

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
(Official)

May 6, 2021  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education and Public Hearing on the Budget was called on May 6, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07207. The Meeting will be open to the public in person however, in light of the public health emergency caused by Coronavirus the public will be required to follow all universal precautions including masks, temperature monitoring, visitor Covid monitoring sign-in log and social distancing. Space will be limited based on guidelines regarding social distancing and room capacity. Voice conferencing technology for the Thursday, May 6, 2021 Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. will continue to be available to the public at <https://www.facebook.com/epsnj> and <https://www.youtube.com/user/epschools>.

Board President Jerry Jacobs presented the following statement at 6:46 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a Public Hearing on the Budget for the school year beginning July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. 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 Monday, May 3, 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.

We are here this evening to hear the public express their views regarding the proposed 2021-2022 budget, in accordance with New Jersey Statute 18A:22-13, and I quote, ‘On the date and at the time and place so fixed, the Board of School Estimate or the Board of Education, as the case may be, shall hold such public hearing at which time the taxpayers and other interested persons shall have an opportunity to present objections and to be heard with respect to said budget and the amounts of money necessary to be appropriated and the various items and purposes for which the same are to be appropriated for the use of public schools in the district for the ensuing school year.’

There will be a public portion for those wishing to speak for or against the budget. Participants for the public portion may sign in up to the start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. There will also be an online public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the online 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 the budget to the Secretary of the Board at [kennedha@epsnj.org](mailto: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 three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 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 (arr. 6:47 p.m.), Charlene Bathelus (via online platform), Maria Carvalho, Iliana Chevres, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron (arr. 7:45 p.m.), Stephanie Pestana, Jerry Jacobs – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch-Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedenio, Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, and Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq., DeCotiis, FitzPatrick and Cole, LLP, were present. Members of the community were present in-person and via an online platform.

Pledge of Allegiance  
National Anthem

Mr. Jacobs stated that we are here tonight for the 2021-2022 public hearing on the budget. Mr. Jacobs stated that he is so excited about this budget because it represents so much opportunity for our district and our schools. Mr. Jacobs stated that the Superintendent and staff have done an excellent job in preparing this budget. Mr. Jacobs stated that the Superintendent is presenting a fully balanced budget that addresses some long-standing concerns in the district. Mr. Jacobs stated that we can be grateful for our congressional leaders in Washington, President Biden, and the Democrats for passing the CARES Act to make these much needed improvements in our schools as we battle with this pandemic.

Board President Jerry Jacobs introduced Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer to present the 2021-2022 School Year Budget of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Covid-19 pandemic has taken a massive toll on our greater community and the impact of the pandemic will certainly be felt for many years to come. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the pandemic heightened access and learning inequities among our underserved population. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we worked with urgency to provide access and support to our students through internet access and through our commitment to our students because we care and have a very special connection with all of them and all of our team members.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer welcomed everyone to the presentation of the Public Hearing for the proposed 2021-2022 School Year Budget of the Elizabeth Board of Education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the Board of Education for their countless hours of meeting to discuss the development of this budget and for sharing the priorities of our community. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is a team effort with both our central office and schools and our Board of Education in the development of this budget.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the overview of the district and stated that we are currently the second largest district in New Jersey servicing 28,148 students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have 37 schools including 3 early childhood centers, 20 neighborhood schools, 6 magnet schools, and 8 high schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we serve 20% English language learners, 10.06% special education students, 1.15% students who are both special education and English language learners, .68% homeless, 67.9% general education students, and .79% of our students are homeless. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the ethnicity is 73.4% Hispanic, 17.0% Black, 7.6% White, 1.8% Asian, and 0.2% other. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that 79.8% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have 4,074 team members. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the

