students are participating in activities to display their thankfulness for their peers and members of the community, offering to give back and spread kindness during this upcoming holiday season. Thank you for your time and consideration and for allowing me the opportunity to share the wonderful activities Elizabeth High School students are involved in.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak in front of you tonight. As a Dwyer student, who started ninth grade during the Covid Pandemic, I was a shy student and also was grieving the loss of a dear family member. Transitioning to high school under these conditions can be intimidating for a teenager, but luckily for me the support of all the teachers and staff members from my Dwyer family allowed me the opportunity to flourish and grow, both academically and emotionally.

Negotiations Committee

November 1, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Negotiations Committee; Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member, Isaias Rivera, Board Member Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Dieter Lerch and Julius Consoni, Financial Consultants Lerch, Vinci, Higgins, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Rajeev Malhotra, Comptroller and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Dieter Lerch presented a Guide comparison analysis to the committee and discussed how our district compares. In addition, an analysis of the percentage and number of employees and salary dollars at different steps of the guides was reviewed.

A request for data concerning the steps of the guide for placement of new hires and resignations to be presented at the next committee meeting. In addition, a request for the analysis of scattergrams for operational positions was requested.

Finance and Accounting Committee

November 13, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Finance and Accounting Committee; Stan Neron, Board Vice President, Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member, Michael Simitz, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Rajeev Malhotra, Comptroller and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee discussed the continuing contract with One Source Employee Assistance Plan and the corresponding communication plan. Further, the status of the audit of the 2023-2024 Annual Comprehensive Report and the timeline for presentation in December was discussed.

The October 15th enrollment counts on the Application for State School Aid were reviewed. The total enrollment reported was 28,456 students. This represents an increase of 97 students in comparison to the previous school year. A total of 552 general education students decreased was offset by an increase of 298 multilingual learners, and an increase of 180 special education students and an increase of 171 Multilingual/Special Education students. Since 2022-2023, there has been a decrease of 1,218 general education students which was offset by an increase of 1,008 multilingual learners, an increase of 68 special education students and an increase of 279 Multilingual/Special Education students.

Lastly, the committee discussed preschool enrollment for this school year and the need for the expansion of marketing efforts to communicate the availability of our program throughout the city.

A request for a report to be presented regarding concession stand operations and bidding procedures on capital projects was requested for the next meeting.

Mr. Neron thanked the schools and staff for participating in the anti-littering campaign. It is important to instill pride in your community and city at a young age. Keeping our city, parks and open spaces clean provides for a better environment for all.

Resolutions 10 to 10g were added 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:

Legal Matters – specifically Workman’s Compensation I.G., J.M., M.P., M.B., and the summary results of Tab 4d Superintendent’s Report, Personnel Matters – specifically suspension with pay, District Calendar.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Carvalho to go into Private Session at 7:33 p.m.

Personnel Matters – specifically suspension with pay, District Calendar.

The Board will reconvene in public and may take formal action.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Carvalho to go into private session at 7:33 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Ms. Bathelus -7

Negative: None

Before going into private session, Ms. Bathelus thanked all the directors in attendance as well as the Security staff, the Food Service workers and the I.T. team for their help and assistance.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Carvalho to return to public session at 8:40 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Carvalho, Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera Ms. Bathelus -5

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Ms. Bathelus -7

1.) Pursuant to Board Policy 5131.1, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, and New Jersey Statute 18A:37, “The results of each investigation shall be reported to the Board of Education no later than the date of the next board meeting following completion of the investigation and include: 1) Any services provided; 2) Training established; 3) Discipline imposed; or 4) Other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator.”

2.) Since our last Board of Education meeting on October 17, 2024, and through November 12, 2024, our school counselors, and school based social workers have completed 45 HIB investigations. Of these investigations 18 cases were Founded for HIB as per New Jersey law. There were 25 males, 23 females, 39 regular education students and 9 special education students that were the alleged victims. There were 45 males, 23 females, 54 regular education students, and 10 special education students and 4 non-students that were the alleged offenders. Of the 18 cases Founded for HIB, 5 cases were Founded based on Race/National Origin, 2 cases were Founded based on Color, 1 case was Founded based on Sexual Orientation, 1 case was Founded based on a Mental, Physical or Sensory Disability, and 15 cases were Founded based on "Other" identifying characteristics. Of the services provided and actions taken for these investigations, there were 21 skill development lessons/trainings, 34 counseling sessions, 3 behavioral interventions, 9 referrals for outpatient mental health treatment, 4 changes of classroom, 1 change of school placement, 5 administrative counseling sessions, 10 in school detentions, 29 parent conferences, 18 out of school suspensions, and 8 cases are continuing to be monitored.

3.) The HIB statute further requires that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after board members receive the initial report of HIB investigations, that the Board issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision pertaining to the 32 cases that was reported to you at the last Board meeting on October 17, 2024. In order for you to do so, the investigation summaries from those investigations which were reported to you at the last board meeting have been provided for your review prior to voting.

The following item was added to the Agenda:

Settle Agreement Workers Compensation Case - M.B.

Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and second to adopt the following agenda.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mr. Rivera to approve the entire Agenda.
Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and second to adopt the following agenda.

Opening Calendar
Official and Private Minutes (October 17, 2024)
Treasurer/Secretary's Report (September 30, 2024)
Personnel Reports
Tuition Reports
Superintendent's Reports
Authorizations Report
Finance and Accounting Report – Pay Vouchers
Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds
Award of Contracts Report
Claims List

Resolutions:

Approval of Submission – Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Academy – Generator Replacement
School Bus Evacuation Drills
Renewal of Portuguese Auto Repair (small-midsize trucks)
Renewal of Portuguese Auto Repair (large trucks)

Transfer of Capital Reserve Funds
Authorization to Process Account Transfers
Payment for Unused Sick Days
Payment for Unused Vacation Days
Workers Compensation Settlement – M.B.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, (with abstention on Tab 4b Item 1 Elizabeth Department of Recreation, use of Gym and classrooms School# 30, Tab 4b Item Elizabeth PAL use of Gym School No. 29, Tab 5 first Authorization - Elizabeth Police Dept. Veterans @ Bollwage Finance Academy) Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, (with an abstention on Tab 9 pg. 17 Travel Reimbursement- Mr. Rivera), Ms. Bathelus -8

Negative: none

On a motion made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, and seconded by Mr. Rivera, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Ms. Bathelus -8

Negative: none

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary