

APPROVED  
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BOARD OF EDUCATION  
(Official)

May 7, 2015  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A public hearing on the 2015-2016 Board of Education Proposed Budget was called on May 7, 2015 at 7:00 p.m., in the Multi Purpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Ana Maria Amin presented the following statement at 7:55 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a Public Hearing of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was published in the Worrall Community Newspapers, Luso Americano, and Noticiero Columbiano on Thursday, April 30, 2015. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

I wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone present for this May 7, 2015 meeting of the Board of Education. This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. In order that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking. I also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, I may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. I am pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.

We are here this evening to hear the public express their views regarding the proposed 2015-2016 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.’

Those wishing to speak for or against the budget must sign in one hour prior to the advertised start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, and telephone number of the person wishing to speak.”

Present: Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Rodriguez, Trujillo,  
Mrs. Amin – 6

Absent: Ms. Bathelus, Messrs. Neron, Perreira – 3

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Linda Seniszyn, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Ceden, Assistant Board Secretary Donald Goncalves, Comptroller William Greene, Supervising General Counsel/Board Attorney Marvin Lehman, and members of the public were in attendance.

Dr. Greene gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance  
Pledge of Ethics  
Core Beliefs and Commitments Video

Mrs. Amin introduced David Sciarra, Esq., Executive Director of the Education Law Center.

Executive Director of the Education Law Center David Sciarra thanked the Superintendent, Board President, and Board members for inviting him. Mr. Sciarra stated that he has had the privilege and honor of representing the students in Elizabeth and the other urban districts around the State in the Abbott v. Burke case. Mr. Sciarra stated that the last time they went back to the Supreme Court a couple of years ago actually helped your budget out that year because we got the government to put money back in the budget. Mr. Sciarra stated that he knows this is a difficult budget year. Mr. Sciarra stated that he was asked to put the tough decisions that the Board has to make and the community has to make in some context in terms of where we are with the funding formula, where the district is, where it stands with the other school systems in the State, what we need to do as a collective community going forward after this budget to try to make sure we are not in the same situation here again next year and some work that we need to do together going forward.

Mr. Sciarra commended the Board and the entire public school community in Elizabeth and he knows they are always going around and around about the problems and they are difficult ones that you are dealing with on a daily basis. Mr. Sciarra stated that he gets a chance to step back and look at this from a broader perspective in terms of how high poverty and high needs districts are doing in our State. Mr. Sciarra stated that he works not only in our State but on some of these issues around the country so he gets to see where we are with public education in communities that have to serve very high concentrations of at-risk students, coming from impoverished backgrounds, poor neighborhoods, English language learners, and disabilities.

Mr. Sciarra commended the Superintendent and Board members and stated that one of the untold stories of success under Abbott, in terms of the Abbott districts, is the use of funds and making the funds effectively used to improve student achievement is Elizabeth. Mr. Sciarra stated that there is a book written about the success in Union City by David Kirp who is a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. Mr. Sciarra stated that the book could have been written about Elizabeth and, frankly, it needs to be written about Elizabeth because one of the things you have been able to do is to use the resources that you were able to get over the last decade and a half from all the Abbott rulings. Mr. Sciarra stated that the preschool programs for three and four year olds came out of that, all of the school buildings that Elizabeth has taken the lead to get the State to rebuild the infrastructure and the bottom line is that is translated into student achievement.

Mr. Sciarra stated that one of the important things to recognize is that student poverty is measured by free and reduced priced lunches. Mr. Sciarra introduced a PowerPoint presentation and explained the first slide showing the concentrated poverty measured by free and reduced lunches and stated that Elizabeth is one of the highest in the State. Mr. Sciarra stated that presents extraordinary challenges for the Board in terms of how do you meet the needs of the children and the Superintendent, administration, the principals, the teachers, and support staff who work so hard every day. Mr. Sciarra stated that he doesn't think we recognize enough in this country and specifically in New Jersey the challenges of educating children when they bring those challenges into school from their family backgrounds and their neighborhoods. Mr. Sciarra explained a PowerPoint slide showing the results of the combined NJ ASK Proficiency for Math for grades three through eight and stated that Elizabeth really stands out among the larger urban districts in the State. Mr. Sciarra stated that this is something that you should be very proud of as a community. Mr. Sciarra stated that the next slide shows the results of the combined NJ ASK

Proficiency for Language Arts for grades three through eight and again Elizabeth is significantly above the State average and well above all of the other large urban districts in the State. Mr. Sciarra stated that he could show a lot more high needs districts that are not in the Abbott category and Elizabeth would be well above many, many of the districts where the free and reduced price lunch percentage is 30 or 40 or 50 percent and higher. Mr. Sciarra stated that the next slides are the high school math proficiency and high school language arts proficiency. Mr. Sciarra stated that a lot of times in the urban districts like Newark and other districts proficiency falls off after elementary school and the high school really goes down and that is not true in Elizabeth. Mr. Sciarra stated that Elizabeth is one of the few districts with the challenges that you face that continues to move children through high performance at the high school level. Mr. Sciarra stated that he wanted to show the PowerPoint as background to pat all of you on the back for all of the hard work that you have done over many years with prior Boards and prior Superintendents over the last twenty years. Mr. Sciarra stated that with this Board and the current administration you are doing an outstanding job.

Mr. Sciarra stated that he wanted to give information about the budget so they could put into context of the funding formula some of the decisions you had to make this year. Mr. Sciarra stated that he recognizes that they are extremely difficult decisions. Mr. Sciarra explained the PowerPoint slide showing the state aid shortfall under the formula and stated that your state aid is almost \$364 million which is a significant portion of your budget. Mr. Sciarra stated that if you look at suburban budgets it would be completely reversed and that is the way it should be. Mr. Sciarra stated that is the result of the Abbott funding over many years and some of the money that came in under the new formula up until 2011. Mr. Sciarra stated that the gap, however, this year in 2015-2016 in state aid is \$67 million. Mr. Sciarra stated that you should be getting, if the formula were properly funded by the State, in the upcoming budget an additional \$67 million and that is the shortfall. Mr. Sciarra stated that Governor Christie has proposed another flat budget with no increase in state aid and as a result the gap is continuing from last year to this year. Mr. Sciarra stated that is one major reason why you are having such a tough budget decision. Mr. Sciarra stated that the legislature and the Governor are not stepping up to the plate to begin to put state aid back into the formula. Mr. Sciarra stated that these gaps are based not on data that he, the Education Law Center, or anybody else has come up with but this is based on the calculations in the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 which was the new formula that came in under Governor Corzine and was upheld by the Supreme Court in the Abbott case and now governs school funding across the State. Mr. Sciarra stated that this is the amount of money you should be getting according to the State's own determinations of what your students need in order to achieve a thorough and efficient education. Mr. Sciarra stated that is the first problem and explained a PowerPoint slide showing the cumulative funding shortfalls over the years. Mr. Sciarra stated that in the first year 2009 the formula was funded, the second year, 2010, it was mostly funded, in 2011 was the big cut from Governor Christie when he cut all of the money out, in 2012 they went back to the Court so it stayed mostly the same because the money got put back and Elizabeth got \$82 million as a result of the Court Order that the Education Law Center was able to get the Court to do and you were able to use that to do a lot of important things for the district. Mr. Sciarra stated that we have had flat funding ever since and not just for Elizabeth but for all the high needs and other districts across the State.

Mr. Sciarra stated that your Adequacy Budget, as it is called under the formula which is the amount of money you should be spending, consists of two components. Mr. Sciarra stated the Adequacy Budget is the cost of educating all of the children in Elizabeth to meet state academic standards, the Core Curriculum Content Standards, now the Common Core Standards with the PARCC Assessments and all of that. Mr. Sciarra stated that the cost of educating, as determined by the State, all of your students that also includes a lot of costs already built-in for students who are low income, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Mr. Sciarra stated that all of those costs are added up in terms of your enrollment to come up with an Adequacy Budget.

Mr. Sciarra explained a chart and stated that \$496 million is under the formula what you should be spending by the State's own calculations in order to deliver a thorough and efficient education to your students. Mr. Sciarra stated that is the amount the State has determined you need. Mr. Sciarra asked what revenue is available to support that budget and stated that it comes from two sources, state aid which we just talked about, and local revenue. Mr. Sciarra stated that last year the Adequacy Budget was \$496 million, the state aid was about \$364 million, and your local levy was \$52 million. Mr. Sciarra stated that the local levy is the amount of money raised from local property taxes from the taxpayers of Elizabeth. Mr. Sciarra stated that the local levy has been basically flat over a number of years. Mr. Sciarra stated that the state aid went up especially in 2011 when the ELC got the State to put the money back and Elizabeth received \$82 million. Mr. Sciarra stated that state aid has been flat since but the local levy has been flat as well. Mr. Sciarra stated that he knows the local levy part of the budget is contentious and a subject of difficulty. Mr. Sciarra stated that he understands that and wants to put it into context. Mr. Sciarra explained that the formula for every school district has two calculations in terms of local revenue, one is called your local fair share which is the amount of money that the State expects you to raise given the property values in the community, your income, and your wealth. Mr. Sciarra stated that every district, urban, suburban, and rural all have this calculation of what you are supposed to raise to support the Adequacy Budget and what you are actually raising. Mr. Sciarra stated that the local fair share for 2015 was \$91 million which is how much the State expects taxpayers in Elizabeth to put in but the amount of money that was actually raised from property taxes was \$52 million. Mr. Sciarra stated that the local levy has been mostly flat the last two years. Mr. Sciarra stated that there is a 2% cap on this so you can only raise 2% of that amount from year to year. Mr. Sciarra stated that you can go above that if you bank the cap so if you don't use the cap you can carry it over from one year to the next. Mr. Sciarra stated that banked cap is what you have been debating and discussing here and as you can see you haven't raised your local levy up to the 2% cap so there is some banked cap that is set aside and this year you can go above 2%. Mr. Sciarra stated that typically you can only, by virtue of the property tax cap, from year to year increase that local levy 2%. Mr. Sciarra stated that Elizabeth is pretty significantly below what the State expects you to raise to support that need. Mr. Sciarra stated that there are two shortfalls, there is the State budget shortfall of \$67 million this year and there is also a pretty good shortfall of the local levy but you can only raise the amount 2%.

