

APPROVED
Bd. Mtg. 4-22-21

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

March 25, 2021
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on March 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. The Meeting was previously noticed to be held in the Multipurpose Room of Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 51, 544 Pennsylvania Ave., Elizabeth, New Jersey 07208. However, 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 online platform technology without providing a physical meeting place.

Board President Jerry Jacobs presented the following statement at 6:42 p.m.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a regular 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 using an online platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on March 22, 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 online public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must register online 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 online 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. 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 two minutes in duration based on the number of speakers. In the event that more than 20 persons indicate an intention to address the Board, speakers will be limited to two minutes each and the total time of public comment will remain limited to 60 minutes. We want to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak. The time limit will be strictly enforced and audio transmission will be terminated at the end of two minutes. Emails received but not read after the 60-minute duration will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this meeting."

Present: Nathalie Alcaide-Hernandez, Diane Barbosa, Charlene Bathelus, Maria Carvalho, Iliana Chevres, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron, Stephanie Pestana (arr. 7:00 p.m.), Jerry Jacobs – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP, and members of the community were present via an online platform.

Mr. Jacobs called for a moment of silence for the passing of Joel Orgella, teacher at Abraham Lincoln School No. 14, Angela M. Moore, food service worker at Nicholas M. Butler School No. 23, and Kelly Quinlan, teacher at Toussaint L'Ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6.

Pledge of Allegiance
National Anthem

Mr. Jacobs recognized high school seniors for student excellence who were selected for the Union County School Boards Association 2021 Unsung Heroes Student Recognition Program. Mr. Jacobs and Superintendent Hugelmeyer recognized Zuri Ekatan, J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy; Daniel D. Magalhaes, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy; Nasenya Robinson, Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy; Ivan Lin, Elizabeth High School Frank J. Cicarell Academy; Maria Grullon, Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health & Public Safety Academy; Alejandra Piedrasanta-Diaz, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy; and Kimberly Avila, Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy. Mr. Jacobs and Board members congratulated them on their achievement.

Mr. Jacobs recognized the Portuguese Instructive Club for community excellence for its 99th year celebration. Mrs. Carvalho and Mrs. Barbosa read a resolution honoring the 99th year celebration of the Portuguese Instructive Club. The Board members congratulated the Portuguese Instructive Club.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that they would like everyone to join us next year for the 100th year celebration of the Portuguese Instructive Club.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Board members Barbosa, Carvalho, and Pestana who were integral in honoring the Portuguese Instructive Club. Mr. Jacobs stated that we support our vibrant Portuguese community and the great impact and contributions they have made to our community here in Elizabeth.

Mr. Jacobs stated that it has been a very interesting week and we've had our ups and downs. Mr. Jacobs stated that we were so happy to welcome our Autism Program back on Monday. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are so happy to make the small steps to reopen our schools but we also want to be able to open schools safely and that is our main priority. Mr. Jacobs stated that looking at the news, New Jersey is rating one of the highest in the nation as far as positivity. Mr. Jacobs stated that we have to monitor science and the data and we have been doing this over the past year. Mr. Jacobs stated that most specifically since the beginning of this year it has been a roller coaster ride and one week we think we're reopening and the next we're not. Mr. Jacobs stated that is the status that we are in. Mr. Jacobs stated that we all have to work together as a community including our parents, our teachers, our children, our staff, our Board members because this is going to take

