

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
(Official)

April 6, 2020  
Elizabeth, New

Jersey

The combined regular agenda and business meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on April 6, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. on a virtual online platform.

Board President Diane Barbosa presented the following statement at 6:40 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. 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 using an online platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on Thursday, April 2, 2020. In addition, this notice is posted in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.”

“Any member of the public wishing to address the Board can do so by emailing statements relative to agenda items and/or educational comments to the Secretary of the Board at [kennedha@epsnj.org](mailto:kennedha@epsnj.org). All relevant statements received will be read into the record during the Meeting’s Public Comment Portion. All emails must be submitted and received by the Secretary of the Board up to the start of the meeting and, as is always the case, must include the public member’s full name for the record. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration.”

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

Absent: None

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 on the online platform.

Mrs. Barbosa called for a moment of silence for staff members Joel Orgella, Joseph Tintle, Michelle Torruella, and Ronald Ussher.

Board President Barbosa stated, on behalf of the Elizabeth Board of Education, that we want you to know that we are working every day to provide the resources for our administration, staff, and students during this unprecedented time. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we send love, prayers, and strength to all of our families but especially to our hero employees who have passed during these difficult times. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is so important to continue to acknowledge our learning community and all that has been accomplished over these past few unprecedented weeks. Mrs. Barbosa stated that first she wants to recognize our families and parents for the tremendous effort they have made to help their children, our children, to learn while we are home. Mrs. Barbosa stated to our students, “Bravo” for their efforts in our E-remote learning and they have been doing a wonderful job. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she and the rest of the Board are very proud of each and every one of them even on those difficult days of log-ins. Mrs. Barbosa encouraged them to keep their spirits up and keep up the great work. Mrs. Barbosa stated to all of our team members including central administration, instructional supervisors, directors, CST members, support staff, warehouse team, food service members, nurses, operational staff, and most important our teachers that she would like to express their heartfelt gratitude for the sacrifices and extraordinary efforts they have all made keeping our students learning, engaged, and growing. Mrs. Barbosa stated that

our community is so fortunate to have such dedicated people who are committed to excellence and she can not thank everyone enough for all you are doing to ensure that education continues here in Elizabeth.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that April is Autism Awareness Month which is dear to her heart. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it brings her great joy when she has the opportunity to visit our special education classrooms through her Visiting Tuesday and see our students reaching new milestones and learning new life skills and growing to reach their full potential. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she really will miss not having that opportunity this April to see our students in action. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she wants to recognize them for the wonderful achievements they have experienced with the highlights and hardships and they are achieving. Mrs. Barbosa acknowledged all of the moms and dads and their families who are affected by autism and who sit side by side and hand by hand helping them through this time. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we care about their successes and their children and we are thinking of them during this month of April and always.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that speaking on behalf of all of the Board of Education members we care about all of our students, moms, dads, and all of our staff that learning must continue. Mrs. Barbosa stated that our team members are working hard to develop this next phase of E-remote learning which we are rolling out in the upcoming week and it will be updated on our website. Mrs. Barbosa thanked everyone for their support as we continue to experience these very difficult circumstances and showing why Elizabeth is so special, special to her, special to the Board of Education, and special to each and every one of us. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are strongest when we are together and together we will succeed and get through these difficult times. Mrs. Barbosa stated to everyone to stay strong and stay well.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega gave her condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega gave prayers to the community who listens to us now and stated that they should stay home and stay safe and to remember that we are with everyone. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the teachers, administration, support staff, parents, and students for their hard work and dedication.