Mr. Trujillo stated that he remembers under the Corzine Administration there was a 4% cap. Mr. Trujillo asked if that was assessed to schools or just municipalities.

Mr. Sciarra stated that when the School Funding Reform Act came in the school property tax went to 2%. Mr. Sciarra stated that he is not familiar with the municipal tax cap.

Mr. Trujillo stated that he believes it is currently 2% across the Board and the municipalities have the ability to bank as well.

Mr. Sciarra stated that he is not an expert on municipal finance. Mr. Sciarra stated that for school districts there is a tight 2% cap and it is very difficult to get around it on your local property taxes. Mr. Sciarra stated that it is important to understand that the State does not mandate that you increase your local levy up to your local fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that even though you are supposed to be at \$91 million and eventually get there by raising 2% each year the State doesn't force you to do it and it is up to you. Mr. Sciarra stated that you have to make these decisions and if you are a district where your local fair share exceeds your local levy meaning that there should be some more local money in your budget the State does not actually mandate that you do that. Mr. Sciarra stated that they are leaving it to you to make the tough decisions about raising your local levy at least up to the 2% or if you have any banked cap and your local

levy is below your fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that there are a lot of districts especially suburban districts where they don't get a lot of state aid and they are high spending and they do it through having a local levy that exceeds their fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that when you hear people complaining about high property taxes in the suburbs these are districts where their local levy exceeds their fair share and they don't get a lot of state aid. Mr. Sciarra stated that in many districts the local levy is still below the local fair share and that is the case here.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if by holding the tax levy steady over the past few years would it be his opinion that we have been underfunding our district.

Mr. Sciarra explained that there are two components to your Adequacy Budget and one is state aid and you are short there and one of the problems you have had now since 2011 is that the legislature isn't stepping up and putting in the state aid. Mr. Sciarra stated that he is going to talk about that and what can be done. Mr. Sciarra stated that the other problem is that we have a lot of districts like yours and particularly the Abbott districts and when the Abbott money was coming in every year the people said they don't want to increase our local levy. Mr. Sciarra stated that the budgets were going up because state aid was coming in and even the first couple of years of the School Funding Formula so there wasn't as much pressure to raise that local levy to start moving it up. Mr. Sciarra stated that it is a problem and to the extent that the community can raise property taxes within the cap and it is not doing that it is contributing to the shortfall in terms of the funding that you need to educate the children and make sure that you don't have cuts, layoffs, and keep the programs going.

Mr. Monteiro stated that following on Mr. Rodriguez' question on the municipal levy in Elizabeth right now our public education is costing us about 25 cents on every dollar. Mr. Monteiro asked what that rate is on average in the non-Abbott districts.

Mr. Sciarra stated that it really varies across the State depending on where the communities are and the extent to which they get state aid. Mr. Sciarra stated that there are a lot of suburban districts that even though they pay a lot of property taxes their tax rates are not that bad because of the property wealth. Mr. Sciarra stated that there are a lot of districts where the tax rates are extraordinarily high with a lot of it going into the schools like Montclair where the tax rate is very high and not a lot of state aid and the homeowners are starting to get stressed. Mr. Sciarra stated that in Newark the local levy is almost where their fair share is and the overall tax rate is very high. Mr. Sciarra stated that Vineland is a community where they wouldn't get much state aid, Jersey City is another example, where they are entitled to some state aid but the amount of gap between their local levy and their local fair share is a problem although it varies from district to district.

Mr. Monteiro stated that he read that the suburban districts that are not Abbott on average take up for their school district anywhere from 46% to 54% of many municipal budgets.

Mr. Sciarra stated that is probably true.

Mr. Monteiro stated that therefore the mayors and city councils of those cities then have to work with the 30% or 40%. Mr. Monteiro stated that to Mr. Rodriguez' point where Elizabeth Board of Education has kept their levy share very low at 25% and although we may have shortchanged the educational system and we have done more with less allowing the City to have more obviously for policing and for City improvements. Mr. Monteiro stated that in Elizabeth the Mayor and City Council probably have 60% to 65%. Mr. Monteiro stated that most mayors and city council throughout the State probably have much less with maybe 30% to 35%.

Mr. Sciarra stated that he has talked with mayors of a lot of communities that were under Abbott and now when the School Funding Formula came in and they should thank their lucky stars that happened. Mr. Sciarra stated that urban communities across the country and you will never see this kind of situation where the State is properly picking up the kind of fair share that they are because of this Formula and Abbott because of the need and the property wealth and income in your community. Mr. Sciarra stated that the some of the reasons why the tax rates have remained constant is because the money was coming in under the Formula and through the Abbott rulings and properly so but he doesn't think a lot of mayors really realized that at the same time they had a responsibility to step up to the plate and put some more into it to meet their fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that now we are in a bit of a different story where, as you see this year, because of the flat state aid we have to correct that but the flat state aid is putting more pressure on in order just to maintain services so you don't have to cut, meet your cost of living, teacher contracts, cost of programs, energy costs, and all of your fixed costs that are going up. Mr. Sciarra stated that in order to get a little more money this year you are looking at having to boost your local levy within the limits. Mr. Sciarra stated that you have the capacity to do that and not only do you have the capacity to do that but the State really expects you to.

Mr. Trujillo stated that Mr. Sciarra has a unique experience having worked with Abbott districts from the beginning and get to travel around the State and compare apples to apples. Mr. Trujillo stated that the three past consecutive years the local levy was held flat meaning the school district didn't increase taxes to the local taxpayer and asked Mr. Sciarra if he was aware of any other district that has been able to do that, apples to apples and compared to our group, and have the amount of success that this district has been able to have.

Mr. Sciarra stated that Vineland is a district where the gap between the local fair share and the local levy is huge and if you ran the Formula they wouldn't even get a lot of state aid. Mr. Sciarra stated that the administration proposes it, the board fights it, the mayor fights it and they can't get it done. Mr. Sciarra stated that 2% is not a lot of money and they can't get that done and that is a real problem.

Mr. Sciarra stated that the important point he wants to make is the decision that you have had to make here in Elizabeth in terms of submitting a budget with a tax increase this year in order to protect your programs and one of the things we have to start doing going down to the Legislature during the budget process. Mr. Sciarra stated that we need to work together on this and send a message to our legislative delegations, and it is not partisan, representing our districts have to step up and start making the case that the Formula needs to be funded. Mr. Sciarra stated that we may not be able to get all \$67 million in this year, a shortfall, and we recognize that the State is in a tough spot. Mr. Sciarra stated that they proposed to the Legislature two weeks ago that they amend the budget and put an additional \$350 million statewide which is not a lot but it is something and would give you probably \$4, \$5, or \$6 million. Mr. Sciarra stated that is the least that the Legislature could do. Mr. Sciarra stated that one of the things we have to do going forward is that we have to send a very clear signal to our Legislative delegation that they have got to step up and start advocating to make sure that the State is putting money back in or increasing state aid, even if it is not the full amount, to provide some relief from year to year. Mr. Sciarra stated that they could do it and they have the capacity to do it and the Governor is a problem and blocked every single one. Mr. Sciarra stated that part of the problem in the Legislature is that the Legislators say well why even bother putting the money in because the Governor is going to conditionally veto it so they have given up. Mr. Sciarra stated that they can't give up and we need to push our State Legislatures and we have to send a message to them that they have to step up and advocate to put more money and making up that shortfall in your budget.

Mr. Sciarra stated that we are going to be in a better position to make that case if you are doing your fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that what you are doing in this budget is extraordinarily

helpful to us and will be helpful to you in advocating that the State has to live up to its end of the bargain. Mr. Sciarra stated that he hears from Legislatures in situations like this when they say why should we put money in when the local districts aren't even putting their 2% in. Mr. Sciarra stated that this really helps make the case that you made the difficult decision this year to raise property taxes within the cap to get some money in the budget to prevent cuts, not even to put new programs in but just to prevent reductions in programs, staff, and services that are getting you those achievement levels. Mr. Sciarra stated that we are stepping up to the plate and it is important that you have to now step up to the plate and make sure you are making your contribution as well. Mr. Sciarra stated that this year you have to try to come up with some additional money by going off the flat line and using the banked cap that is going to go into the budget. Mr. Sciarra stated that is well within what you ought to be doing given the gap between the local levy and the local fair share. Mr. Sciarra stated that it is important for you to do and you are still doing it within the cap. Mr. Sciarra stated that it is going to make sure that you can maintain services to a significant extent. Mr. Sciarra stated that the message also has to be made to the Legislators and the Governor that you just made the tough decision to raise taxes to put more money in your budget now what about the State. Mr. Sciarra stated that is really the challenge that we have going forward.