a community effort. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is not something that one person alone is going to make happen. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are going to continue to plan to reopen our schools because we have to and the children eventually have to get back to school. Mr. Jacobs thanked all the parents that have responded to the parent survey and that gives us a great indication of where we are but we have to be cognizant about it. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is all uncharted territory for all of us. Mr. Jacobs stated that we haven't seen one major school district of our size reopen in the past year. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is a monumental task that we are trying to embark on. Mr. Jacobs stated that we need to stay the course and work through the ups and downs that we will see and continue with our program of preparing to be ready to reopen schools. Mr. Jacobs stated that tonight we will be hearing presentations about the work that has been going on and the things that the Board has been integrally involved in to make sure that our schools will be ready. Mr. Jacobs stated that you will hear details about the 4,300 high tech air purifiers that we purchased for our classrooms. Mr. Jacobs stated that our Superintendent has been going out of her way this past week to meet with as many parents as possible with her nightly workshops to answer any questions that may be out there when it comes to our reopening. Mr. Jacobs stated that we all have to work together and it is going to take the efforts of each and everyone of us from our Superintendent all the way down the line including our assistant superintendents, our staff, and our support staff. Mr. Jacobs stated that our support staff, from at least the beginning of the year, has been coming in on a staggered schedule to make sure that our schools are ready to go back to school. Mr. Jacobs stated that is about 2,300 employees that have been working three days a week on a staggered schedule in our schools to make sure that we are ready. Mr. Jacobs stated that is an achievement. Mr. Jacobs stated that another thing is that the Mayor promised us the vaccinations for our teachers who are returning to work because that is the next piece of the puzzle. Mr. Jacobs stated that slowly we are starting to put the pieces of the puzzle together to try to make this happen.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented the Reopening Together Plan Guidebook 2.0 with guidelines, resources, and best practices for the safe reopening of the Elizabeth Public Schools in Covid-19 conditions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the following message from the Superintendent:

"This has been the most challenging year I have ever experienced as an educator. But I am grateful for the team at EPS that has been working tirelessly on our reopening plans in the face of ever-changing health conditions and conflicting data and information. This plan has been developed with a constant focus on how to best serve our students. This document will help provide guidance to our principals as they develop the site-specific logistical plans, and we will continue to update the reopening plan based on CDC, New Jersey Department of Health, and New Jersey Department of Education guidelines. Our ultimate goal is to ensure our schools open safely and responsibly and to continue to provide a healthy learning environment for each and every student.

It will be critical that we continue to monitor the CDC, NJDOH, and NJDOE directives to update plans so we can ensure the opening of schools provides a safe and healthy environment for students and staff. We will continue to plan and collaborate with teachers who have taken on new roles as virtual teachers using new tools, resources and online pedagogy. Our reopening focus will support our district promise of providing an innovative and personalized learning environment that ensures every child achieves excellence and those efforts will continue in all settings. We will also be continuing efforts to integrate more culturally relevant curriculum within and across grade levels to ensure diverse perspectives are included in literature and history. One of the greatest

concerns during school closures has been the impact on students' emotional well-being. We will amplify our efforts to ensure students feel connected, valued and have opportunities to learn collaboratively. Our students with unique learning needs, as well as with IEPs, 504s and English learners will continue to be provided with the necessary differentiated supports to foster their individual success.

While we may need to limit parents' physical presence on campus, our goal will be to continue to partner with parents for their child's education. We will continue to communicate regularly with our families and staff regarding our plans and changing health and safety protocols. We want our parents to be as informed as possible when making the decision that is right for their children and family."

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about the Parent Virtual Academy Workshops and stated that the Parent Virtual Academy will provide families with valuable training and information to support their child's learning during remote instruction and beyond. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the topic of discussion will be the Reopening Plan Guidebook. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the workshops will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on March 22nd and 24th for English and March 23rd and 26th for Spanish. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the steps to join the workshop by accessing the Parent Virtual Academy Workshop in the Families section on the district website at www.epsnj.org.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about vaccines and stated that beginning April 1, 2021, Mayor J. Christian Bollwage has made provisions for all returning classroom teachers to be vaccinated. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that information on registration will be given shortly for the vaccines and will be held on April 1st at the Dunn Sports Center.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about reopening our schools and stated that we recognize the importance of returning students to our schools for in-person instruction, as well as the overarching need to protect the health and safety of our students and team members. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we expect that Covid-19 will be present, to some degree, in our community throughout the school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our district is prepared to respond in the event that we experience a Covid-19 exposure. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that education, just like healthcare and food provision, is essential to our community, and as such, the reopening of our schools for in-person instruction with strict safety protocols will be prioritized. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the safety of our team members is also a critical priority in school reopening guidance and decisions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have highlighted key staff safety measures in a standalone section that summarizes safety measures set forth throughout this document to protect staff and students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our schools will need to maintain flexibility in the delivery of educational instruction based on health data. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that schools will be prepared with the support of the district to switch between distance learning and in-person instruction, and vice versa, with little notice. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that schools reopening for in-person instruction will also be ready to provide virtual learning for students who may need to isolate or quarantine, as well as students who are medically fragile or who have a household member who is medically fragile. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our goal is to open schools responsibly.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about the guiding principles for reopening our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the core values have guided the work of the Elizabeth Board of Education, Superintendent, administrators, and teachers to ensure a smooth and safe 2020-2021 school year for each and every student. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the core values include exceeding minimum expectations to place health and safety first for our students and team