Mrs. Chevres stated that at this time during our schools being closed with significant changes in our normal routines, many parents have expressed concerns about the impact on our students, especially our students with special needs. Mrs. Chevres stated that she is part of those parents and is concerned. Mrs. Chevres stated that there is a question about our children every day and the individual needs of our children and this transition is a challenge every day. Mrs. Chevres stated that something so important to make her feel happy and have hope is the hard work of our teachers, our staff members, and our IT Department who are doing a great job. Mrs. Chevres stated that our teachers provide great emotional support with emails, phone calls, reaching out every day and make that transition all the more easy for everybody. Mrs. Chevres stated that she wants parents to know that they are so important for their children's education and we are never alone. Mrs. Chevres stated that we need to keep working hard and working together and it may be hard but it is not impossible. Mrs. Chevres thanked all of the teachers, staff, friends, parents, administrators, Superintendent, and Board members. Mrs. Chevres stated that it is so hard this time but we are doing a great job because we are together. Mrs. Chevres stated that we learn everyday and we are trying to not be impossible but its not easy.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked them for their comments. Mrs. Barbosa stated that each day is a new day, especially our Mondays through Fridays. Mrs. Barbosa stated that at times when we get our comments from our parents and our community members please know that we are listening and we understand that some days there are technical difficulties with our website and the logging in. Mrs. Barbosa stated that our technical team does work very efficiently every morning and they are on it to see that it runs smoothly. Mrs. Barbosa stated that there are struggles at times but we are doing the best that we can to keep up the communication. Mrs. Barbosa stated that Board member Chevres mentioned that teachers are reaching out and stated that if parents feel that they need more assistance to please reach out to their teachers and they are there to help and are listening.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that we do have our Board business as usual and we do have our committee meetings, particularly our finance committee which is meeting this week along with our special education committee meeting. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are constantly in cooperation with our Superintendent and team members with all of the unraveling of new information just to make this remote learning as easy as possible for our students, our parents, our teachers, and our principals.

Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools remains closed in accordance with Governor Murphy's stay at home order, as New Jersey prepares for a potential surge of the COVID-19 virus in the coming weeks. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are all adjusting to changes to how we lead our daily lives, especially in respect to finding a balanced structure for learning, for work, and for family time at home. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that while we need to remain focused on our students and their ongoing academic needs, we also recognize that this situation requires people to attend to personal and family social emotional needs as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools has been working hard to address important inquiries from students, team members, and parents about our next steps. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that these include questions about supporting our most vulnerable learners, providing meals for children in our community, and how younger students might participate in online learning experiences. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are also looking at how we will address grading and report cards, course credits, transcripts and college applications, and the meaningful end of the year events like prom and graduation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in time we will have answers to these questions and others. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked everyone for their patience and understanding as we tackle the issues within our learning community and continue to adapt to those matters beyond our control.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that anticipating that our schools may be closed for a longer duration, the Elizabeth Public Schools is cancelling plans to observe Spring recess. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Board will be considering tonight a revision to the school calendar to continue to hold school Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup> in order to continue to support our students with consistency. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Easter Recess will be observed on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> and Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and E-remote learning will not take place on these two days in observance of the holiday.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our instructional team is working on the development of Phase 2 of a long-term E-remote learning plan. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the program has been in development for the past two weeks and will launch on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Parents of students in Preschool through Grade 2 and students with disabilities in Grades PreK to 12 will receive packets in the mail that include instructional activities for students to complete while E-remote learning is in progress. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that EPS educators, instructional directors, supervisors, and instructional coaches have led this important transition and have committed tremendous time and energy to organize course content and design professional development sessions to help enhance remote learning and communication between teachers and families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that next week our educators will participate in professional development sessions about the online platforms that will be used by teachers to collaborate with colleagues and engage with students remotely as we build on our remote learning program to provide opportunities for virtual contact with classmates and teacher, directed instruction from teacher, and independent work activities to supplement teacher instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that they are working to address any questions or concerns regarding student laptops. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the Grab and Go Breakfast and Lunch Program offered at seven sites throughout the district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked everyone for their support as we navigate these challenging times together and to stay safe and be well.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked the Superintendent.

Board President Barbosa presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the meeting is open for public comment. At this time the Secretary of the Board will read into the record all the emails that have been submitted up to the start of the meeting. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration.”