Mr. Sciarra stated that he gets asked why we don't go back to the Court again. Mr. Sciarra stated that they went back to Court when the aid was cut so we had very clear evidence and we were able to show that if that billion dollar cut had gone through across the State it was going to trigger significant reductions in teachers, support staff, and programs and harm to children. Mr. Sciarra thanked Elizabeth for participating with them in that in 2011. Mr. Sciarra stated that we started a conversation and reconvened now for Elizabeth and the other former Abbott districts to start talking about what are the impacts of flat funding and what is it that you have had to cut. Mr. Sciarra stated that he knows you cut extended learning initiative which was a very important initiative. Mr. Sciarra stated that he knows you are having a lot of trouble with early education funding starting to erode. Mr. Sciarra stated that he is not here just to tell you to raise property taxes and this has also got to be an effort to get the State to live up to its obligations and we need to do that through efforts with our Legislative delegation, Assemblyman, Senator, and they really have to hear this message. Mr. Sciarra stated that they are going to work with the districts in the coming year to see whether there is harm that is occurring in terms of cuts to programs, staff, and services and whether children are being harmed by this flat funding scenario we've been in for the last couple of years. Mr. Sciarra stated that frankly the increase that you are putting in the budget through the property tax increase is not going to allow you to restore programs that you have cut. Mr. Sciarra stated that you are in a maintenance budget situation. Mr. Sciarra stated that we are going to be sitting down working with your administration to do that in order to go back to the Court. Mr. Sciarra stated that he has learned through experience that the Court isn't going to do anything if we just come in with numbers, dollar shortfalls, and they are going to say we understand that the Formula is underfunded but what is the harm to the children and asked if class sizes are going up, are programs being cut, are teachers being let go, are support staff being let go, are programs being eroded for interventions for children who are at risk of dropping out or falling behind grade level, is early childhood education being eroded. Mr. Sciarra stated that we have to document in detail what the impact of this flat funding scenario is having on programs, staff, and services in order to make a case not just with the Legislature but also with the Court. Mr. Sciarra thanked the Board and administration for giving him the opportunity to come and speak and told them to keep up the good work.

Board President Amin thanked David Sciarra, Executive Director of the Education Law Center, for his informative presentation.

Board President Amin recognized EEA President Rose Carreto, EEA Vice President Joe Cortico, NJEA representative Roselouise Holz, EASC President Ben Candelino, and EASC Vice President George Mikros for being in attendance.

Board President Amin introduced Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer to present the 2015-2016 Budget.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Board President Amin and welcomed everyone to the presentation of the 2015-2016 school budget of the Elizabeth Board of Education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget has allowed us to maintain the educational improvement efforts we have put in place in recent years and sustain the strong academic progress our students are making. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this budget allows us to continue our work of eliminating the achievement gap and implementing the common core standards, however, we continue to face a challenging budget situation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as in our current school year due to rising costs and a drop in federal and state funding resulted in a \$38 million budget shortfall. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that providing an equal educational opportunity for all students requires funding public schools at levels sufficient to provide a rigorous curriculum in a broad range of subject areas delivered by well trained teachers and supported by effective school and district leaders. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this also requires sufficient funds for schools serving our high numbers of low-income students, English language learners, and students with other special needs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our Board recognizes that we have worked diligently to craft a budget that prioritizes and protects school-based instructional priorities and is closely aligned with our limited resources to ensure that we meet our ambitious educational aspirations.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated our vision that the Elizabeth Public Schools will be one of the best school systems in America and that the district has performed well against other large urban districts in the State of New Jersey in a variety of metrics. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is because of this district's leadership that our urban school system is the best in the State and we are striving to become the best in the nation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we owe this success to the hard work and dedication of our school leaders, our teachers, and our children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our mission is that the Elizabeth Public Schools will provide excellent educational experiences and services to inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we believe that to be a high achieving district it is important to have a mission that is genuinely and widely shared, lived, and aligned with the school's policies and practices. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our mission statement drives everything that we do.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in building this budget it follows our guiding principles of equity, expectations, and excellence that we introduced in the previous school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated the definition of equity is that as a nation, America's Promise is that every child, regardless of race, ethnicity, or social class, should receive a high quality, academically rich and rigorous public education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there has been a focus on expectations for quite some time in this district and we define it as the concept of high expectations is premised on the philosophical and pedagogical belief that a failure to hold all students to high expectations effectively denies them access to a high quality education since the educational achievement of students tends to rise or fall in direct relation to the expectations placed upon them. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that educational excellence is defined as students performing at high levels or where students are making significant gains in academic achievement helping to prepare every child for global competitiveness.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this past year we worked closely with our Board to be able to redefine our core beliefs so that they would reflect the focus on the 3 E's. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first and most important is our students because all of our conversations center on our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it begins with the student and we believe that all

students can learn and achieve at high levels regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, neighborhood, household income, or home language. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our commitment is that ALL Means ALL and we will narrow the achievement gaps of students by providing a high quality education to ensure that all of our students are college and career ready. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this evening she will share some of the data that demonstrates that we are, in fact, closing the achievement gaps and the next level of work is to eliminate those gaps. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the second core belief is the teachers and 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 our commitment is that we believe that teachers are central in a child's life and having an effective teacher is the single most important factor in student success. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the third core belief is our leaders and we believe that effective leaders demonstrate unwavering commitment to high levels of achievement for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our commitment is that leaders will exemplify and support practices that promote high levels of achievement for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next core belief is our family and we believe 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 are committed to engaging parents and caregivers in their children's education and we will develop a coordinated strategy that enables parents and caregivers to play an active role in building and sustaining family support for their children's learning and academic success. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we cannot do this alone and we need our parents to be able to work jointly with us to be able to ensure the success for our children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the last core belief is our team and we believe that every member of the Elizabeth Public Schools team has a responsibility in producing and supporting high levels of achievement for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our commitment is that every member of the Elizabeth Public Schools team will make a measurable contribution to the success and achievement for all students by ensuring equitable distribution of resources throughout the organization. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that despite the hardships that we experienced in the development of this budget we ensured that our focus was clear on the equitable distribution of resources throughout all of our schools.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have a valuable partnership with the Panasonic Foundation and we are currently in our seventh year of a ten year partnership. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Panasonic Foundation has served as our strategic advisors and they work with various districts across the nation including San Diego Public Schools, Oakland Public Schools, Highline Public Schools, and other districts that have demonstrated that leadership for equity and acting on those beliefs and understanding, intentionally, regularly, and systematically. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Panasonic Foundation Executive Director Dr. Larry Leverett has been in our district many times and is the former Superintendent of Plainfield Public Schools and also worked for the New Jersey State Department of Education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Dr. Leverett reminds us that we need to be equity warriors and he defines that as people who regardless of their role in a school or district passionately lead and embrace the mission of high levels of achievement for all students regardless of race, social class, ethnicity, culture, disability, or language proficiency.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another leader that we engaged with at the beginning of this school year and we continue to have conversation with and hope to work with him closely in the 2015-2016 school year is Dr. Pedro Noguera. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Dr. Pedro Noguera reminds us that we must recognize the importance of equitable access and the opportunity for our students as a primary starting point for creating the conditions for improved student success and that we must act on this in daily ways through our actions and our words. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she read that recently and thought about the importance of those who dedicated their entire lives to ensuring equity and excellence for all children.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced a video presentation and stated that the Panasonic Foundation was very involved in certain aspects of this video. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she has seen the video five or six times and has the same reaction and becomes very emotional when you hear the vision our students have and what their goals and aspirations are and how dependent they are on all of us to be able to help them to achieve those goals.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that a few years ago we began with a foundation that was built on what we referred to as 90 day plans and that is what we used as our accountability measure. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we also started by defining what rigorous instruction meant to us. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a slide and stated that this design incorporates our previous district's work but also builds on it. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have developed a series of focused policies and practices that are aimed at improving student outcomes. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at the center of these reforms was the adoption of managed instruction in 2006 as our theory of action which provided central office significant control over the curriculum and over instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that moving forward our approach to include managed performance empowerment allows experienced leaders who are showing positive results to have more autonomy over decision making. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this will build on the existing reforms that shaped our organization. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that these reforms include having reorganized our schools so now all of our schools are either PreK-8 or themed high school academies, universal preschool for all three and four year olds in the district, adopted a dress code that included uniforms for all children in preschool through high school, and also increased the number of credits needed to graduate from high school from 120 to 160 to better prepare our students for college and career. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that served as the foundation and many of you are familiar with it as the work started eight years ago and we have built on it. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our core beliefs and commitments have been revised as shown earlier. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our work is further guided by our understanding of the Danielson and Marzano Frameworks, Dr. Elmore's work with regard to Instructional Rounds, guided by former Superintendent of Cambridge, MA, Dr. Thomas Fowler-Finn. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Dr. Thomas Fowler-Finn has helped us over the past five years to examine practice and has worked with our central office, principals, vice principals, teachers on improving practice. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that is one of the critical pillars of this model. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the continued implementation of our principal peer leadership communities and the development of two new networks that were launched this year for our vice principals and our instructional coaches serves as the center pillar. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if we are not having conversations and establishing that common language and talking about what our aspirations and goals are for our children then it is very difficult for us to achieve the goal of college and career readiness for all children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this summer we conducted extensive work with our partners from the Panasonic Foundation and we also had the former superintendent of the Baltimore Public Schools observing our teams' engagement as we reflected and planned for the new school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we examined our data and concluded on what the five levers would be that serve as the five levers for educational equity in the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that each lever on the model is an area of opportunity to increase the probability of our schools delivering predictable and robust growth. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the five areas that we have dedicated a great deal of time in this organization with all of our teachers engaged in this work and all of our leaders, principals, vice principals, supervisors, directors, assistant superintendents, and herself in this work to examine this data and to determine what our next level of work is going to be. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we focused on five areas including data to drive instruction, teaching and learning and the common core standards, literacy PreK-3, eighth grade algebra, and high school persistence and advancement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we believe that by focusing on these areas it is helping us to improve the system overall. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this design starts with a clear focus on college and career readiness as the goal, is supported by the guiding principles