enrollment has grown by 4,757 students in the past ten years from 23,391 students in 2011-2012 school year to 28,148 students for the 2020-2021 school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the enrollment trends for each year from 2011-2012 through 2020-2021 for the total population, special education, English language learners, and high school. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there was a 3% decrease in the total population this past year due to Covid-19. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there was a 20% increase in the total population over the past ten years.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked how we define every child achieving excellence and stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools equity goal is that we believe all students can learn and achieve at high levels regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, neighborhood, household income, or home language. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we believe teachers make a positive difference in student achievement and teachers will prepare all students for success in college, career, and our technological global society. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we believe effective leaders demonstrate unwavering commitment to high levels of achievement for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that parents and caregivers are both valued partners and active participants in their children's learning and a shared sense of mutual responsibility for learning is the foundation for family involvement to ensure student success. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we believe every member of the Elizabeth Public Schools team has a responsibility in producing and supporting high levels of achievement for all students.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the budget highlights from the 2020-2021 school year including that the district implemented E-remote learning virtual instruction platform, hosted parent virtual academy workshops, served more than 2.5 million meals to families through Grab-n-Go Breakfast/Lunch Program, provided laptops for all students and instructional staff, provided free internet connectivity to students in need, provided PPE for students and employees, purchased 4,000 air purifiers for classrooms and offices, and provided EPS employees access to Covid-19 vaccines.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the goals for the 2021-2022 budget and stated that the goals include nurturing students' social and emotional development and overall well-being, strengthening educational access and opportunities for all students in our diverse community, and empowering students to become lifelong contributors of our community. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide thanking Governor Murphy for the increase in state aid. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the 2021-2022 budget highlights including the opening of the district's eighth high school for ninth and tenth grade students which is an additional 288 seats for a cost of \$2,900,000., acquisition of Our Lady of Fatima School Annex for an additional 14 classrooms for grades 2 and 3 to assist School Nos. 15 and 25 for a cost of \$3,400,000., 87 new certified and non-certified positions for a cost of \$7,305,000., and acquisition of the property adjacent to Hamilton Preparatory Academy for an additional 200 seats for 2022-2023 at a cost of \$500,000.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next area focuses on our financials, our drivers, and our programs and services. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated the process for the development of the 2021-2022 budget had five phases. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first phase was gathering input from stakeholders. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the second phase was determining the needs of the organization based on the October 15th ASSA enrollment data and then we created a class-size analysis. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the third phase was to determine priorities and adjust the budget and included face to face meetings with all principals, review of all curriculum inventories and requests, face to face meetings with all instructional and operational directors, and a comparative analysis of expenditures of 2020-2021 vs. proposed budgets. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the fourth phase was the budget review process including line by line department budget review, allocation of funds within the school-based budgets based on enrollments, programs, and equitable need, review by financial consultant, collaboration with

and review by EBOE Finance Committee. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the last phase is where we are now, the Budget Hearing.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. to present the financials.

Mr. Kennedy stated that tonight he is presenting the financials for the 2021-2022 School Year Budget. Mr. Kennedy stated that the vast majority of the revenue will come from New Jersey State Aid, \$503,237,026., which is 84.4% of our revenue. Mr. Kennedy stated that the next largest source of our revenue will come from the local Elizabeth taxpayer, \$59,813,124., which is 10.0% of our budget, federal aid is \$19,858,758., which is 3.3%, balance appropriation is \$12,725,637., which is 2.1%, and miscellaneous revenue is \$1,041,428., which is .2% for a total budget of \$596,675,973. Mr. Kennedy stated that there is \$0 debt service. Mr. Kennedy stated that our budget expenditures include \$459,327,074. for instruction which is 76.9%, of our total budget, \$20,024,929. for administration which is 3.4%, \$56,561,866. for operation and maintenance of plant which is 9.5%, \$60,762,104. for other which includes community services, employee benefits, transportation, and capital outlay which is 10.2% of our budget. Mr. Kennedy stated that the 2021-2022 comparative per pupil cost is \$17,823. per student and includes \$10,818. for classroom instruction, \$72. for equipment costs, community services and special schools, \$2,599. for cleaning, repair, and maintenance of our schools, plant and property, \$142. for athletics and extracurricular activities, \$2,656. for support services including health, guidance, child study teams, library, and professional development, and \$1,423. for central administration, school administration, business services, human resources, telephone and postage. Mr. Kennedy stated that the State of New Jersey regional administration cost per student is \$2,252. and here in Elizabeth the cost for our administration is \$1,536. per student. Mr. Kennedy stated that the 2021-2022 budget and tax levy proposed is in accordance with the rules and regulations as promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Education. Mr. Kennedy stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools prepares its budget following instructions incorporated into the Budget Guidelines and Electronic Collection Manual published by the NJDOE Office of Finance. Mr. Kennedy stated that the instructions ensure that budgets and information submitted for approval to the Executive County Superintendent and Business Administrator are complete and correct.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mr. Kennedy for his presentation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next area of the 2021-2022 budget presentation is our programs and services. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the NJ Department of Education has budget development priorities including maintaining our school system, building professionalism/resources, raising standards and expanding opportunities, and protecting our investments.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first budget development priority is maintaining our school system and the budget goals for maintaining our school system include adequate staffing for instruction, safe and caring initiatives, transportation, home and school relationships, academic safety nets, athletic and co-curricular activities, student assessment, and academic programs and partnerships. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the teacher to pupil ratio for grade levels and stated that the teacher to pupil ratio is 1:19 for grades K-5 and 1:22 for grades 6-8 and 1:20 for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the 2021-2022 budget includes an increase of 87 new certified and non-certified positions.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the safe and caring initiatives including contracted services for nursing, speech, occupational therapy and physical therapy, chief medical inspector, behavioral services, and student drug screenings. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the safe and caring initiatives include substance abuse coordinator services, investigators and school security guard services, school guidance counselor services, social