members; providing high quality instruction to all students; ensuring families have flexibility and choice in the instructional models; and delivering accurate and timely communication to team members and families as needed and keep all stakeholders informed throughout the school year.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about the Parent Survey for in-person learning selection. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Parent Survey for in-person learning selection for PreK-12 is open until 8:00 p.m. on March 25, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we recognize the importance of returning students to our schools for in-person instruction, as well as the overarching need to protect the health and safety of our students and team members. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that on March 22nd, we welcomed our Autism Program back in our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as we continue to monitor our local health data, we are optimistic that we will be able to begin bringing prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade students back in on Monday, April 19, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in addition, we are hopeful that additional students will begin to return on April 26, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that throughout this difficult year, the district has made its decision based on science and the best available and latest health data. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will continue to do so. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we monitor those metrics daily and adjust accordingly and we will continue to do that as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that to properly schedule each student, the district requests that families complete the Parent Survey to indicate your learning preference for your child. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that you only need to complete one survey per family. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that all schools will continue to operate on a modified half-day schedule and PreK-8 from 8:20 a.m. until 12:39 p.m. and grades 9-12 from 7:30 a.m. until 12:22 p.m. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there are two options and Option 1 is for in-person instruction for two days a week defined as Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday with alternating Wednesdays. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Option 2 is 100% virtual learning five days a week. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in order to comply with the CDC for in-person learning, the classrooms have a maximum number of students in accordance with social distancing as required. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as a result, students will be placed in Group A or Group B. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the weekly calendar chart for in-person learning for Group A and for Group B. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if a selection is not made, then your student will be scheduled by the child's school.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the Parent Survey and questions to be answered for each child including name, school, grade level, and choice of which option you would prefer, either Option 1 or Option 2. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Parent Survey for in-person learning selection for PreK-12 is open until 8:00 p.m. on March 25, 2021.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the maintenance and operations for safety equipment and other protocols. Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Director of Plant, Property and Equipment Luis Couto to speak about the maintenance and operations for safety equipment, protocols, ventilation systems, and air purifiers.

Mr. Couto stated that the safety equipment includes hand sanitizing stations, personal protective equipment for staff, touchless thermometers, and electrostatic sprayers and portable UV cleaners. Mr. Couto stated that the hand sanitizing stations are located in common areas such as security desk, front offices, and priority locations as identified by the principals. Mr. Couto stated that personal protective equipment for staff includes that all staff are required to wear fabric face coverings unless prevented due to health conditions or instructional/communication needs. Mr. Couto stated that in those instances, staff shall not be assigned duties that require close contact with students or other staff. Mr. Couto stated that additional disposable masks are also available for students and staff who lose their face coverings or forget to bring them to school. Mr. Couto