which are the 3 E's, three pillars which support the structure and are all based on effective practices, the key areas that we are examining that will propel us forward, and the foundation which is most critical which is our theory of action and core beliefs and commitments.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the goal of the organization is to prepare all students to be college and career ready. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the definitions come from the American Diploma Project and college today means much more than just pursuing a four-year degree at a university, being college ready means being prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential including a certificate, license, associates or bachelor's degree and being ready for college means that the a high school graduate has the English and mathematics knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in today's economy a career is not just a job and a career provides a family-sustaining wage and pathways to advancement and requires post-secondary training or education, a job may be obtained with only a high school diploma but offers no guarantee of advancement or mobility. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the English and mathematics knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the post-secondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career including technical/vocational program, community college, apprenticeship, or significant on-the-job training. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that graduation is the final point for our students and we are very proud of all of our college acceptances and students' success and persistence. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as we know we are moving toward a K-16 system and our job does not end when our children graduate and we continue to monitor our students to ensure that they are progressing and that we are able to reaffirm for ourselves that we are preparing them to be successful and to be able to graduate from college and have a successful career or to be able to move into the various trades of their choice and be successful once they have completed their programs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented two PowerPoint slides showing all of the colleges and universities to which our students have been accepted.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked how we define every child achieving excellence. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools has declared its commitment to equity and excellence for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be able to tell the story of our good leaders that strive for excellence to be achieved through high standards and our good leaders that will ensure that our students grow to reach their highest potential year after year and are college and career ready as high school graduates. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our iLeap personalized learning plan represents a shift in education from teacher centered model to a student centered model that teachers facilitate. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that through this approach educators can customize lessons based on the pace and learning style that each student has and can actively engage the student by centering learning on student interest, on their progress, and on their mastery. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that educators frequently depend on technology to be able to efficiently and effectively personalize learning for students so while the definition of personalized learning may vary a key tenet is active student engagement in education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that personalized learning is one of the key priorities to move behind a one size fits all model of schooling. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our iLeap personalized learning plan includes the following strategies: enhancing technology to engage students and to allow anytime, anywhere learning; shifting the teacher's role to support student centered learning; renovating physical spaces to better meet our students' learning needs; using data and assessments to inform instruction; and emphasizing learning of college and career ready skills. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that some of the work that we have currently done this school year as initial steps in this learning plan include purchasing and distributing devices as laptops and tablets. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that although personalized learning encompasses changes to the classroom environment we believe that technology is a key tool used to scale personalized learning not only for small groups of learning but rather a large group of students. Mrs.

Hugelmeyer stated that to support the wide use of technology in the school we spent considerable time and resources updating our technology infrastructure. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to shifting the teacher's role in the classroom we were able to support our teachers through training that focused on different instructional strategies as well as using digital content in classroom lessons so our students could have better control over the pace and content of their learning. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that to support professional development we hired nine technology coaches this past year who specifically aid teachers in creating this personalized environment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our technology coaches are all content certified teachers that have been working collaboratively with our literacy and math coaches to provide a number of services to teachers including planning, co-teaching lessons, identifying digital and non-digital resources, and answering curriculum specific questions, and this has allowed for meaningful job imbedded professional development to take place in all of our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our principals expressed the need for additional instructional coaches to support their schools through a survey that had been administered in 2014. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that through a thorough analysis of support services we were able to reallocate funding and added seven literacy coaches to our budget for the 2015-2016 school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there are nine technology coaches and now we are adding seven literacy coaches and this complements a cohort of forty-two coaches to support 32 K-12 schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have a total of 35 schools, 3 are early childhood centers and the early childhood program has master teachers which are considered instructional coaches. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the coaches to support K-12 are literacy, math, and technology coaches. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are renovating physical spaces to better meet our students' learning needs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that major physical renovations were necessary for supporting a personalized learning environment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that renovations to media centers to create spaces where students could be more engaged through collaboration and technology, transforming existing classrooms into mathematic learning centers with New Classrooms as our partner to support more flexibility, student collaboration, and technology use in the classroom. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that using data and assessments to inform instruction is another key component of our iLeap personalized learning plan. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have worked to implement online assessments to clearly identify students' needs and skills and teachers use that information to tailor instruction for every student. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that personalized learning cannot occur without data on individualized student performance. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our assessments provide our teachers and our students with actionable data that allows personalization and allows a teacher the ability to measure the student's mastery of a specific unit of study or a learning standard. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that online tools such as EdConnect and MAP are available to collect data on student progress and this is our way of being able to personalize instruction for our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that emphasizing learning of college and career ready skills is a critical area and we are enhancing our support for developing college and career ready skills for all of our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for many years our high school students have been engaged in individualized extended learning opportunities that have allowed them to earn community service hours through learning experiences with local businesses as well as our community partners. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we intend to build on these learning experiences in the upcoming school year by creating online tools for eighth grade students to use to develop learning plans that are aligned to college and career readiness goals.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this past school year we re-branded George Washington School No. 1 as the Academy for Science and Engineering and we opened School No. 9 as the Jerome Academy for Mathematics, Technology, and the Arts. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that making these themed academies created opportunities to collaborate with our local community colleges, with four-year colleges, with virtual learning programs, and with local businesses so we could enhance the college and career readiness skills. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for School

No. 9 it was the partnership with New Classrooms and for School No. 1 it was the partnership with NJIT. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next level of work is to continue to convert our neighborhood schools to themed academies and in doing so assist students in developing personalized learning plans that will help us to identify how each student is progressing toward those college and career ready goals. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our leaders will continue to engage in discussions around personalized learning to include a focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and in turn through these conversations when we meet as networks will help us develop a competency based system so that teachers and students can monitor their progression.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our accomplishments and accolades and what we see is evidence that ties back to those initial steps that we have taken with regard to personalized learning. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools was selected as a Future Ready District this past school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in June 2013 the President announced the ConnectED Initiative setting a goal of connecting 99% of students to high-speed internet within five years. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth was selected with other model districts across the country who are using technology to create personalized learning environments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we signed the Future Ready Pledge that includes fostering and leading a culture of digital learning within our schools, helping schools and families transition high-speed connectivity, empowering educators through professional learning opportunities, accelerating progress toward universal access for all students to quality devices, providing access to quality digital content, offering digital tools to help students and families to reach higher, and mentoring other districts and helping them transition to digital learning. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools had the opportunity to participate in the ConnectED Conference at the White House in recognition of the district's commitment to Future Ready Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated the commitment to be able to help other districts achieve the level of success that these districts have and this helped us to implement district-wide action plans and that is the work we are doing this summer to be able to showcase it in the fall.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this past September we provided 1:1 learning in all of our schools and all students in grades 3-12 received a laptop, access to the Learning Management software and curriculum materials that helps promote blended learning opportunities for all children in Elizabeth. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we brought in iPads in grades K-2 so that we could further augment the access for all of our children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our goal is to be able to strive to have 1:1 learning in grades K-2 as well. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have already implemented over 4,000 iPads in addition to expanding the number of laptops that have been placed in all of our K-12 schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that SmartBoards and StarBoards which are a white board that connects and interacts with computer technology can be found in over 80% of our schools including our early childhood centers to provide students with innovative lessons in all subject areas. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this work started in 2012, which David Sciarra had referenced when we received the additional state aid, and there was a commitment to ensure equity in our schools and that is what we were focused on. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that a few new schools opened with the latest technology and our commitment was to ensure that every single classroom from preschool to high school would have access to the same technology and we began to focus professional development on the integration of technology and support for all of our teachers and our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this budget includes the commitment to the district-wide laptop initiative for \$1 million which is for five years to ensure the continuous access of the laptops for our children in grades 3-12.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the district was the recipient of an i3 Grant which was a highly competitive federal grant and our partner New Classrooms collaborated on the application and helped us to expand this concept to a number of our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a PowerPoint slide showing the redesigning of classroom space which is no longer the one teacher to twenty-one students in a class but rather our teachers working collaboratively in an open environment and with our students working in centers and having their instruction very much