worker services, school nursing services, child study team services, American Red Cross CPR training, before school breakfast programs, high school Saturday programs, Positive Behavior Supports in Schools (PBSIS) supports, Recovery High School tuition and transportation, and alternative education programs for at-risk learners. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the impact of the CDC guidelines for 6 feet social distancing on buses and stated that the transportation eligibility is 2.0 miles and beyond for students in grades PreK-8 students, 2.5 miles and beyond for students in grades 9-12, and students with transportation in their IEP. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the cost of transportation increased from \$19.8 million to \$29.7 million.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the home and school relationship and stated that this includes community services; Welcome Centers for centralized registration; high school registration for after school, Saturday, and summer; community attendance liaisons; student handbooks and parent handbooks; communication materials and brochures designed to promote school and district programs available in multiple languages; high school information sessions; community education program; Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Seminars; school events including National Honor Society, Back to School Nights; Math/Science/Literacy Nights, and awards ceremonies. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the academic safety nets and stated that the summer academics include promotion/retention program for grades K-8; summer literacy interventions program; summer remediation and advanced credit for grades 9-12; Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC); home instruction services; Reading is Essential to Adolescent Development (READ) for grades K-3; Algebraic Thinking for grades 6-8; Developing Mathematical Understanding for grades 4-5; recreation program for special education; extended school year (ESY) for students with disabilities PreK to age 21; and summer arts enrichment for grades K-11. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the academic safety net programs for students with disabilities including the opening of two new self-contained autism classrooms; TouchMath for grades K-8; Edmark for autism, mild cognitive, and multiple disabilities; 504 Plan Related Services; extended school year for students with disabilities PreK to age 21; contracted services for nursing, speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and behavioral services; Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Services; Rethink; and Union County Educational Services Commission Transition Partnership.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the academic safety nets for before and after school and academic interventions and stated that they include before school and after school basic skills and enrichment programs; after school enrichment program for grades K-8; Saturday recreation program for students with disabilities; after school clubs for high school students; attendance recovery program for high school students on Saturday; and graduation rate improvement program (GRIP) for high school students on Saturday. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the academic interventions include Agile Minds: Mathematics for 8<sup>th</sup> grade; Response to Intervention (RTI); Hispanics Inspiring Students Performance and Achievement (HISPA) role model program for grades 6-8; SONDAY multisensory interventions; Orton Gillingham; and Leveled Literacy Interventions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the academic interventions include Khan Academy at no cost; ST Math for grades K-5 for all students; SuccessMaker for reading and mathematics for grades K-8 for general education, bilingual in class support, bilingual math self-contained, and special education; and Achieve 3000 for ELA for grades K-8 in self-contained bilingual classrooms. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs for bilingual students include self-contained bilingual and ESL services, native language materials, transition services, bilingual magnet program for grades 4-8 (Spanish), Point of Entry for grades 9-12, and Esperanza Literacy Intervention. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that home instruction includes contracted providers, hospital home instruction, and after school home instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeyer

presented a PowerPoint slide showing the athletic and co-curricular activities including a complete array of clubs and activities, athletic summer camps, intermural sports for grades 6-8, athletic programs for grades 9-12, summer band camp for grades 9-12, New Jersey State Police Top Physical Challenge, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Health Bee, Special Olympics, Saturday and Summer Recreation Program, and T. Bowles Play 60. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the student assessments and stated that it includes the High School Graduation Appeals Portfolios, State Testing Program for NJ Student Learning Assessment (NJ SLA), Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Evaluacion del Desarrollo (EDL), College Board Assessments, Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Advanced Placement (AP), PreK IDEA Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT), New Entrant Testing for English Language Learners, translation services for student assessments, and Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VBMAPP) for students with disabilities. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the academic programs and partnerships include a refurbishment of instructional materials in grades K-12 including general education, bilingual education, and special education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the technology in maintaining our schools and stated that the technology includes Information Technology (IT) Technicians, internal and external communications for the e-mail system, phone system, robo-call system (Blackboard APP Connect), technology training, continued maintenance of technology resources at the district and school level including Microsoft Translator, computer literacy teachers, computer literacy curricula writing, digital literacy for grades 3-4, and introduction to coding for grade 5.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next budget development priority is our programs and services including raising standards and expanding opportunities. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the resources for closing the achievement gap and stated that it includes an office of equity, guidance counselor to track and monitor out-of-district students, leveled curricular materials, SchoolNet data system, data analyst to identify strengths and weaknesses of minority populations, culturally relevant supplement for curricular materials, consultants to examine curriculum of inclusion, 15-hour Sheltered Instruction Module for all instructors, summer transition program before 9th grade, Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI) partnership, partnership with Harvard University – Reimagining Integration: Diverse and Equitable Schools (RIDES), and Growth Mindset. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the resources to enhance technology standards for students and teachers and stated that the partnerships for grades 9-12 include the National Academy Foundation and Global Logistics/Federal Express; industry certification exams for engineering and Global Logistic exams; National Academy Foundation program for Be Future Ready: Academy of Information Technology and Project Lead the Way; and structured learning experiences – advisors and internships including United Way of Greater Union County, ShipCo, automotive technology, print services, health sciences, cosmetology and barbering, and commercial foods.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the career and college readiness programs and stated that they include International Baccalaureate for grades K-8, Naviance for College and Career Readiness for grades 9-12, Dual Enrollment Partnerships with Kean University, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), New Jersey City University, Middlesex County Community College (MCCC), and New Jersey Institute of Technology for grades 9-12, transition program for students with disabilities, college visits, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) for grades 6-12 and adding J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy in 2021-2022. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the visual and performing arts including the Teen Arts Program, summer arts institute, music theater orchestra, high school performing arts program after school, Disney Musicals in Schools, HBO partnership, and Visual Arts Center of New Jersey.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the building professional resources including mentoring first-year teachers, new teacher training, new teacher network induction programs, Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal, content area trainings (including bilingual and special education), Harassment Intimidation and Bullying (HIB), language arts literacy training for K-3 with on-site coaching, mathematics training for grades K-8 and high school Algebra I Advanced and Algebra II with on-site coaching, training for librarians on literacy instruction, safety and security of our schools, personalized learning environments and differentiating instruction, Handle with Care, Global Compliance Network Professional Development System, administrators' institute, and district professional development days.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide about protecting our investments and stated that the capital and maintenance projects include asphalt replacement at 2 schools, repoint on brick on main building at 1 school, add bathrooms in kindergarten classrooms at 2 schools, replace gym ceiling at 1 school, replace cold water main at 1 school, convert nursing room to conference room at 1 school, convert classrooms at 3 schools, replace and or install new doors at 3 schools, replace gym floors at 3 schools, replace greenhouse glass room at 1 school, additional heat in the weight room at 1 school, HVAC installation at 3 schools, paint entire building at 2 schools, paint classrooms at 3 schools, roof replacement at 9 schools, ShopRite/backing room at 1 school, replace hot and cold water lines in tunnel at 1 school, exterior wall weatherproofing at 1 school, and build black box theater space at 1 school.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented PowerPoint slides showing the accomplishments of our district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the district reopened all schools for in-person learning for students in all grade levels. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools was recognized as a 2021 best community for music education by the NAMM Foundation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 51 and Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy were each named a 2021 NJ School of Character. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the U.S. News and World Report 2021 Best U.S. High Schools Rankings include Elizabeth High School Frank J. Cicarell Academy ranked No. 204 in the U.S. and No. 13 in N.J. and Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy ranked No. 1,143 in U.S. and No. 49 in N.J. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public School and Kean University's Be the Change partnered to help families in need during the pandemic and provided 70 community families with meals in accordance with CDC guidelines, delivered toys, clothes, and essential items, and provided turkeys to the community for Thanksgiving. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that EPS students participated in the virtual environmental day. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the EHS varsity cheerleaders earned first place in ImpAct Cheer and Dance Competition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy's Twelfth Night/Merchant of Venice received 11 Montclair State University theater Night Awards Nominations for production and individual nominations. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that high school student Isabella Santos was the first Elizabeth wrestler to win the NJSIAA Girls State Wrestling Championship. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth Athletic Director Bartolomeo Candelino was inducted into the NJSCA Coaches Hall of Fame. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that EPS teachers Belinda Jimenez and Jairo Labrador earned the Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year and Physical Activity Champion Awards from NJ Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Marie Noonan was named School Nurse of the Year by the Union County School Nurses Association. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Jahari Jacobs was named the 2021 New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom (NJAITC) Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy students Lucy Gomez and Nick Mayancela performed at the New Jersey State Solo and Ensemble Festival. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth High School Frank J. Cicarell Academy Band Director Wayne Dillon was selected as the adjudicator of the Inaugural New