stated that the district has provided each school and district site with touchless forehead thermometers so staff may screen each student, and themselves, as they enter. Mr. Couto stated that the district will provide electrostatic sprayers for every school and the sprayers will enable custodial staff to more efficiently disinfect our schools. Mr. Couto stated that the units spray a fine mist of disinfectant solution that is statically charged and then adheres to the surfaces in the room ensuring coverage. Mr. Couto stated that detailed attention will be given to high-touch areas such as door handles, desktops, sink handles, handrails and restrooms throughout the day. Mr. Couto stated that at least daily, and more frequently, they will clean and disinfect frequently touched hard surfaces including tables, desks, chairs, door handles, light switches, phones, copy/fax machines, bathroom surfaces including toilets, countertops, faucets and playground equipment and shared objects such as toys, games, art supplies, and books pursuant to CDC guidance. Mr. Couto stated that we are using cleaning products that are approved for use against Covid-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved list. Mr. Couto stated that in addition, drinking fountains have been suspended and students should bring their own water bottles, bathrooms will be cleaned and stocked with soap throughout the day, disinfecting wipes and/or disinfecting sprays will be provided in every classroom, HVAC systems have been serviced and inspected across the district to ensure proper operation and circulation of outside air, the district is upgrading from a 3-ply to a 4-ply filter, exceeding current requirements, and HVAC schedules will be set to run at least one hour before and after occupied hours. Mr. Couto stated that all the ventilation systems will be checked for proper operation. Mr. Couto stated that the goal is to provide as much outdoor air as possible, prevent high ventilation rates that may spread the pathogen further from the human host and minimizing or diluting the recirculated air as much as possible. Mr. Couto stated that to achieve our goals we will increase the percentage of outdoor air as much as possible to dilute the recirculated air and minimizing the recirculated air; evaluate the using of filters with a higher MERV rating increasing the level of filtration when the equipment can handle it; running the equipment always in occupied mode to provide more changes of air by when the students show up; run the UVs at a slower speed to prevent/limit the projection of any possible pathogens in the air; have additional filters at hand so that if necessary they can do additional filter changes; lower the setting of the systems controlled by a carbon dioxide on-demand sensor to force them to increase the amount of outdoor air; and evaluate the addition of needlepoint bipolar ionization devices to our HVAC equipment to inactivate/kill the virus in the air and improve our filtration of particles in suspension in the room air. Mr. Couto stated that all classrooms will be provided with air purifiers that have a HEPA filter and most classrooms will be outfitted with two air purifiers that have a HEPA filter.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mr. Couto for the information. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the social media website and app information. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are constantly updating information on our district website, www.epsnj.org and leveraging social media to stay connected with all of you. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this concluded her presentation on the Reopening Together Plan.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint presentation on the community updates for programs that we will be offering virtually as well as new information that we have received from the New Jersey Department of Education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the enrichment virtual supplemental opportunities at the elementary level and high school level. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Title I Reallocated Elementary Programs include a STEM after school program and a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) after school program for Title I elementary

schools from 3:05 p.m. until 4:05 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday beginning April 20, 2021 through June 17, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the virtual supplemental high school programs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Title I Reallocated High School Programs include a STEM after school program and a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) after school program for Title I high schools from 2:20 p.m. until 3:20 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday beginning April 20, 2021 through June 17, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that one of the many summer programs that will be offered is a Summer SEL Program for Title I high schools will be held in August 2021 with dates and times to be announced at a later date.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide on the state assessments and stated that the New Jersey Department of Education had applied to the U.S. Department of Education to waive the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirement to administer state assessments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the official date of New Jersey's waiver request submission is not known. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the original deadline was February 1; however, the deadline was extended and did not set a new deadline. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the U.S. Department of Education has 120 days from the date of the submission to respond to New Jersey's waiver request. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the timeline and stated that on February 11, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Education announced the postponement of the planned start dates of all Spring statewide assessments to begin not earlier than April 5, 2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that since February 11, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education maintains the requirement that all states administer statewide assessments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the U.S. Department of Education has provided a pathway to waive accountability requirements and the NJDOE continues to pursue assessment flexibility based on specific circumstances within the state. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide and stated that while the NJDOE is pursuing flexibilities via the waiver process the school communities must prepare for all contingencies and make the best effort to plan for statewide assessment administration this Spring. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the NJDOE has announced it will resume a significantly amended statewide assessment administration this Spring. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if the waiver is denied or still pending as of the scheduled dates, the spring assessment administration will move forward. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the statewide administration dates of the ACCESS for ELLs for kindergarten through high school is from April 5 through June 11, 2021 with an in-person mode of delivery. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be communicating with parents as to the dates that their child will need to be in school to take their assessment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the statewide administration dates of the DLM is from April 5 through June 11, 2021 with an in-person mode of delivery. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be communicating with parents as to the dates that their child will need to be in school to take their assessment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the statewide administration dates for the NJSLA is from May 3 through June 11, 2021 and has both an in-person option and a remote option. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will be setting up parent workshops to go into further details with regard to the administration of these important required assessments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it was important to announce this information and a flyer will be posted with parent academy workshops very soon. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this concludes the community updates.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer for the information.