personalized to their level. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there are a variety of designs in the district and when you hear we are expanding Teach to One it means it is the redesign of an instructional environment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this past year we had Teach to One at School No. 8, we had a very successful mid-year implementation at School No. 9, and with the grant we will have the opportunity to expand Teach to One to five additional schools and the announcement will be made on May 11, 2015 with regard to the schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the President of the National Superintendents Association Dan Domenech invited the Elizabeth Public Schools to attend a session in Mooreville, North Carolina to be part of a group of superintendents that will be discussing their practices as it relates to personalized learning. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is also an opportunity to visit Dr. Mark Edwards, the 2013 Superintendent of the Year, who has been incredibly successful with his implementation of the 1:1 initiative. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a research based instructional model that encourages our students to be able to prepare and participate in challenging college coursework. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in addition to enrolling in advanced placement and honors courses students receive the necessary academic support through a specially designed AVID elective. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are proud to be able to currently have so many of our schools participating in this valuable program and in the upcoming year we are proud to announce that we will be expanding the AVID program to School Nos. 20, 23, and 25. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another partnership we have is with Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and the Elizabeth Public Schools is a Hispanic-serving school district and is represented on the HACU Advisory Council to provide guidance, advice, and support to HACU with orientation and information to establish contacts to establish K-16 collaborations and to inform HACU advocacy efforts in Washington, DC to secure federal support for establishment of K-16 partnerships and develop an advocacy agenda as it relates to K-12 issues. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we were invited this past school year and were able to submit our comments on the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that from a K-12 perspective we were able to have some input with regard to what the future holds for federal regulations. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have an opportunity to have a partnership with Univision which has a new mobile app that is going to be made available to all of our parents, Clave al Exito, and the main feature is the ability for our teachers and our parents to be able to communicate in the native language. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in addition there will be numerous opportunities for professional development that have been offered and shared through our parent academies and opportunities to be able to work closely with our district leaders and teachers and to be able to showcase the work that we are doing in terms of how it is that we support our limited English proficient students and how it is that we engage with our community. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is a resource that is specifically geared to supporting our parents and a great opportunity for our teachers to learn about this new digital device that will aid in communication. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have had a partnership with Rutgers Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies and also by extension with the Ford Foundation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Rutgers has engaged in a lengthy study of academic reform in our district including everything from the impact of the 160 credits and the success attributed to college and career readiness to studies on extended learning time and the tremendous interest with the regard to the reform strategies in the district and an opportunity to have an objective view on our practices and to learn about the areas that we need to attend to.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the accolades at the State level include our work this past year was with innovateNJ and Elizabeth Public Schools was selected as 1 of 8 districts considered to be innovative and responsibilities include engaging in a partnership project development with districts across the State to discuss innovation and Elizabeth Public Schools is encouraged to partner with suburban districts. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools received the Achievement Coaches Grant and the NJDOE announced the selection of 16 districts

to participate in the Achievement Coaches program and Elizabeth Public Schools as 1 of 3 districts to lead content development for this initiative. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the language arts literacy team is working with Fred Carigg, former Assistant to the Commissioner of Education, to continually improve the language arts literacy curriculum and district benchmarks to ensure equity, expectations, and excellence for all of our students in their literacy growth. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are seeing significant progress on our goals and the graduation rate rose by 8% since 2011 to 72.5%, the Advance Placement enrollment has grown since 2011 from 963 to 2,546 which is a growth of 246%, and the number of students taking the SAT has increased in 3 years from 720 to 2,450. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the increase in the number of students taking SATs is largely due to the fact that we put it in policy as a requirement for all students to take the SAT prior to graduation ensuring that we are helping every student to be prepared and to be college and career ready. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that from 2010 to 2014 there was largely double digit percentage growth overall in all of our high schools in both language arts and mathematics in grades 9, 10 and 11. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there were 12 perfect scores in 2005 on the NJ ASK and in 2014 there were 497 perfect scores which is an increase of 4,042%. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the School Performance Reports were released by the NJDOE and the Elizabeth Public Schools when ranked amongst schools in its peer group 77% of all EPS have average, high, or very high performance in Academic Achievement, when ranked amongst schools in its peer group 88% of all EPS have average, high, or very high performance in College and Career Readiness, when ranked amongst schools in the State of New Jersey 91% of all EPS have average to very high performance in College and Career Readiness, and when ranked amongst schools in its peer group 68% of EPS grades 3-8 schools have average, high, or very high performance in Student Growth. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a chart showing the specific schools in each category of the School Performance Reports. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated the importance of closing the achievement gap which refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students and shows in grades, standardized test scores, course selections, dropout rates, and college completion rates among other success measures. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a chart showing the many groups that we have narrowed the achievement gap over the last three years with the use of reform recommendations, effective teachers in every classroom, challenging curriculum, and enrichment opportunities. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our work will not be complete until we have eliminated the achievement gap but we are on the right track.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that, as Mr. Sciarra mentioned earlier, we are moving our K-8 schools to a regular schedule. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the last two years were extremely painful because we were incredibly proud to be the only district in the nation to have an extended learning time model in all of our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that while we will continue to have extended day at the high school it saddens her to have lost the extended day for the K-8. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that last year we lost 45 minutes of the 90 minute extended day and now for this upcoming school year we will have lost the remaining 45 minutes of learning time. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she and her Cabinet are going to initiate a letter writing campaign to do their best to reach out to the various foundations to talk about the good work that we have been doing because our journey has not been completed and there is still a great deal of work ahead of us. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she would like to be able to tell how a longer school day had greatly impacted the performance of the students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that recently we had a visit from the Gates Foundation and knowing that this was a key area of the budget she had the opportunity to talk with them about the importance of extended learning time, how it has impacted all of our schools, and how it has afforded our children to have more learning time in literacy and math. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the schedule for K-8 schools beginning September 2015 will be from 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the schedule for our high schools continues as an extended time from 7:30 a.m. to 3:57 p.m., and our PreK continues to be 8:20 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will be expanding our course offerings and as a result of this work the rebranding of one of our high schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at a new program will be offered at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, the Cisco Network Academy where students will learn how to design, build, and secure intelligent networks while developing leadership, collaboration and entrepreneurship skills. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy will offer Construction Technology to prepare students for a career in construction trades such as carpentry and teaches students the methods and equipment used to build structures and a new course program Electricity/Sustainable Energy will be offered to prepare students for success in “green” residential and commercial construction, project management, energy efficiency, trade specialties, and building safety and inspection. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another new course that will be offered at Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy is the Hospitality and Retail Services to prepare students to enter into the management and marketing fields, sales, customer service, entrepreneurship, restaurant management, food service, and personal care services including cosmetology and barbering which is a new offering. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Process Technology and Automotive Technology will continue to be offered. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. will be rebranded as the Academy of Health Science and Public Safety and will offer a new program Public Safety to prepare students with a rich curriculum in law enforcement, fire sciences, emergency management (EMT), criminal justice, and Homeland Security. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students will be challenged to achieve through learning experiences in various public safety settings and forensic science, chemistry, and statistics will be taught through hands-on planned projects. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that a new offering at Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. is health sciences to prepare students for a career in patient care, nursing, radiology, medicine technology, and healthcare administration and there will be additional opportunities for students in physical therapy, athletic training, and nutrition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy will offer a new program Tomorrow’s Teachers, an elective course for students who aspire to be teachers that includes four themes, experience learning, experiencing the profession, experiencing the classroom, and experiencing education with a variety of hands-on activities and a strong emphasis on observations and field experiences.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Dr. Orlando Edreira School No. 26 is officially designated as an International Baccalaureate School which includes benchmarking our schools on an international level, flexible yet comprehensive curriculum with rigorous international standards, global focus with an emphasis on intercultural understanding, unique approach to trans-disciplinary learning using multiple rounds methodologies and teaching strategies, and development of the whole child including requirements for arts and community service.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Bilingual/ESL Department is implementing the Point of Entry (POE) Literacy and Language Curriculum for Spanish native speakers and explained that many of the English Language Learners (ELLs) who enter our district have experienced some kind of interruption in their formal education that has produced a gap in the acquisition of the literacy skills in their native language and this lack of skills has a negative effect on their acquisition of the English language.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is very much about having partnerships not only with parents but with the Panasonic Foundation, NASA, AVID, International Baccalaureate, Rutgers Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies, Alliance for a Healthier Generation founded by the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation, innovateNJ, HACU, Rutgers Business School, Stevens Institute of Technology, National Academy Foundation, Princeton Center for Leadership Training, Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce, The Broad Foundation, Center for Reform of School Systems, New Classrooms, National Center on Time and Learning, Middle States Association, Junior Achievement, Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research, Montclair State University, U.S. Marine Corps Junior ROTC, and Instructional Rounds.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools has been recognized by the US News and World Report and Newsweek for having the best high schools and America's Most Challenging High Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the district has received 4 National Blue Ribbons for Terence C. Reilly School No. 7, Victor M. Mravlag School No. 21, and two for William F. Halloran School No. 22.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are building a budget based on our principles and our team has been hard at work to take into account our core values, our 3 E's and every child's needs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is done while we manage our expenditures and fulfill the needs of our community addressing the record increases to our student population throughout the district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is going to be a part of Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Alliance for Excellence in School Budgeting and a small group of school districts from across the country will work together as a cohort to implement best practices in school budgeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools has been recommended to participate in this national pilot with the Government Finance Officers Association and we are the first school district in New Jersey to participate. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in 2014 the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) declared the Elizabeth Public Schools as a high performing district in fiscal management, governance, operations, and personnel.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the process for development of the 2015-2016 budget included a class size analysis, face to face meetings with all principals, review of all curricular inventories and requests, face to face meetings with all instructional and operations directors, comparative analysis of expenditures for 2014-2015 versus proposed budgets, and state aid issued on February 28, 2015. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget review process included a line by line department budget review and allocation of funds within the school-based budgets based on enrollment, programs, and equitable need. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the number of students has increased dramatically over time with the total student population of 20,062 in 2001-2002 and the total student population of 27,127 for 2014-2015. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this past year we grew in enrollment by 926 students and our projected increase in enrollment for next year is 1,154 students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have added 36 new K-12 teachers which represent \$3,163,464. in salaries and benefits for the 2015-2016 school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a chart of instructional professionals needed in the new budget including teachers in Bilingual Haitian Creole, Math, ESL, Social Studies, Special Ed Autism, Bilingual, English, History, Engineering, and Biology.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Dr. William Greene, Comptroller, to present the financials.

Dr. William Greene, Comptroller, stated that our budget vision is to provide a high quality education at an affordable price and that our budget message to the community is that only 25 cents of every tax dollar goes to support your Elizabeth Public Schools.