Jersey State Solo and Ensemble Festival. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth High School Frank J. Cicarell Academy student Wilmary Figuereo was named a Coca-Cola Scholar Semifinalist by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools responded to the global pandemic with global instruction providing instruction on its virtual learning platform to students staying in 14 different countries spanning four continents. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy student Lucielle O'Donnell earned honorable mention in the 19<sup>th</sup> Young Playwright's Competition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the many colleges and universities the graduates of the Class of 2021 will be attending.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Board of Education and Central Office believe in an open and transparent budget process, all Board of Education meetings are open to the public, and agendas and meeting minutes are available at [www.epsnj.org](http://www.epsnj.org). Copies of the tentative 2021-2022 budget are on file at the Board of Education Mitchell Building, 500 North Broad Street, and a copy of the proposed budget is posted online at the district's website, [www.epsnj.org](http://www.epsnj.org)."

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the Board of Education for their hard work, dedication, and support for our district working alongside and rolling up their sleeves in order to ensure that we have a budget that covers the needs of all of our children from kindergarten through high school. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this concludes the budget presentation.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, ESSER II Fund, American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide on the ESSER Fund and stated that the purpose is to prevent, prepare and respond to Covid-19 including the development of strategies and implementing public health protocols including to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with CDC guidance for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the period of availability is from March 13, 2020 to September 30, 2022. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that \$310,371,213 million was dedicated to K-12 education to New Jersey delivered to local school districts based on the Title I funding formula. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools received \$7,592,750. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the use of funds including WiFi access for students, devices for educational interaction, stipends for nurses administering Covid-19 vaccines to the community, professional services for technology, professional services for ServPro, Personal Protect Equipment (PPE) including masks, isolation gowns, eye goggles, latex gloves, hand sanitizers, antiseptic wipes, cleaning supplies, Covid signage, acrylic dividers for all security stations, non-public school allocation for devices and PPE, headsets for all K-12 students for ACCESS assessment, headsets for all K-8 students for September 2021, online digital calculator licenses, facial recognition temperature readers and mask detectors, electrostatic backpack sprayers, webcams for classroom computers, UV disinfectant system for bathrooms, non-contact thermometers, and Motorola radios for multiple entrances.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide for the ESSER II background information and stated that the purpose is to support students, teachers, and schools during this historic pandemic. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the period of availability is from March 13, 2020 to September 30, 2023. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that \$1.2 billion will be dedicated to K-12 education to New Jersey delivered to local districts based on the Title I funding formula. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools will receive \$28,568,451. in ESSER II funds and in addition, \$1,833,378 for Learning Acceleration and \$147,496. for Mental Health Supports and Services. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the allowable use of funds including to coordinate emergency response, ensure preparedness and coordination,



purchase cleaning supplies, educational technology, mental health supports, supplemental learning, added needs of at-risk population, coordinate long-term closures, addressing needs of individual schools, professional development, ESSA, IDEA (special education), Perkins (career and technical education), McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, other activities for continuity of services, address learning loss, school facility repairs and improvements, and improving air quality. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of the ESSER II Funds including improving air quality for \$12,083,350 for portable air purifiers at all facilities, bipolar ionization air purifiers for gymnasium and auditorium, univentilator replacement and ventilation upgrade at Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5, Toussaint L'Ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6, Hamilton Preparatory Academy, and Thomas Edison Career and Technical Academy. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for educational technology for \$10,721,779 including viewsonic viewboards, HP mini desktop computers, wireless keyboard and mouse, and student laptops. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for learning loss for general education, bilingual, and special needs in class support including summer programs for K-12 students, intervention and academic support for K-12, and added needs of at-risk population. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for IDEA (special education) including a social skills program and supporting academic growth program for two years for K-8 and 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for supplemental learning for a youth athletics summer program for 3 years for grades 1-8. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for mental health and support services for displaced youth and families for two years. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for the Perkins (career and technical education) for two years for a work-based learning afterschool program and the CTE tutoring afterschool program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for the learning acceleration academic enrichment for students including STEM enrichment afterschool program for grades K-12 for two years and the three year STEM Enrichment Summer Program for grades 4-12 for computer programming and chess; the Arts for a two year program for the Quaver classroom music program for grades K-8 for social and emotional skill development; and Learning Ecosystems for student growth mindset for two year programs for social and emotional learning afterschool program for K-12 and professional development for counselors and social workers on mindfulness, play therapy, and student motivations. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of funds for mental health including individual counseling afterschool, before school, and lunchtime sessions for two years and social emotional learning and grief for staff professional development and parent workshops for one year.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and stated that on January 14, 2021 President-elect Biden announced a proposal for additional Covid relief and the American Rescue Plan would provide \$130 billion for K-12 education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the ARP background information and stated that the ARP ESSER funds must dedicate 20% to learning loss and remaining funds can be used on the same categories as ESSER and ESSER II. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the period of availability is from March 13, 2020 to September 30, 2024. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that \$2,764,587,703. will be dedicated to New Jersey delivered to local school districts based on the Title I funding formula. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools district anticipates receiving the allocation at the end of May. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of the ARP funds including bipolar ionization air purifiers at all facilities, univentilator replacement and ventilation upgrade at School Nos. 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 25, Frances C. Smith Center for Early