Mr. 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 two minutes in duration since there are so many who would like to speak. The time limit will be strictly enforced and audio transmission will be terminated at the end of two minutes. 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 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 two minutes in duration.”

Mr. Jacobs called upon the first public participant, John Griffin, to address the Board.

John Griffin, EEA President, spoke about lack of communication and concerns for the reopening of schools.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Nick Nicoletta, to address the Board.

Nick Nicoletta, EEA 2nd Vice President, spoke about the lack of communication.

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

Maria Lorenz spoke about special education and SEPAC.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called twice upon the next public participant, Nikita Clarke-Huff, to address the Board. Nikita Clarke-Huff did not respond.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Anna Kroik, to address the Board.

Anna Kroik spoke about the rise in Covid cases and asked the Board to reconsider the opening.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Robert Golden, to address the Board.

Robert Golden stated that he was just observing and had no comment.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him.

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Lana Nguyen, to address the Board.

Lana Nguyen stated that she is concerned about the reopening for her and her students.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Jamie Mahoney, to address the Board.

Jamie Mahoney spoke in support of the EEA.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments.

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

Mr. Jacobs called twice upon the next public participant, Adilia Coimbra-Costa, to address the Board. Adilia Coimbra-Costa did not respond.

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Sarah Afflitto, to address the Board.

Sarah Afflitto spoke in support of the EEA.

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon Tracey Thompson who was on the online platform.

Tracey Thompson spoke about the lack of air purifiers in the classroom and the supplies needed.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments. Mr. Jacobs called upon Marisa Catena who was on the online platform.

Marisa Catena stated that there are no air purifiers in the classroom and asked about the protocol.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

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

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

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Leo Caramazano, to address the Board.

Leo Caramazano, EEA 1st Vice President, spoke about the lack of communication with the union and problems with the reopening of schools.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Yas Davis, to address the Board.

Yas Davis asked about the filtration systems in the schools.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Anthony Galindo, to address the Board.

Anthony Galindo spoke about the union and the reopening of schools.

Mr. Jacobs thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Harriet Villarrubia, to address the Board.

Harriet Villarrubia spoke about concerns of reopening the schools.

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

Michelle McAteer spoke about concerns of reopening the schools.

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

Marie Tichenor spoke about concerns of student testing the first week of returning to school.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next public participant, Jeannine Carlucci, to address the Board.

Jeannine Carlucci stated that she is listening and had no comment.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her and called upon the next public participant, Ann Tramuta, to address the Board.

Ann Tramuta stated that she is listening and had no comment.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her.

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

Mr. Jacobs called upon Elaine Wilds who was on the online platform. Elaine Wilds was not able to access the online system.

Mr. Jacobs stated that there were no other participants for public speaking.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he received emails prior to the start of the meeting and read them in full into the record.

Mr. Kennedy read the following email from Andrea Rojas:

“I know focusing on a re-opening plan is concern with everything going on. But how about implementing and discussing a new start time for your schools. I am a new parent with a child starting in your district this coming year, and honestly I like a 820am start time for 3-5 year olds is too early.

I know some of your schools have the early drop off and that’s great. But the current schedule should be another thing to be up for discussion among your board.

My suggestion: early drop offs should be 715-815. Breakfast time 815-845. With a clean up and prep time of 845-9am. And have the children start at 9am for pre—k to first grade at least. I think by second grade maybe the 830 start time would be okay. We want are children to go to school and learn. Not to be too tired to not want to learn. Thank you.”

Mr. Kennedy read the following email from Debra Murray:

“I would first like to thank all the board members for their unpaid service to the community. It truly is a specific calling to serve, especially during this time. The gamut of feedback you receive takes a toll on your personal and family’s health.

I have some thoughts, comments, and concerns. While I am not opposed whatsoever to returning in person, I would like to better understand the sense of urgency in opening, after being virtual for much of the school year. With that being said, I am struggling to understand why the opening plan did not allow for a full, two week “quarantine period” for people who are electing to travel. That would bring the opening date, at the earliest, to April 26, 2021. Secondly, as I am grateful for the partnership between the city of Elizabeth and staff members regarding vaccinations, wouldn’t it make sense to open AFTER members received their SECOND dose, should they elect to be vaccinated with the limited supply the city is receiving? This would make members and the community safer, but more importantly lessen/prevent the opening and closure of classrooms/buildings which is more disruptive than remaining virtual. Thanks for your time.”