Dr. Greene stated that this year there was a reduction in state aid and we are receiving \$417,132,738 as compared to \$418,995,585. for 2014-2015. Dr. Greene stated that the vast majority of the revenue will come from the New Jersey State Aid, \$417,132,738., which is 83.1% of our revenue. Dr. Greene stated that the next largest source of our revenue will come from the local Elizabeth taxpayer, \$59,813,124. which is 11.9% of our budget, federal aid is \$15,145,756., which is 3.0%, balance appropriation is \$9,128,978., which is 1.8%, miscellaneous revenue is \$874,179., which is .2%.

Dr. Greene stated that our budget for instruction last year was 78.8% and we increased our budget for instruction and other programs for our students for 2015-2016 to 79.3% of our total budget, 3.5% is for administration, 9.0% is for operation and maintenance of plant, and 8.2% is for other which includes community services, employee benefits, transportation, and capital outlay. Dr. Greene stated that there is \$0 debt service.

Dr. Greene stated that the 2014-2015 budget for instruction was \$390,644,492. and we increased the budget for instruction to \$398,102,465. which is an increase of \$7,457,973. for instruction including regular and support services, special education, co-curricular, athletics, state and federal programs and special schools. Dr. Greene stated that there is an increase of \$7,457,973. in total instructional spending over last year. Dr. Greene stated that the benefit costs increased by \$5,034,537., special education costs increased by \$7,384,809. including tuition for 79 out-of-district schools, special education support services increased by \$3,632,726. including additional personnel and assistant costs, and transportation costs increased by \$1,828,021. for transportation for additional special education and general education students.

Dr. Greene stated that the 2015-2016 comparative per pupil cost is \$15,978. per student which is less than last year. Dr. Greene stated that includes \$9,770. for classroom instruction, \$62. for equipment costs, community services and special schools, \$2,201. for cleaning, repair, and maintenance of our schools, our plant and property, \$144. for athletics and extracurricular activities, \$2,421. for support services including health, guidance, child study teams, library, and professional development, and \$1,380. for central administration, school administration, business services, human resources, telephone and postage.

Dr. Greene stated that there were reductions in the per pupil costs for operations and maintenance of plant and administration over last year. Dr. Greene stated that the administration cost is a focus of the State of New Jersey and the Elizabeth Public Schools spend less on administrative costs and benefits when compared to the State of New Jersey regional cost. Dr. Greene stated that the State of New Jersey regional cost per students is \$1,941. and here in Elizabeth the cost for our administration is \$1,380. per student. Dr. Greene stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is spending less this year per pupil on administrative costs and benefits when compared to the State of New Jersey regional cost. Dr. Greene stated that this is important because we are spending most of our money in the classrooms where it belongs.

Dr. Greene stated that an important part of this budget includes the use of banked cap and the banked cap does not represent existing cash that is banked in an account. Dr. Greene stated that it represents the authority to levy that every board of education retains within the 2% cap. Dr. Greene stated that any and all use of banked cap exists with authority from the State of New Jersey and falls within the 2% cap. Dr. Greene stated that the availability of banked cap indicates that the district budgeted below the 2% cap in prior years. Dr. Greene stated that the preliminary budget includes the use of banked cap. Dr. Greene stated that there are some things that we would not be able to fund if we did not use the district's banked cap including equitable services for all three and four year old students during, before, and aftercare, door to door transportation for all eligible preschoolers that reside 1.3 miles and beyond, After School Academic/Enrichment Program for K-8 students, Summer Arts Enrichment Program for K-8 students, expansion of AVID Program to K-8 schools, Summer Sports Camps for grades 9-12, and After School Athletic Programming for grades 9-12.

Dr. Greene stated that the 2015-2016 budget and tax levy proposed is in accordance with the rules and regulations as promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Education. Dr. Greene stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools prepares its budget following instructions incorporated into the Budget Guidelines and Electronic Collection Manual published by the NJDOE School of Finance. Dr. Greene stated that the instructions ensure that budgets and information submitted for approval to the Executive County Superintendent and Business Administrator are complete and correct.

Dr. Greene stated that the distribution of tax dollars for the Elizabeth taxpayers includes 25% from the Elizabeth Public Schools, 60% from the City of Elizabeth, and 15% from the County of Union. Dr. Greene explained a chart comparing the City of Elizabeth tax levy to the Elizabeth Board of Education from 1997 through present and stated that the tax levy for the new budget year is to be determined (TBD) by the City of Elizabeth for municipal services and has not been announced as yet. Dr. Greene stated that the tax levy for the City of Elizabeth is \$141.7

million for 2015 and the tax levy for the Elizabeth Board of Education is \$59.8 million which is a difference of \$81.9 million. Dr. Greene stated that over a nineteen year period from 1997 to 2015 the City of Elizabeth increased the tax levy by \$103 million while the Board of Education tax levy increased by \$22 million during the same period. Dr. Greene stated that annualized over a 19 year period the effective rate for the City of Elizabeth's tax levy is 13.9% per year and annualized over a 19 year period, the effective rate for the Elizabeth Board of Education tax levy is 3.0% per year. Dr. Greene explained a chart of the tax levy detail showing the tax levy, tax rate, and percentage for the City, school, and county and what it means for homeowners.

Dr. Greene stated that the Elizabeth Board of Education is proud to announce that our school district, unlike many other government agencies, has no debt service. Dr. Greene stated that incurring debt impacts the rate of tax that is charged to our local taxpayers and the Elizabeth Board of Education has no debt service.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Dr. Greene for his presentation.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that included in the 2015-2016 budget are the requests made by a school based on a thorough needs assessment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it accounts for classroom supplies for K-12; instructional materials and textbooks for all content areas including language arts literacy, social studies, interventions, world languages, health, physical education, art, music, and education media/technology; purchased professional services for K-12 improvement of instruction and school administration; instructional supplies for social workers and guidance counselors; health and medical supplies for nurses; Advanced Placement exam fees; busses for high school themed academy programs; maintenance of all science lab and vocational equipment; participation of our students in competitions and conferences; student incentives and awards, Project Graduation and Yearbooks; National Honor Society and College Board Memberships; field trips for educational purposes; teacher stipends for the proper monitoring during breakfast/lunch programs; teacher stipends for proper monitoring of morning/afternoon bussing program; teacher stipends for after school educational programs; security guard stipends for providing the safety and security during afterschool activities, PTA/PTO meetings, student performances, and parent workshops; nurse stipends for field trips that take place beyond the school day; teacher stipends for the opening of schools; 6<sup>th</sup> period stipends for high school teachers to provide instruction in required courses; teacher stipends for summer programs; security guard stipends to provide safety and security during the high school extended day and Saturday programs; nurse stipend to provide health services during the high school extended day; teacher and administrator stipends for high school Saturday academic Programs; teacher stipends for afterschool /evening high school performances/productions; and teacher stipends to provide visual/performing arts and athletic opportunities for students.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in the 2015-2016 budget we are maintaining the following: K-8 refurbishment of instructional materials for all content areas; language arts literacy online writing program for grades 3-8; E-Quite Deluxe to support the mathematics core program K-5; Bilingual Spanish Magnet Program for grades 4-7; Bilingual Haitian Creole Magnet Program for grade 2; International Baccalaureate (IB) for School No. 26; and E-books for K-8. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in the 2015-2016 budget there are new programs including Connected Mathematics Program 3 expanded to grade 6; intervention programs for special education grades K-8 including Sonday, Touchmath, and Ablenet; and bilingual magnet for grade 7. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are maintaining the following in grades 9-12: including refurbishment of instructional materials for all content areas; language arts literacy online writing program for grades 9-12; Visual Arts Center Partnership; Point of Entry Program for grades 9-12; National Academy Foundation Partnership; STARS Tutorial Program, and e-books for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there are new programs in the 2015-2016 budget including the CISCO Partnership; GREEN Construction Initiative; Expanded Nursing Program; and the

EMT/Police/Fire Safety Program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in the 2015-2016 budget the K-8 After School and Summer Programs include the After School Enrichment Program, Summer Promotion/Retention Program, Home Instruction, and the Extended School Year Program for Special Education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for grades 9-12 the After School and Summer Programs include the After School Enrichment Clubs, Saturday SAT Prep Program; APEX Credit Recovery; Summer Remediation and Advanced Credit Program; Extended School Year Program for Special Education; and the Saturday Detention Program, and Saturday Attendance Program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the After School and Summer Programs for athletics and co-curricular for grades K-12 include athletic summer camps, middle school intramural sports program, high school athletic program, summer band camp, teen arts program, summer arts institute for students, and the music theater orchestra.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in the 2015-2016 budget there is adequate staffing for instruction with new staff for K-12 to address the increase in enrollment and new staff for expansion of the bilingual magnet program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there is an increase in supplies, equipment, and textbook allocations for an anticipated 3% increase in new students in our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the academic programs include refurbishment of instructional materials for all content areas, language arts literacy online writing program for grades 3-8, Mathematics Connected Project 3 for grade 6, E-Suite Deluxe to support the mathematics core program for grades K-5, extensive elective and exploration programs, Visual Arts Center Partnership Agreement for grades 9-12, and revise curriculum for all content areas.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our programs and services include safe and caring initiatives including alternative programs for at-risk learners, mentoring programs at middle and high schools, Check and Connect, maintenance of equipment, contracted nursing services, student drug screening, nursing supplies and equipment, sign language interpreter services, substance abuse coordinator services, American Red Cross CPR Training, High School Saturday Detention Program, and High School Attendance Program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our 2015-2016 budget includes programs and services for home and school relationships including K-12 Central Registration, communication materials and brochures designed to promote school and district programs, website and video channel promoting activities, student and parent handbooks, newsletters, district website, operation of video channel, PowerSchool student information system, Learning Management System, iLeap Next Gen System, Blackboard Connect, community education program, community services including high school registration, junior/senior seminars, parent seminars, cell phones for home instructors and attendance officers, and IEP Direct.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our programs and services for academic safety nets include summer programs, home instruction, after school, and Saturday school remediation and enrichment programs and academic interventions. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Summer Programs are Promotion/Retention Program for K-8 and the Summer Remediation and Advanced Credit for grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will continue to have home instruction including contracted providers, hospital home instruction, and after school home instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the afterschool and Saturday programs include After School Enrichment Program for K-8, Saturday SAT Prep Program for 9-12, APEX Credit Recovery for 9-12, Saturday Recreation Program for special education, and high school after school clubs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the academic interventions include AVID K-12 and refurbishment of Read 180 and System 44.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in the 2015-2016 budget our programs and services for special education students include Carnegie Learning Summer Academic Program for K-8, Literacy Intervention Summer School for K-8, Sondag Program for K-8, Touchmath for K-8, Ablenet for K-8, IEP Program for K-12, 504 Related Services, Extended School Year Program for K-12, Contracted Speech, OT/PT, ABA services, and Rethink. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the 2015-2016 budget for programs and services for bilingual education students include