Childhood Education School No. 50, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy Annex, J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy, Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Annex, Thomas Edison Career and Technical Ninth Grade @ Charles Harris Academy, and School No. 92.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented PowerPoint slides showing the proposed use of ARP funds for learning loss for general education, bilingual, and special needs in class support for summer K-12 programs for three years including Step Up to Writing Program for K-5, Carnegie Learning Summer Bootcamp for grades 6-12, Promotion/Retention expansion for grades K-7, Promotion/Retention expansion for grade 8, high school summer remediation program expansion, and APEX summer recover and accrual expansion. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the two year programs include Really Great Reading Afterschool Program for K-3, Academic Math Afterschool Tutoring Program for K-5, AgileMind Academic Youth Development Afterschool Program for grades 6-8, Carnegie Learning Standard Virtual Mathematics Afterschool Program for grades 9-12, NJSLA Saturday Program for grades 3-8, AP Preparation Saturday Program for grades 9-12, and the SAT Prep Saturday Program for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the intervention and academic support include Heggerty Professional Development and Program Materials for K-3, Carnegie Learning Professional Development Math Teacher Academies for K-8, Data Monitoring and Administrative Support Summer/Afterschool Programs, and Instructional Supplies and Platforms for K-8 including Newsela, Flocabulary, MyAccess Expansion, Citesmart, SeeSaw, Nearpod, calculator licenses, and student stylus. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of the ARP funds for ESSA and stated that the ESSA programs include NJSLA Saturday Program for grades 9-12, Bridging the Gap Saturday Grade 8 Program for ELLs Expansion, Point of Entry Afterschool Program for K-8 ELLs Expansion, Best of Both Worlds Afterschool Program for 9-12 Expansion, and Point of Entry Liaisons for Immigrant Students and Families Expansion. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of ARP funds for added needs of at-risk population including the Intensive Literacy Afterschool Program for K-3, Orton Gillingham Training and Professional Development for Tutors, and Bilingual Achievement Strategies Afterschool Program Expansion for ELLs for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of ARP funds for supplemental learning including World Language Summer Program for grades 9-12, World Language Saturday Program for grades 9-12, Arts Enrichment Summer Expansion for grades K-11, Arts Enrichment Afterschool/Saturday program for grades K-12, ESL Enrichment Summer Program Expansion for grades K-12, Youth Athletics Saturday Program for grades 1-8, College Admission Mindset and Preparation Afterschool Program for ELLs for grades 11-12, and Cultures and Literacies Through Art for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of ARP funds for mental health support including seven social workers and a district psychologist. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of ARP funds for professional development including job-embedded coaching and professional development for Children's Literacy Initiative for general education and special education for in class support, job-embedded coaching and professional development for Children's Literacy Initiative for bilingual education and ESL, and job embedded district instructional coaches for 2 English language arts coaches and 2 mathematics coaches. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a PowerPoint slide showing the proposed use of ARP funds for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for professional development for displaced youth and families, NJ Transportation bus passes for displaced youth over age 16, and essential needs and supplies. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that concludes the presentation on the additional funding provided by the CARES Act, ESSER, ESSER II, and American Rescue Plan.