Mr. Kennedy read the following email from Ellen Glynn:

“I am writing in response to the reopening plan presented at the last board meeting. To start, I am still weary about schools reopening in general due to New Jersey’s and more importantly Union County Covid stats. We are still in a high risk area. Staff are still not vaccinated and have yet to receive a follow up from the city of Elizabeth or the Board of Ed to when, where and how staff will be vaccinated. At this point teachers will not be fully protected before the set return date. This is an alarming fact.

It has been noted by many staff who returned this past week that windows are still non functioning and air purifiers have not been placed in classrooms. We must protect the staff as much as the students.

Teachers are scrambling with rumors and speculation on how their day to day will be, how new protocols will be in place and who is handling these new responsibilities. Everything is hearsay because they are left in the dark. Employees are weary that their and their families health, safety and well being are not top priority. Please open up the lines of communication with staff and ensure their safety. Many are stressed to the max while continuing to go above and beyond to provide meaningful instruction to the students of Elizabeth.

I understand you as leaders are working hard on many decisions but let the everyone’s voice be a part of the conversation and solutions.”

Mr. Jacobs called again upon Iraklis Vogiatzidakis who was now on the online platform. Iraklis Vogiatzidakis did not respond.

Since there were no other participants for public speaking and the emails have been read into the record, Mr. Jacobs closed this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the public speakers for all of their concerns. Mrs. Hugelmeyer addressed concerns about mask wearing and referenced the Reopening Together Plan Guidebook 2.0 and personal protective equipment and protocols for all students wearing face masks. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students with special needs who are unable to tolerate a face covering are excluded from the requirement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer encouraged the teacher to meet with the school nurse, child study team, and special needs educators who can help when delivering the services to

our children in terms of understanding why our special needs children may not be able to tolerate wearing a face covering.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded to the concerns about air purifiers and stated that the air purifiers that are referenced in our Reopening Together Plan Guidebook 2.0 will be delivered during Easter break and installed in each of our classrooms.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she understands that we all have been working extremely hard preparing for our reopening and preparing lesson plans to provide the highest level of education for our children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she would like to share with everyone and addressed EEA President John Griffin that perhaps he had forgotten that we met on Monday, March 22nd for two hours from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the NJEA Field Representative was present for that meeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will gladly share the Q&A from our two-hour meeting with all of our staff members and team members in our organization. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will gladly be able to go through each of those areas in detail. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it was a two-hour meeting to address any and all concerns that the EEA had. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we were successful in completing that and, in fact, the meeting ended at 4:00 p.m. because there were no further questions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she would also like to note that there was a post by the EEA President this past weekend. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she was a bit confused by the message that was communicated this evening. Mrs. Hugelmeyer read the post that was communicated on social media this past weekend by John Griffin, EEA President, “Good news. The lines of communication have opened amongst the stakeholders. Your voices are being heard. Schools will reopen and our members want them to reopen. We just want to be part of the conversation with the Superintendent and the school administration to help ensure they open safely. Part of the reopening of schools will depend on the availability of vaccines. Many of our members who want to be vaccinated have not had access to them. The Mayor has secured vaccines for our members and we are grateful. He has access to a limited supply and we will be offering our support and cooperation to help make vaccines available to all of our members and to help open the schools safely. Going forward we ask that you respond to the surveys and emails pertaining to the vaccination process. Your input is critical to the planning process.” Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is important to review the timeline. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this communication was issued this past weekend which then as a follow-up on Monday we had a very successful meeting from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. where all the questions were addressed. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the principals and supervisors union for having coordinated multiple sessions with all of the members as we have gone through all of the questions and answers together. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that her key message this evening is how important it is that we do work together and that we ensure that we communicate in a very honest and straightforward manner. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will be forwarding via email the Q&A from our two-hour session this past Monday with the EEA.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mrs. Hugelmeyer and stated that the Board has played an active interest in making sure we hear the union’s concerns. Mr. Jacobs stated that last Wednesday we set up a meeting with Mr. Griffin with himself and the negotiation team including Board members Alcaide-Hernandez, Barbosa, and Bathelus. Mr. Jacobs stated that was another two-hour meeting as well. Mr. Jacobs stated that we set it up specifically to hear the concerns from the union. Mr. Jacobs stated that at the end of that meeting we requested that Mr. Griffin supply us with a list of his concerns so they can be dealt with because we know we want to work with the union. Mr. Jacobs stated that there seems to be a disconnect here. Mr. Jacobs stated that he knows that Mr. Griffin

