

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

February 9, 2019
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called on February 9, 2019 at 8:00 a.m., in the iLeap Center at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, 123 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Stephanie Goncalves presented the following statement at 8:30 a.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning. This is a special 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 January 28, 2019. 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.”

“I wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone present to this February 9, 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. I also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, I may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. I am pleased that you have taken time this morning to join us. 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: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Miss Goncalves – 8

Absent: Ms. Bathelus – 1

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., and Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP were in attendance. There were no members of the public present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Stephanie Goncalves 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.”

Since there were no public participants to address the Board, Miss Goncalves closed the public portion of the meeting.

Miss Goncalves welcomed Dr. Adrienne Bailey and Gail Davis who will be facilitating our governance retreat.

Dr. Adrienne Bailey welcomed everyone and acknowledged the availability of the board members today for another board retreat. Dr. Bailey stated that this is the eighth or ninth retreat and they started when Ms. Bathelus was president and continued under presidents Mr. Neron and Mrs. Carvalho. Dr. Bailey stated that they should be proud of their accomplishments. Dr. Bailey introduced her colleague, Gail Davis who will be facilitating the retreat with her.

Dr. Bailey reviewed the general meeting norms and added that they should expect non-closure on some items and decide retreat follow-up and next steps. Dr. Bailey stated that not everything will have finality today and asked if we don’t finish it today, then where is it going to land, either on a parking lot for follow-up or get a smaller group to discuss it through and take it to a proposal. Dr. Bailey reviewed the background resources including the 2015-2020 EPS Strategy Map, EPS Steps to Success, Three High Leverage Strategies, Promise Goals, and Achievable Results (AR) Strategies.

Dr. Bailey stated that the overall goal is to further the board’s effectiveness in essential areas of governance. Dr. Bailey stated that the three objectives are to understand the governance role of the Board related to policy, to continue work toward creating a more effective and efficient board including clarity of governance roles and responsibilities of board members in the areas of equity leadership and review and use of data, and to maintain commitment to sustainability and continuation of good governance practice.

Dr. Bailey reviewed the agenda including the retreat start-up with the President’s Welcome, the purpose and introduction of the facilitation team, retreat norms, rules of engagement, review of the retreat objectives and agenda, board’s governance role related to policy including best practices development, revision, monitoring, ongoing maintenance, and policy committee update, equity policy update and board engagement, sustainability plan reminders and updates including board goals and work plan, working agreements, new member on-boarding, self-evaluation including targeted areas of improvement, calendar aligned with superintendent’s evaluation, 2018-2019 customized questions, priority policies update on data dashboard including review of scorecard calendar and data dashboard schedule, board engagement and dissemination. Dr. Bailey stated that the retreat closure includes future topics, retreat dates, the plus/delta assessment, and next steps.

Dr. Bailey stated that the first area of work is the board’s governance role related to policy. Dr. Bailey stated that the policies are established, initiated, revised, and monitored by the board. Dr. Bailey stated that the policy oversight includes development of new policies, revising current policies, and monitoring policies. Dr. Bailey stated that the board identified four priority policies to monitor including data dashboard, constituent services, promotion and retention, and student code of conduct. Dr. Bailey stated that the board and superintendent determine the need for policy. Dr. Bailey stated that the superintendent is responsible for carrying out the policies through the development and implementation of regulations. Dr. Bailey stated that Mr. Jacobs is the chairperson of the policy committee.

Mr. Jacobs gave a policy committee update and stated that the policy committee started a review of the policies and there are additional discretionary policies to be reviewed. Mr. Jacobs stated that there is a committee meeting on Monday.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked what kind of data we can look at when we monitor a policy.

Dr. Bailey explained that it is not always quantitative and that it can be a process. Dr. Bailey stated that the high-level steps for locally initiated board policy development, implementation and monitoring include the implementation and metrics. Dr. Bailey stated that the superintendent will propose a calendar and metrics for board review. Dr. Bailey stated that the metrics need to be determined for each policy.

Dr. Bailey led the board members in a group discussion of the board's role in policy and asked three probing questions. Dr. Bailey stated that the first question is if all members are clear in understanding their collective responsibility in this area of governance of establishing, revising, monitoring implementation, and ongoing review and updating. Dr. Bailey stated that the second probing question is if the board members are satisfied that they are effectively fulfilling their role in this policy arena and if not, then what else needs to happen for the board to become more effective. Dr. Bailey stated that the third question is if there are specific next steps to ensure this board goal is brought to full completion by June 30th and what action is needed by the board to address the discretionary policies that have not been reviewed or reaffirmed.

Facilitator Gail Davis led the board members in a group discussion and asked what drives the board's decision for making policy. Ms. Davis stated that when policies are developed there needs to be a common understanding of the language used. Ms. Davis led the board members in a group discussion of definitions of what does data mean and what does closing the achievement gap mean. Ms. Davis stated that the board needs to be clear with their terms so that everyone understands.

Dr. Bailey stated that the board has made significant strides in their policy monitoring responsibilities and chose four policies to monitor.

Board President Stephanie Goncalves requested a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of a matter covered by attorney/client privilege. The Board will reconvene in public.