Mr. Jacobs thanked the Superintendent for the presentations. Mr. Jacobs stated that last year at this time we were in the pandemic and we were submitting our budget for the 2020-2021

school year. Mr. Jacobs stated that we were anticipating that there might be changes in the budget which, at first, we were cut \$17 million and we were very uncertain about the environment we were going in. Mr. Jacobs stated that it is not an easy seat for all of us, administration, staff, and Board members, to sit in knowing we are faced with major decisions. Mr. Jacobs stated that he was so happy in February when the numbers came out that we received an additional \$35 million to make up the \$17 million that was cut from the previous year. Mr. Jacobs stated that what has gone on down in Washington has really given our community and our schools an opportunity to address many long-standing needs that had to be addressed. Mr. Jacobs stated that one of those was ventilation which was something that this Board and administration struggled with how we are going to get these things done. Mr. Jacobs stated that in a normal year this would have been a five to seven-year project. Mr. Jacobs stated that with the ESSER funding we are able to accomplish that in a much shorter timeframe. Mr. Jacobs stated that, as our Superintendent stated, we were on track to do the air conditioning and ventilation for the remaining nine schools and it is something that had been promised even before he became a Board member. Mr. Jacobs stated that his colleagues made the commitment to make sure that we would make all of our schools comfortable. Mr. Jacobs stated that with this funding we are able to do that and improve the ventilation for our students and staff. Mr. Jacobs stated that many of the issues that we have discussed, such as social and emotional learning, we are able to put those programs in place. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are able to make this somewhat sustainable and we can run these programs for two years. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is not going to be just a one-shot deal and after that time is another issue if we are able to continue those programs. Mr. Jacobs stated that it is very good to see that we have been able to bring back many of the programs that have been cut over the recent years, the Saturday program and the youth sports program are being brought back in full strength. Mr. Jacobs stated that in years past we only had to offer it for certain sports. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are extremely fortunate and lucky to be Board members in Elizabeth in this district and not have to face some of the challenges that our counterparts have to face dealing with their budgets. Mr. Jacobs stated that under the fiscal guidance of our Superintendent, Business Administrator, Comptroller, and Assistant Superintendents this is the sixth year that there has been no school tax increase. Mr. Jacobs stated that is due to great fiscal guidance and is a noteworthy achievement. Mr. Jacobs stated that we are addressing the learning loss which is a big concern of this Board coming out of the pandemic, especially for our most disadvantaged children and special needs children. Mr. Jacobs thanked everyone for a wonderful job on the budget. Mr. Jacobs stated that it took a lot of work and effort and it's a job well done.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the Superintendent for the great presentation. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked our Business Administrator/Board Secretary and everyone who participated in this budget. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that for her, personally, it is an amazing moment when everyone in other districts are having a hard time. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she identified five great things in this budget. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that the first is the priority for safety. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that the next is mental health and it is a big moment, not only of our students and families, to support mental health. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that the others are learning, instruction, and technology. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that it is sad in New Jersey that we identify districts where not everyone has a laptop. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that everyone knows that education starts in PreK and it is amazing that we can provide Summer and afterschool programs, not only athletic activities but instructional and social and emotional activities. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she is very proud of this moment and very proud of our accomplishments of our school district. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the finance committee Board members who dedicated hours and hours. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that she is extremely happy because we have money to support our students with technology.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that it is not easy to find a district that has students from PreK to grade 12 who have access to technology. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked each one of you who participated and gave their wonderful ideas to administration who passed it to our assistant superintendents, then to our Superintendent and Board members. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked everyone and stated that now she hopes they have some time to rest after long hours of hard work and dedication.

Mrs. Carvalho thanked our Superintendent, Business Administrator, Comptroller, Assistant Superintendents, Directors, and entire team. Mrs. Carvalho stated that this definitely has been a challenging year for all of you and the teachers, staff, students, and parents. Mrs. Carvalho stated that this has definitely been a different kind of year and she doesn't think anyone sitting here tonight thought that this would be what we would be presenting. Mrs. Carvalho stated that it has been a long journey to get here. Mrs. Carvalho stated that in the economic state that our country is in due to the pandemic, we are going to be able to bring back programs that we lost which is something that none of us thought would happen. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we are able to not raise taxes again which is going to help the people who are sitting at home. Mrs. Carvalho congratulated them for listening to their cries and hearing the voices of what people at home are saying. Mrs. Carvalho thanked them for not only caring about the budget for this year but knowing that tomorrow matters and to afford the children who are coming to our school system to know and for their parents to know that there is a future for them.