Bilingual Magnet for grades 4-7, Haitian Creole Bilingual Magnet Program for grade 2, and Point of Entry for 9-12.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services in the 2015-2016 budget include transportation services to support academic needs for all special needs students and students who live outside of a specified area. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget includes transportation for all special needs students, courtesy for students attending magnet programs, preschoolers who live outside of a specified area, transportation for homeless/displaced students and transportation for foster children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget includes maintaining athletic and co-curricular activities for programs in grades 6-12 including athletic summer camps, middle school intramural sports program, high school athletic program, and summer band camp.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for student assessments include formative and summative supplies including ACCESS, DRA2/EDL, PSAT, SAT, Pre-IPT, APA/DLM, and NWEA Online Formative Assessment System. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget also includes translations of student assessment for formative assessment benchmarks and student growth objectives. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the 2015-2016 budget includes programs and services for technology classroom support including providing individual e-mail addresses for students in grades 6-12, Microsoft ecosystem, E-Suite Deluxe, renewal of software license for Everyday Mathematics K-6, maintenance of equipment for TV studio 9-12, Amplify, and EdConnect Instructional Improvement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the technology training is computer-based training for teachers and students to obtain technology certification. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the technology needed for PARCC includes an upgrade of the infrastructure for K-12, expansion of tablet computers for K-12, and increasing the internal bandwidth capacity. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our programs and services include district technology resources for our financial systems, human resources system, payroll system, accounts payable system, budgeting system, maintenance of transportation software system, automated telephone messaging system, upgrade of two-way radio network, telephone system upgrade K-12, and video-conferencing K-12.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our programs and services in the 2015-2016 budget for career and college readiness include International Baccalaureate stipends, conference fees, supplies, and travel PreK-8, Naviance for College and Career Readiness 9-12, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) Program 9-12, and Middle States. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for visual and performing arts enrichment include the Teen Arts Program, Summer Arts Institute for Students, Music Theatre Orchestra, and the HS Performing Arts Program (after school). Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for resources to close the achievement gap include AVID, National Academy Foundation Partnerships 9-12, and special education supplies. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services include updating the K-12 library and media programs with e-books and digital holdings for K-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the 2015-2016 budget includes resources to enhance educational opportunities with field trips, review of instruction with the use of iObservation which is a Danielson & Marzano evaluation system, review of revise the ESL offerings for 9-12, and review of special education programs with IEP review, and Special Ed Federal Reports. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services include literacy training with Fred Carrigg and Associates for literacy and interventions on-site coaching and fall, winter, and spring teaching and learning institutes. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that programs and services include mathematics training with Lens On Learning On-site Coaching. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services include resources for social and emotional with Behavioral On-site Coaching for special education K-8. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the data resources include resource disks for student data and analytics.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services in the 2015-2016 budget for new teacher training include new teacher network induction programs and the Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and

services include EE4NJ/Educator Evaluation Effectiveness for teacher and leader evaluation and professional development. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for professional networking on best practices and pedagogies include Welcome Back materials, Panasonic Foundation, conference travel, AVID, International Baccalaureate, and Peer Leadership Communities/Networks. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for HIB include suicide prevention training for school psychologists and nurses to turnkey and HIB bullying prevention programs and training for nurses. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the programs and services for professional development include differentiated instruction, personalized learning environments and alternative proficiencies.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the 2015-2016 budget includes building and infrastructure improvements with additional classrooms, installation of doors to separate School Nos. 1 and 9, renovation of Temporary Classroom Units, environmental abatement, sidewalk repairs and improvements, partial roof replacements, Teach to One renovations at five schools, ventilation systems, boiler repairs, floor repairs, improvement of security systems at various schools, and flooring.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our accomplishments and accolades include the National Blue Ribbon Nomination for Elizabeth High School. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that based on state assessment data, Elizabeth High School has been nominated to apply for this award as an Exemplary High Performing School. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the U.S. Department of Education sent EHS a formal invite to apply for the program and successfully completing the national application round leads to the next hurdle which would require EHS to make Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) for the 2014-2015 school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if that is completed then EHS will be invited to attend the national awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. in November 2015 where schools around the country will celebrate their success, share information, and receive a plaque and flag to commemorate their achievement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another accolade is that the John E. Dwyer Technology Academy students were featured in NJ Tech Weekly and won first and second place in the AT&T Innovation Competition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first place winner of the contest was tenth grade student Jaroy Richardson from John E. Dwyer Technology Academy for a "Late Scanner" a bar-code scanner that tracks when students are late or on time for their classes. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that ninth grade student Stephanie Medeiros from John E. Dwyer Technology Academy won second place with her entry "Drone Your Phone" which can turn your cell phone into a mini flying drone to get better reception and complete the call using Bluetooth and the phone/drone could help hikers stuck on a mountain or firefighters searching for people in a burning building and could also be used for selfies. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that another accolade is that twelfth grade student Alexandra Gonzalez from John E. Dwyer Technology Academy was awarded the John S. Martinez National Hispanic Scholarship. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the scholarship program is specifically designed to help Hispanic high school students achieve educational success and the program has been implemented in the thirty-eight states and territories that have Hispanic legislators. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Alexandra was the only student selected in the entire State of New Jersey. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy is one of a select number of New Jersey schools to be designated as a Model School in the Arts by the NJ Arts Education Partnership. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the criteria for this designation includes school climate, teacher quality, and variety of arts offerings. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy is a past recipient of the GRAMMY Foundation's GRAMMY Signature Schools Community Award which recognizes schools which demonstrate excellence in music education with an award to support the school's music program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy was 1 of only 10 New Jersey schools to receive this award since it was endowed in 2010. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students at Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Academy participated in job shadowing in Alcatel Lucent Bell Labs, Ernst & Young, Valley National Bank, PSE&G,

Goldman Sachs, and Bloomberg. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students from Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Academy participated in Junior Achievement's Women's Future Leadership Forum with female role models from top companies in NJ to be mentored on college/career work-readiness skills. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C. attended the Union High School Drill Team Competition and won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Unarmed Color Guard, Armed Regulation, and Overall 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Armed Division. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C. also attended the Central Regional Drill Team Competition and won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in both Unarmed Inspection and Unarmed Exhibition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our district's crowning achievements include two national ranked high schools and the U.S. News and World Report evaluated more than 21,000 high schools across the nation and awarded schools Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards based on state proficiency standards and how well they prepare students for college. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth High School received a Gold award and Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy received a Silver award. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that The Washington Post ranked America's Most Challenging High Schools and Elizabeth High School is No. 1 in New Jersey and No. 2 in the Northeast. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Elizabeth High School has for the fourth year in a row received high ratings in "The High School Challenge" by the Washington Post which reveals the level of a high school's commitment in preparing students for college. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Newsweek listed the best high schools in the nation and Elizabeth High School was selected in the Newsweek ranking as one of the top 1,000 high schools in the nation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Newsweek compared the quality of education among the nation's top secondary schools including four-year on-time graduation rate, percent of 2011 graduates accepted to college, AP/IB/AICE tests per student, average SAT and/or ACT score, average AP/IB/AICE exam score and AP/IB/AICE courses offered per student. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have achieved the designation of Middle States Accreditation for all of our high schools from the Middle States Association.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Fall 2014 highlights of the Elizabeth Athletics include Elizabeth High School Football Team ranked No. 9 in Group 5 by The Star Ledger, Lloyd Jackson named to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Team Defense for The Star Ledger All-State Football Team, David Tobe named 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Offense, Tyree Gutierrez named 3<sup>rd</sup> Team Offense, and Lloyd Jackson named 1<sup>st</sup> Team Defense by the star Ledger All-Group 5 Football Team. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Max Acosta was named 3<sup>rd</sup> Team by The Star ledger All-Group 4 Boys Soccer Team, the Elizabeth High School Girls Soccer was ranked No. 10 in Union County by The Star Ledger, and Alexis Booker was named 2<sup>nd</sup> Team by the Star Ledger All-Group 4 Girls Volleyball. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the highlights for the Elizabeth Athletics Winter 2014-2015 include Lloyd Jackson won 7<sup>th</sup> Place in the NJSIA Wrestling State Championships, and in the NJSIA Wrestling Region 3 Tournament Lloyd Jackson won 1<sup>st</sup> Place, David Tobe won 1<sup>st</sup> Place, Michael Anaya won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Tony Stuckey won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Michael Rojas won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, and Quincy McCallon won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that six schools were recognized by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, founded by the American Heart Association, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Clinton Foundation, as Let's Move Active Schools for transforming into healthier places for students and team members. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Let's Move Active Schools include Joseph Battin School No. 4, iPrep Academy School No. 8, Elmora School No. 12, Madison-Monroe School No. 16, Victor Mravlag School No. 21, and Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Alliance for a Healthier Generation awarded all 32 schools that were eligible the Healthy School Awards. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are now the first school district in New Jersey to have all schools receive recognition. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that to earn the National Recognition Award these schools improved their nutrition services and physical activity programs to meet or exceed stringent standards set by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the new