Mr. Kennedy read the email received from Maria Lorenz:

“Good Evening, I want address the presentation the Ms. Hugelmeyer did on school preparedness. In this presentation it was stated that “all parent communications will be conducted by the Case Manager routinely” I just heard from my case manager after 3 weeks, March 24th I heard from her supervisor to cancel an IEP meeting we should have had in February. It is April I still have no invite to the IEP meeting. The IEP Meeting was originally cancelled because the district was ill prepared to bring in an evaluator who evaluated my child because the individual doesn’t work Fridays. This is not an excuse to not have all members present. Regardless of the lies the Superintendent and the Administration is telling this board I want to advise you of some interesting statistics. Like the technology survey the district did, I also conducted a special education survey to verify what we were all told by Ms. Hugelmeyer and what is happening within special education. 40 parents responded to this survey which represents 1% of 3,668 students overall within special education. The results are that: • 100% heard from their teachers • 72.5% heard from their case manager in 1st week; 7.5% on 2nd and 20% have not heard from their case manager at all • 82.5% heard from their speech OT & PT; 10% have NOT heard from the therapists • 17.5% do not feel they have sufficient support and resources • 12.5% are not happy with how this remote e-learning situation is being handled. Additionally, through comments it appears the district struggles with parents that are non-english speakers. There were several concerns expressed within the comments. I want to reiterate that this is just 1% response. Imagine if this was sent to all special education parents? This is just a small representation of the truth and struggles of what you as a Board do not want to acknowledge. I am astounded at how Ms. Hugelmeyer can present the board with a plan that lies to and fails the parents. It is my hope you can hold the administration and the superintendent accountable as is your duty. Additionally, through comments parents expressed their concerns regarding language barriers. The districts presentation noted that “Once school re-opens we will assess the regression level if any and compensatory will be provided as needed”. It appears the “we” is the school district solely without much regard for the parent. I want to take this opportunity today to allow Ms. Hugelmeyer a chance to respond and clarify exactly who “we” is? It was also presented that “all contracted provider communications will be inducted via email and phone routinely”. I just received my first call after I contacted the state school officials on the negligence of this school district. I also want the superintendent to clarify whom should have access to the “SEL” modules with pre recorded sessions for emotional regulation? Is that parents with children with emotional regulation issues? I would like clarification for the public from the superintendent since this was what she presented and it should be clear since her presentation leaves much to be questioned and clarified. I am happy to share with the board the questions that were asked and the statistics on the responses.”

Mr. Kennedy read the email received from Michelle Santos:

“Hello everyone. My name is Michelle Santos and I am a special needs mom. As I am sure a lot of parents are struggling but it is extremely hard for us. My question is since so many are doing it is there any way that speech/OT therapy can be done thru telehealth or that type of platform. Packets and rethink is not cutting it when it comes to therapy and since this looks like this is going to last more than 4 weeks what are the districts plans? Thank you.”

Mr. Kennedy read the email received from Maria Echavarria:

“I want to know if the district is installing small cell technologies or small cell sites in or around schools? I hope everyone knows the 1st time I heard about coronavirus was a week after we won in Trenton NJ to keep our religious exemptions. I wonder if people have seen the TED TALK with Bill Gates talking about depopulation through vaccines. Has anyone heard how fast clinical trials has started? Has anyone seen EVENT 201 on YouTube? I don't know why Johnson and Johnson is involved in anything as their products kill. Steven Sweeney said it on channel 12 news after he lost to take away our rights, "we're ready to go to war over this." People need to wake

up to the dangers of vaccines and 5G. EVERYONE NEEDS TO RESEARCH. During this time as we're all in quarantine stop installing small cell technologies or small cell sites. Thank you.”

Mr. Kennedy read the email received from Don Lorenz:

“Good Evening! My name is Donald Lorenz resident of Elizabeth NJ. I was present about 4 weeks ago when the superintendent did the presentation of remote learning for children. I understand the seriousness of the COVID virus world wide and the need to be home. Fortunately, I have the option to work remotely from home. As a professional, I am experienced with BIA (Business Impact Analysis) and dealing with recovery, contingency planning, training and exercises to maintain the plan. It was obvious from the first week of remote learning The district was clearly not prepared for the massive amount of students connecting online. Week 4 here we are still experiencing connection issues work arounds for equipment failure (laptop). My son has an IEP he was sent home with laptop and charger. There was no:

1. parent/ student information on how to login into and navigate the system. The first 2 weeks was a total loss. A YouTube video or step by step instructions on how to access the work would have been helpful.
2. My child was overwhelmed with the tasks that were assigned. There was no modification of assignments. I want to know what directive special services gave staff regarding IEP and modifications? We would end up submitting work around 8pm or 9pm at night. This lead to emotional deregulation, resistance and resentment in doing any future school work.
3. Laptop - laptop he brought home was in bad shape. Keyboard on the laptop does not work and we had to connect an external keyboard to make it work.