did meet with Superintendent Hugelmeyer and other representatives on Monday because the Board's representative was there and reported back to us that the meeting went well and there were questions but they were satisfied with the responses they received. Mr. Jacobs stated that was the information that was given back to the Board. Mr. Jacobs stated that he is not understanding where the disconnect may be occurring because the Board has recently made efforts and entreaties to communicate with Mr. Griffin and the union. Mr. Jacobs stated that the administration is also trying as well to communicate with the union. Mr. Jacobs stated that hopefully we can all get on the same page because this is something we talked about earlier that this has to be a team effort with the community. Mr. Jacobs stated that it is not only Board members, Superintendent Hugelmeyer, and administrators it is also our parents and our teachers that we are doing this for our children. Mr. Jacobs stated that he wanted to point out something that gets lost sometimes and that is our support staff, our custodians, our security guards, food service, and all the people that make the building run have been working a staggered schedule since July. Mr. Jacobs stated that these people have been in the buildings since July and they are Elizabeth residents, too. Mr. Jacobs stated that they obviously want our children back. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is where we all have to be in this together. Mr. Jacobs stated that no one said that this is going to be an easy road and we have to go with the ups and downs to make this happen. Mr. Jacobs stated that behind the scenes, which is what a lot of our Board members have been living, with the Superintendent and her staff and administration we have been going through these ups and downs which you haven't seen in public. Mr. Jacobs stated that he had a sense of relief last week knowing that we were finally getting the vaccine that the Mayor has graciously granted to our teachers to ensure that they could come back. Mr. Jacobs stated that approximately 2,500 of our support staff employees have been in the building and coming to work and doing their job to make our schools ready since July.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer for the Parents Academy and stated that she was one of the mothers that signed in and was listening. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she received good feedback the way the Superintendent explained the tests and we had a great attendance. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that there is one more and wants to engage the community to see the numbers improve. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is a large district and wants the parents and guardians to please attend. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that when parents make a statement at a Board meeting everybody knows that we don't give answers. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is a great opportunity for each one who is listening to the presentation to have a question and answer time. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that at the end if you need any support, they will help you. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega requested the Superintendent remind the parents of the date again.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be presenting on Friday at 6:30 p.m. and for our parents that are not available during the week we will be presenting on Saturday as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will continue with our parent workshops and as we enter the next phase we will also continue this as a practice. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she believes this is the best way in which to communicate with our families and we are offering them in English and Spanish on alternating nights.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is a great opportunity on Friday and Saturday and she wants our numbers to improve during the time it is better for you. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer and all the team behind this.

Mr. Jacobs thanked the 2,500 support staff for coming in since July. Mr. Jacobs stated that he apologizes for not making that clear because they have been keeping our schools going. Mr. Jacobs stated that he needed to add that to thank all these people for believing the vision that we believe in getting our kids back to school.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that she was also a part of the virtual workshops and listened to the Superintendent and assistant superintendents. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it was very informative and there were a lot of questions. Mrs. Barbosa stated that the fear of what we were in but going in with modifications is difficult. Mrs. Barbosa stated that after the virtual workshop a lot of questions were answered as to uniforms and the April 1st letters to parents. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it was very successful. Mrs. Barbosa stated that as of Monday, we had our Autism children come into our classrooms and stated that she saw the smiles on the parents' and children's faces. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she wanted to recognize the team that has been there this week and stated that she appreciates them. Mrs. Barbosa stated that they will be there with you, visit, and give any assistance even with any upcoming staff that are coming in. Mrs. Barbosa stated that the children are getting their related services and they are getting their speech and things that they need. Mrs. Barbosa stated that the in-person relationship is happening and that warms her heart. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we need to work together and we, as Board members, want to work together with our staff, with the EEA, and with everyone out there. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we want to make the best decisions upcoming and understanding that the data we get is clinically important and understanding that minute by minute things change and sometimes it is out of our control. Mrs. Barbosa stated that vaccinations are out there but they are not as abundant as we would like them to be. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she is thankful to the Mayor for allocating those vaccinations for our staff and teachers because she personally understands how difficult it is. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she knows that in the next several weeks we should have many more vaccines even at your local pharmacy. Mrs. Barbosa stated that there is going to be a sense of flexibility where you can get your vaccine and there are three vaccinations out there for you to get. Mrs. Barbosa stated that everyone has to be patient and understand that we are dealing with something that changes minute by minute. Mrs. Barbosa stated that understanding the clinical realm is something that we take very strongly. Mrs. Barbosa stated that anything that modifies we just have to do what is right for everyone involved including our denominator, which is our children.