Mr. Neron echoed the words of his colleagues and stated that it is a fine job by our administration. Mr. Neron thanked them for all of the hard work and efforts they put forth. Mr. Neron stated that they spent long hours in the finance committee playing tennis with a lot of ideas and thoughts on what we thought would happen. Mr. Neron stated that our Vice President eloquently spoke about key points that are so important. Mr. Neron stated that at the top of this is mental health for all of us, from Board members to teachers to our first responders in our community and school system that have been tirelessly working, our nurses, our administration, and the mental health of everyone. Mr. Neron stated that the mental health of everyone is key and we cannot forget that. Mr. Neron stated that our babies out there need that support along with the parents. Mr. Neron stated that it has been a very trying time for our country, for our school districts, and for the trauma that everyone has experienced during this very time. Mr. Neron stated that everybody has been impacted in some way, shape, or form. Mr. Neron stated that we are still going through it and none of us have the answers. Mr. Neron stated that to be able to create a concerted effort like this to finally have a plan and direction, leadership has to be transparent, firm, and has to be direct. Mr. Neron stated that we have proven that we can do that here and that we can really push the needle forward and be an example to the State and the country as to how we get back to a sense of a new normal and become a district that will be able to thrive again. Mr. Neron stated that despite all that we have lost and what we have been through, the support systems are there and we want to make sure we see it forward. Mr. Neron thanked the patience of all of our parents, the community, our staff members, our union, and everyone. Mr. Neron stated that everyone has been patient and it has been an arduous struggle and a battle to see this through. Mr. Neron stated that it is not over and we have a lot of work ahead of us. Mr. Neron stated that this is just the beginning so keep us in good spirits and good energy and he is sure we will all succeed as a team. Mr. Neron thanked the Superintendent, administrators, and team and stated that they have done some amazing work.

Mr. Jacobs thanked the Board members for their comments.

Mr. Jacobs presented the following public participation statement:

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone based on the order of the sign-in. The in-person public comment session will be followed by public comment online to those who have registered with the online participation form prior to this session. I shall also call those individuals to participate based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The time limit will be strictly enforced and audio transmission will be terminated at the end of three 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; 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 in person and online participants have been called, remaining participants can email their statements to the Secretary of the Board at [kennedha@epsnj.org](mailto:kennedha@epsnj.org) and they will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this meeting”

Mr. Jacobs stated that there were no in-person public participants.

Mr. Jacobs called upon the first online public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz spoke about against the budget and special education.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Jacobs called twice upon the next online public participant, Skylyr VanDerveer, to address the Board. Skylyr VanDerveer did not respond.

Mr. Jacobs called upon the next online public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Christina Moreira spoke about the superintendent contract, special education, and lack of 504 programs in the budget.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her for her comments and called upon the next online public participant, Nathalie Ricot, to address the Board.

Nathalie Ricot stated that she is only observing at this time.

Mr. Jacobs thanked her and called twice upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board. Kason Little did not respond.

Mr. Jacobs stated that there were no other public participants registered to address the Board. Mr. Jacobs asked Mr. Kennedy if he received any emails prior to the start of the meeting.

Mr. Kennedy responded that he did not receive any emails.

Since there were no other participants for public speaking and no emails received, Mr. Jacobs closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Neron thanked everyone for their prayers for his family during this difficult time.

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 add to the agenda.

A motion was made by Mrs. Pestana, seconded by Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez, to go into private session at 8:51 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 10:56 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

Mr. Jacobs requested a motion to suspend the rules to add to the agenda the Personnel Report for transfer of employee W.F.

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, to suspend the rules to add to the agenda the Personnel Report for transfer of employee Walter Fisher.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 8

Negative: Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez – 1

Personnel Report – Transfer of W.F.

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, to accept the report.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana, Mr. Jacobs – 8

Negative: Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez – 1

Resolution – Adoption of the 2021-2022 School Budget

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, that the resolution be adopted.

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

Mr. Jacobs asked if any Board members would like to comment.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this weekend is Mother's Day and wished all the mothers, grandmothers, and her colleagues Happy Mother's Day.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that she is continuing the congratulations for our teachers, our Nurse Coordinator Marie Noonan, and our IT Department. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we do half in person and half virtual and the IT Department does a fabulous job in supporting the Board bringing this to the public and the parents. Mrs. Barbosa wished Happy Mother's Day to all the moms.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked for prayers for her country, Colombia. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that right now they are facing difficult times.

Mr. Jacobs thanked all the mothers, especially his mom, in our community, mothers on our staff, and all the mothers here because as we all know we wouldn't be here without our women. Mr. Jacobs stated that our mothers are very important and raise us from the womb to the tomb. Mr. Jacobs stated that he is very grateful and appreciative for all of our mothers.

On a motion by Mrs. Alcaide-Hernandez, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 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