Teacher was very good in communicating with us. However we did not hear from the CST team and others for support for three weeks. This is unacceptable my wife had to reach out to the state and county. The response was denial of allegations yet there is no outreach to resolve our concerns from special services or the superintendent. Do you find this anyway to treat active and concerned parents?

Ideas to consider:

1. Keep the work to a appropriate levels and modify the IEP. Parents now have triple duty of provider/parent and now teacher and therapist.
2. Have teachers create online videos.
3. One line web video chat - Since we started this program many companies such as Webex and other are offering access to many schools for class room participation.
4. More communication for parents and CST team. Three page document with happy / sad face does not cut it in the real world. We can draw sad faces all day and this will not help make any progress and stop any regression.

Remember our children are working to check off your boxes of things to do. They are not learning they are doing. In your e remote learning there is no interactive discussions so when you think of celebrating autism awareness remember the parents that are left behind because of language barriers, those with broken laptops and those trying to check off the box so you can celebrate. Any questions please contact me [Donald.Lorenz@outlook.com](mailto:Donald.Lorenz@outlook.com) - 103 Murray Street, Elizabeth, nj.”

Since there were no other emails received, Mrs. Barbosa closed this portion of the meeting.

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

#### Secretary/Treasurer’s Report for the Month of February 2020

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa added the report to the agenda.

#### Personnel Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa added the report to the agenda.

## Authorizations Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that this is for the revised 2019-2020 School Calendar. Mrs. Barbosa stated that Easter Recess will be observed on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> and Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and E-remote learning will not take place on these two days in observance of the holiday.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the importance of the changes to the 2019-2020 School Calendar in order to continue to provide continuity to all of our children during this very difficult time. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that March 16<sup>th</sup> was the last day our children were in our schools receiving instruction from their teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that since March 17<sup>th</sup> we have been closed and our teachers have been online supporting the students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we felt this upcoming week, considering we are still in a shelter in place essentially, it was important that we continue to provide the same level of attention to our children by providing them with the critical instruction as opposed to being closed completely for an entire week and then expecting our children to log back on after such a long time to continue their instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that those are the changes in which she recommended a change in the school calendar in order for us to continue to support our children as best possible.

Mrs. Barbosa added the report to the agenda.

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

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa added the report to the agenda.

## Claims List

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa added the Claims List to the agenda.

Mrs. Barbosa asked for a motion to approve the following items on the agenda:

## Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of February 2020

### Personnel Report

### Authorizations Report

### Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers

### Claims List

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, that the above be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is so critical that everyone completes the U.S. Census at this time. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the U.S. Census was launched on April 1<sup>st</sup> and we have added the U.S. Census as a link on our students' computer in order to help our parents be able to complete it. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is going to serve as a very important civic lesson for all of our children and we encourage our students to participate. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this will serve as an extra credit activity. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for the elementary students in grade three the teachers will guide the parents and in grades four and five which are departmentalized our language arts and social studies teachers will assist. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our middle school and high school social studies teachers will assist and have these links added to their classes so that we are able to ensure full participation by all of our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is

critical and important and as a daily reminder urging for the completion of this very important task. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked everyone and stated that she looks forward to continue to communicate with all of our families district-wide.

Mrs. Barbosa wished everyone a blessed Passover and Easter. Mrs. Barbosa stated this will be our last communication before then and that we are out there and to reach out. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is important to our special needs parents to please keep on eye out for the form to complete it. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she can't stress enough to stay home and stay safe. Mrs. Barbosa thanked all of our essential personnel who have to go out and work every day.