The President requests a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of personnel, contracts and legal matters. The Board will reconvene in public and may take formal action.

A motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Chevres, to go into private session at 9:00 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, to reconvene in public session at 11:10 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that pursuant to Board Policy 5131.1 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) 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. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after Board members receive the report of HIB investigations, the statute requires that the Board issue a decision in writing to affirm, reject, or modify the Superintendent's decision pertaining to the cases that were reported to the Board members at the last meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez, seconded by Mrs. Carvalho, to suspend the rules to add the following four resolutions to the agenda:

Resolution – Termination effective March 8, 2021 – J.R.

Resolution – Settlement and Resignation – E.R.

Resolution – Appointment of Health Benefits Broker – Acrisure, LLC

Resolution – Appointment of Risk Manager – Acrisure, LLC

The motion to suspend the rules to add the above resolutions to the agenda was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our Excellence News can be accessed on our district website. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have included Read Across America activities in our schools, Youth Art Month activities in our schools, celebrating Women's History Month where EPS recognizes its women Board members that were interviewed by our high school students, and additional activities in our schools including varsity boys basketball, senior night, food and nutrition, and also our amazing educators that include Wayne Dillon. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked our Board for participating in Women's History Month and having our students interview them including what has inspired them to pursue leadership roles. Mrs. Hugelmeyer invited our parents to access our Excellence News at our district website www.epsnj.org.

Mr. Jacobs asked for a motion and second to adopt the agenda.
Minutes of the Meetings of February 18 and 25, 2021
Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of January 2021
Personnel Report
Supplemental Personnel Report
Tuition Report

Superintendent's Report – Considerations
 Superintendent's Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results
 Authorizations Report
 Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc.
 Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds
 Award of Contracts Report
 Supplemental Award of Contracts Report
 Miscellaneous Communication – None
 Claims List
 Resolution – Autism Awareness Month
 Resolution – National Library Week
 Resolution – Requisition for Taxes
 Resolution – U.C.E.S.C. Environmental Safety Program for 2021-2022
 Resolution – Consent for Transfer of Liquor License
 Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2017-4075) – K.C.
 Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2017-19740) – K.C.
 Resolution – Maximum Travel Expenditures for 2021-2022
 Resolution – Appointing NuEnergy LLC - Energy Management
 Resolution – Appointing Manor II Electric Inc. for Emergency Generator at School No. 1
 Resolution – Adoption of Tentative Budget for 2021-2022
 Resolution – Termination effective March 8, 2021 – J.R.
 Resolution – Settlement and Resignation – E.R.
 Resolution – Appointment of Health Benefits Broker – Acrisure, LLC
 Resolution – Appointment of Risk Manager – Acrisure, LLC

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Alcaide-Hernandez, Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho (abstain- Superintendent's Report– Considerations – O.H., J.C.), Chevres (abstain- Superintendent's Report– Considerations – O.H.), Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron (abstain- Superintendent's Report– Considerations – O.H., J.C.), Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Jacobs stated that March is Women's History Month and recognized the women in all of our lives and our female Board members, our Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer, and her staff. Mr. Jacobs recognized the women in his life who made him the man that he is and he always says that behind a good man is a good woman.

On a motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

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