A motion was made by Mrs. Carvalho, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to go into private session at 9:03 a.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Miss Goncalves – 8

Negative: None

A motion was made by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mrs. Carvalho, to reconvene in public session at 10:40 a.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Miss Goncalves – 8

Negative: None

Miss Goncalves called for a short recess.

The Board reconvened in public at 11:05 a.m.

Dr. Bailey stated that the next area of work is a review of the sustainability plan summary. Dr. Bailey stated that the tasks the Board is working on include board goals and work plan, working agreements, new member on-boarding, and the self-evaluation. Dr. Bailey stated that one of the goals is to increase community engagement data. Dr. Bailey stated that the Board did an excellent job with the on-boarding process with a plan and a schedule. Dr. Bailey led a discussion with the two new board members who had the on-boarding training including what went well, what did they struggle with, and what improvement suggestions do they have. Dr. Bailey explained that there is a flowchart for the process when a board member is contacted by a community member for assistance or information. Dr. Bailey led the board members in a group discussion on the work plan. Dr. Bailey stated that at the agenda meetings going forward the

work plan will be reviewed and discussed for updates. Dr. Bailey led the board members in a discussion of the final working agreements including self-monitoring and evaluating them in one year.

Mr. Williams stated that the policy committee should consider adopting the working agreements into a policy.

Dr. Bailey stated that the working agreements should be put on a six-month monitoring review. Dr. Bailey stated that the board goals include agreeing on the 2018-2019 board governance goals along with a work plan schedule; continuing to monitor the policies/procedures and determine if revisions are needed in the following priority areas including data dashboard, constituent services, promotion and retention, and student code of conduct; learn and support the district's teaching and learning agenda; participating in professional development through retreats and workshops; setting an annual calendar, completing and reviewing the board self-evaluation results with attention to priority areas of improvement, providing increased opportunities for community engagement with the board, engaging in policy development by establishing a district-wide equity policy, and engaging in the comprehensive review and monitoring of all policies. Dr. Bailey stated that the board asked for a presentation on the teaching and learning agenda.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained how we currently deliver the teaching and learning agenda. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the student achievement presentations have been incorporated at the agenda and business meetings in the district goals and achievement data, PARCC Performance Data, and the NJ Performance Reports. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the district leadership presented academic initiatives including AVID, Middle States Regional Forum Programs, STEM Title I Funding, and Dual Language Preschool. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the teaching and learning agenda is included in the publications such as Inside EPS, Excellence News, and Calendar of Events. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the teaching and learning agenda is in the management oversight presentations on district initiatives including the recent presentations from the human resources, plant and property, food services, and security departments.

Dr. Bailey led the board members in a discussion of the teaching and learning probing questions including what else is needed for the board to be able to articulate a clear philosophy of teaching and learning that is reasonably complete and well aligned with the district goals and other reform strategies, and deeply knowledgeable about district reforms and initiatives and what further clarifications or additional information is needed for the board to better respond to the self-evaluation questions related to the subject. Dr. Bailey stated that there needs to be communication of information going out and more engagement of data.

The Board went into a short recess at 12:15 p.m.

The Board returned to public session at 12:50 p.m.

Dr. Bailey stated that the next area of work is the board self-evaluation priority areas identified for improvement. Dr. Bailey reviewed the priority areas and instructed small groups of board members to read the priority areas and assess each priority area on the progress evidence and what is in need of attention and then share their notations. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion with the board members on the progress of the priority areas. Dr. Bailey stated that the three probing questions are what are the concerns of the board members and what should be changed to ensure more efficient and effective board meetings; has the superintendent sufficiently clarified the district's teaching and learning philosophy; and what needs to happen to ensure your goal of community engagement is completed by June 30th, what are the next steps that need to occur, and who is responsible. Dr. Bailey led the board members in a group discussion including informational town hall meetings for community engagement; designing a meeting where the data for the data dashboard is inclusive; creating an efficient agenda for board meetings; extension of

retreat with data as a topic; and receiving reports to be able to examine the information in advance.

Dr. Bailey reviewed the next steps including a six-month monitoring review of the working agreements, evaluation of the work calendar, data dive, board self-evaluation, and equity policy questions, feedback, and development. Dr. Bailey stated that June 8th is the next scheduled board retreat.

Dr. Bailey commended the board members and administrators on their work and led a discussion of the evaluation of the retreat and asked if the retreat objectives were met, overall did this retreat effectively serve your needs, how satisfied were they with the content of the material provided, were the binder resource materials useful in supporting the agenda topics and helping the board think about the retreat issues, usefulness of work products, protocols, and agreements, adequate length of the topic sessions, sufficient board member participation, and the adequateness of the facility.

Dr. Bailey and Ms. Davis thanked the Board for allowing them to serve the Board today.

Miss Goncalves thanked Dr. Bailey and Ms. Davis for facilitating this retreat. Miss Goncalves thanked her colleagues and administrators for their work today.

Mr. Neron thanked Board President Stephanie Goncalves for her leadership.

On a motion by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, the meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Miss Goncalves – 8

Negative: None

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