Mrs. Hernandez stated that she would like to echo the comments of the Board members from earlier. Mrs. Hernandez expressed her gratitude that occupies every corner of her heart for all of our families, students, teachers, staff, and administration for all of their patience, strength, hard work, and dedication. Mrs. Hernandez stated that it is really one day at a time getting stronger together and we will get through this. Mrs. Hernandez stated that we need to keep going, conversations are not cancelled, learning is not cancelled, love is not cancelled, and more importantly hope is not cancelled. Mrs. Hernandez stated that we are here and we absolutely love you all and care for you all.

Ms. Bathelus commented that all of us are in the same boat, thinking the same, feeling the same as Board member Nathalie Hernandez just mentioned. Ms. Bathelus stated that we are so grateful and thankful to everyone who has put their hands together to assist in every way. Ms. Bathelus stated that she did not know that the nursing supplies were donated to the County to assist when we as a City, County, and State are all coming together. Ms. Bathelus stated that as Mrs. Hernandez stated love is not cancelled, hope is not cancelled and this is a time for us to come together and be stronger than ever. Ms. Bathelus stated that we are one New Jersey and one family and we are going to use this time to make sure that we, the human race, will be good and be able to stand and survive this. Ms. Bathelus stated that when she goes outside and sees what we have to wear and go through it saddens her heart but she knows that there is hope on the other side. Ms. Bathelus stated that we are going to get through this as long as we are staying together. Ms. Bathelus stated that we appreciate the support that the parents have given us so far, that the administrators have given so far, and thanked everyone. Ms. Bathelus thanked everyone for being selfless and stated that one thing that she loves is when people are selfless. Ms. Bathelus stated that we appreciate you being able to come out and just lend a helping hand and be there. Ms. Bathelus stated that today is Board member Nathalie Hernandez's birthday and on her birthday she can't celebrate the way she would like to. Ms. Bathelus stated that we appreciate Nathalie Hernandez and celebrate her life. Ms. Bathelus stated that Nathalie Hernandez is sacrificing and being on this call because she really does love our children. Ms. Bathelus stated that this is what we do and who we are. Ms. Bathelus stated that Board member Maria Carvalho says all the time that as Board members we give ourselves, give our lives, and give our time and take away time from our families and ourselves to be here to help our 29,000 students and our 5,000 and growing team members. Ms. Bathelus stated that we love you, be safe, and we will come together again. Ms. Bathelus stated that when we do come together again it is going to be amazing to share these stories with one another but for now just be safe and God Bless.

Mr. Neron stated that, on behalf of his family, we love you and we are going to get through this by love and understanding what is really important during these times. Mr. Neron stated that we live a life where we see so much meaning in things that are meaningless. Mr. Neron stated that at this point in time this is an opportunity for us to really see what is important. Mr. Neron stated that, as we heard tonight, a lot of things are not cancelled and please take the time now that you are able to spend with your families, able to connect with your children, and appreciate this time. Mr. Neron stated that this is a time that is not just unique to the State of New Jersey but around the world where we are able to really focus on the important things in life and what God is providing us with, which is life and the ability to watch the sun set and watch the sun rise. Mr. Neron stated that we need to focus on what is really important in your life. Mr. Neron stated that we are going

to get through this and we can do this. Mr. Neron thanked all of the staff, administrators, and the parents who are now sitting in the shoes of the teachers. Mr. Neron stated that to all of the people who are impacted by this and to all of those who have lost loved ones our hearts and prayers and love go out to you and may God comfort you and be with you at this time for peace and comfort. Mr. Neron stated that we are here as a family and we are here with you and we will get through this. Mr. Neron thanked everyone for all they have done and may God Bless you. Mr. Neron wished Board member Hernandez a happy birthday.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that no one was prepared for what is going on in the world today and we are doing our very best. Mrs. Carvalho thanked everyone at the Elizabeth Board of Education for going above and beyond. Mrs. Carvalho stated that our teachers are getting up early and communicating with our children, our food service workers are coming in everyday and sacrificing their life to do what they do to make sure our children get their food, our warehouse staff that no one ever sees are loading the shelves to make sure our children get their food, our nurses who are at Kean University serving. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she also doesn't want to forget the things we do every month and recognized the staff who are retiring after serving the district for so many years. Mrs. Carvalho stated that one of the retirees is Rebecca Aiello who taught her, her husband, and her son, and that they are blessed to all be a product of Elizabeth. Mrs. Carvalho stated that they are proud to have these people who are retiring from the district and we can't forget what they have done for all of us and thanked them for their service. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we can't forget that we are in a time where we are all home for a purpose in order for us to all remain safe. Mrs. Carvalho stated that to please keep your social distance and stay safe so that we can get back to normal as soon as possible. Mrs. Carvalho stated that they are going to be here for every one of you and together we will get through this because there is no one stronger than the people who live in Elizabeth. Mrs. Carvalho thanked all of the parents who are home and doing their best to maintain and keep the school system alive and for listening to the teachers and the advice they are giving to you. Mrs. Carvalho wished Board member Hernandez a happy birthday.

Mr. Jacobs stated that we all expressed our thankfulness to our Elizabeth Board of Education administration which has gone above and beyond. Mr. Jacobs echoed all of the sentiments of his fellow Board members as they said it all. Mr. Jacobs offered condolences for the teachers that we have lost and to Elizabeth residents who have lost their life in this terrible pandemic. Mr. Jacobs stated that if you have a mask, please wear your mask and please stay home. Mr. Jacobs stated that we need to flatten the curve by wearing the mask, practicing our social distancing, and staying home as much as possible. Mr. Jacobs stated that we will get through this all together. Mr. Jacobs wished Board member Hernandez a happy birthday.

Mrs. Pestana echoed the sentiments of her fellow Board members and the gratitude for our teacher, administrators, directors, and our seven nurses who are volunteering at Kean University. Mrs. Pestana stated that we couldn't have gotten through fifteen days of remote learning if it wasn't for each and every one who has a role in our school district and thanked everyone from the bottom of her heart. Mrs. Pestana stated that we will be taking this one day at a time and hoping for the best.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that each morning she thinks about what she is going to do with her children and how they are going to get through the day. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she knows she is not alone and there are parents that feel the same way. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we just have to get through this, whether we have a great day or have a more difficult day. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we take it one day at a time. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she walks through her door to the outside and sees very few people out and it's scary. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she can't sit here and tell you that she knows what is going to happen in a week or a month but what she knows is that we will do everything in our power to help keep our children learning and to help keep our children engaged in their work. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she is asking for the help of all of the parents because now it is absolutely a team effort with our teachers and our parents at home. Mrs. Barbosa stated to the



parents to please don't feel alone and if you need help to email your teacher. Mrs. Barbosa stated that to let us know and we will try to help in any way that we can.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she respectfully applauds Mrs. Barbosa as the President of the Board for the year 2020. Ms. Bathelus stated that Mrs. Barbosa took on the position open-minded and open-hearted with everyone wanting to make sure that all of the Board members were on the same playing field. Ms. Bathelus stated that Mrs. Barbosa wanted all of us to be a team and be team players. Ms. Bathelus stated that Mrs. Barbosa wanted to make sure that all of our voices were heard and she has done a tremendous job. Ms. Bathelus stated that Mr. Neron, Mrs. Carvalho, Mrs. Pestana, and she has served as president and none of us have gone through the situation that you are going through right now. Ms. Bathelus stated that she, along with her fellow Board members, applaud Mrs. Barbosa for the work that she is doing, for the love she has for the students, and for always communicating with the Board members even if it is late at night with all that she wants to say to make sure that we are all in the loop. Ms. Bathelus thanked Board President Barbosa for being selfless and doing this.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked Ms. Bathelus for her comments and stated that she stands here as Board President this year with obstacles that are very difficult. Mrs. Barbosa stated that just like anything we face it together. Mrs. Barbosa stated that if we do something wrong today, we will fix it tomorrow. Mrs. Barbosa stated to everyone that you are strong, tough, loved, you are not alone, you are super supported, you are amazing, you are brave, you are our Elizabeth parents, you are our Elizabeth teachers, you are our students, and you are the Elizabeth Public Schools fully hearted.

On a motion by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Chevres, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

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