initiative “We Love Our School” is an equity based initiative designed to highlight programming throughout our school district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our continuous focus on equity helps to ensure that all schools possess high quality, innovative initiatives that result in pride within the school community and helps to ensure that every child achieves excellence.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are committed to create an equitable budget with high expectations and a budget that underscores our focus on college and career readiness. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that once again this budget year has presented extraordinary challenges for our learning community and the taxpayer. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there continues to be a sizable increase in our student population which has placed a strain on our resources. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with that challenge we continue moving forward with a commitment to equity, expectations, and excellence. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the commitment to our core values and our concern for the welfare of the City requires us to work arduously to present a budget that our community can support. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she is proud to serve as the Superintendent of this schools district which has a rich legacy and commitment in setting a high standard for our children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our high expectations balanced with the financial pressures we face will require us to seek input from everyone in the learning community. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we could not have accomplished so much without the commitment and leadership of our Board of Education, our union partners, and the support of the community-at-large. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked everyone so much for their support.

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). Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that copies of the tentative 2015-2016 budget are on file at the Board of Education Mitchell Building and a copy of the proposed budget is posted online at the district’s website, [www.epsnj.org](http://www.epsnj.org).

Board President Amin thanked Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer for the thorough and informative presentation.

Mrs. Amin presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for those wishing to speak for or against the budget who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All 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:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced;
2. No personal attacks on individuals;
3. No vulgar or indecent language;
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting;
5. Speakers should refrain from naming individuals;
6. Comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated.

As a reminder this is not a debate nor an audit but an opportunity for citizens to present objections and to be heard with respect to the budget.”

Mrs. Amin called upon the first public participant, Stephanie Goncalves, to address the Board.

Stephanie Goncalves, 202 Marshall Street, asked about the discretionary funds and stipends in the budget.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Jon Lippi, to address the Board.

Jon Lippi, teacher and EEA Director of Communications, spoke about the budget.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Laura Rico, to address the Board.

Laura Rico, 731 Emerson Avenue, spoke about the budget.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Christina Moreira, 805 Gebhardt Avenue, asked about the budget for field trips and banners.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz, 103 Murray Street, spoke about the budget for special needs.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Danette Torres, to address the Board.

Danette Torres, 539 Grier Avenue, spoke about the budget for special needs.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Rose Carreto, to address the Board.

Rose Carreto, EEA President, spoke about the positive school campaign to highlight what we have worked so hard to build over the years and what we have been able to accomplish together and spoke in support of the budget.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Joseph Cortico, to address the Board.

Joseph Cortico, EEA Vice President, thanked David Sciarra for informing us on what takes place in the State of New Jersey and spoke about the budget.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Since there were no citizens that signed in to address the Board, Mrs. Amin declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Superintendent Hugelmeyer responded to the public questions about the budget and stated that the \$6.5 million for discretionary funds are essentially the schools' budgets and includes all instructional materials, all textbooks, and all supplies and that is referred to as discretionary funds. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is an accounting for each of our schools and the necessary instructional materials and supplies in support of our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded to the question about \$3.2 million for stipends and explained that in the presentation

one of the slides showed a listing of some examples of the stipends. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that stipends are used to fund the necessary after school programs, summer programs, and is outside of the teachers' contract so all of the hours that are worked in support of these programs are paid through hourly stipends. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it also supports our teachers for breakfast programs, lunch programs, taking the children off the bus in the morning, boarding the bus in the afternoon, providing the monitoring and oversight and they are being paid for that on an hourly rate to support that service in addition to the opening of our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it also includes for our medically fragile children that require a nurse to accompany them on a field trip once it goes outside of the contractual time because the field trip may be longer than the school day and then the nurse is paid a stipend to accompany the child. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to the 36 new teachers there was a slide in the presentation that indicated each of the schools that would be supported with the additional teachers including the new advanced bilingual classrooms, extensive list of ESL teachers at the high school, English teachers, Biology teachers, and so on. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she can provide the information on our website. Mrs. Hugelmeyer spoke about the cost and fundraising events for school trips. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to autism we have increased the number classrooms over the past five years and if you look at the number of autism classrooms five years ago compared to now there is definite evidence that we are responding to the need. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that all of the children whose parents meet with us and express what the possible disability might be are supported properly whether it is an in-class support or a self-contained setting, and that is a firm commitment that we have to all of our students to provide the appropriate supports.

Mr. Monteiro thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer for the informative presentation this evening. Mr. Monteiro thanked David Sciarra for being here tonight and stated that he has been a true advocate of the Abbott school districts here in the State of New Jersey for many, many years and because of him we have had a great deal of success. Mr. Monteiro thanked the EEA President Rose Carreto, Vice President Joe Cortico, all the staff and the parents and everyone who took time out from their busy schedules for being here tonight. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is important to have open and frank discussions especially when it involves our school system.

Mr. Monteiro stated that our Pledge of Ethics states that we inspire the best in myself and others by celebrating success and learning from mistakes. Mr. Monteiro stated that we certainly know that we have learned a great deal from our mistakes of the past. Mr. Monteiro stated that the Elizabeth school district not too long ago, probably fifteen years ago or so, was one of the worst school districts in the State of New Jersey with a ranking of No. 497. Mr. Monteiro stated that when he served as a Councilman for the City of Elizabeth one of the biggest problems they faced was how many people were moving out of the City because they said they would not send their children to the Elizabeth Public School system and didn't want to send them to the high school. Mr. Monteiro stated that we lost many, many really good hardworking families who were leaving the City because of the school system not being up to par. Mr. Monteiro stated that his parents, like many parents, were immigrants to this country and we all understand that many of the parents like many of the parents here tonight come here from all over the world come for that opportunity to give their children a better chance. Mr. Monteiro stated that we know the past mistakes we have made and we know the transformation that took place in these past ten years.

Mr. Monteiro stated that the successes of our district are in this room tonight and recognized the principals including Principal of Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy George Mikros, Principal of Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy Michael Ojeda, Supervisor of Music Dennis Argul, and all the wonderful principals and staff who work so hard and are part of this success to make this school district the No. 1 Urban School District in the State of New Jersey.

Mr. Monteiro stated that we are going to have our disagreements and we are not always going to agree and we are not a perfect school district. Mr. Monteiro stated that we understand

that and we are only the No. 1 Urban School District in the State of New Jersey and we know we want to change that and become the No. 1 Public School District in America. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is going to take a lot of effort and a lot of pain. Mr. Monteiro stated that this budget is certainly not an easy budget, no budget ever is, and no budget at home ever is. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have to live within our constraints and sometimes we have to do more with less. Mr. Monteiro stated that he has served on both sides, on City Council for eight years and as a Board member for many years and he has gotten to see both sides.

Mr. Monteiro stated that what is interesting, whether we agree or disagree, is that the Board of Education is doing a lot with less. Mr. Monteiro stated that 25 cents of every dollar that goes into your property taxes here in the City of Elizabeth is going for public education. Mr. Monteiro stated that throughout the State of New Jersey it is almost double that number. Mr. Monteiro stated that most cities collect almost half of their property taxes to go into public education. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are very fortunate that we do so much more with less and all this is happening and all the incredible success that we have had. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are the Number One High School in the State of New Jersey and the top in the Northeast. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy right behind that and a remarkable transformation happening at all the other high schools. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are not trying to leave any high school behind. Mr. Monteiro stated that as equity says we are focused on all of the schools. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are a team and that is what he has experienced in his years of serving on this Board of Education. Mr. Monteiro stated that he has had the pleasure of visiting some schools and feeling and experiencing that energy is a great thing. Mr. Monteiro stated that positive energy is a contagious thing and goes from great leaders to the staff to the students and to the parent involvement and is incredible and that is what it is all about.

Mr. Monteiro stated that we are going to have our mistakes and our differences. Mr. Monteiro stated that he is strongly going to support this budget. Mr. Monteiro stated that unfortunately he doesn't think we can pass the budget tonight because it needs a majority of five votes of the Board to pass the budget. Mr. Monteiro stated that is unfortunate and we will have to come back next week and try again. Mr. Monteiro stated that he hopes everyone understands what is at stake and as Mr. Sciarra stated that it is difficult when you have a difficult budget. Mr. Monteiro stated that as Joe Cortico said so eloquently for what you get in this City we have a lot at stake. Mr. Monteiro stated that he has been walking door to door for another campaign and just last week he was in the town of Union speaking with a young couple who had just listed their house because they were moving to Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that when he asked them why they responded because his sister lives in Elizabeth and his niece is attending Elizabeth High School and they are elated that their daughter is going to have the same opportunity. Mr. Monteiro stated that they don't have confidence in the Union school system so they are moving to Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that this would not have been if it were twenty years ago. Mr. Monteiro stated that he met another young couple in Elizabeth who moved here from Brooklyn and couldn't stop praising the Elizabeth school system. Mr. Monteiro stated that when they were looking for a place to move they chose Elizabeth because they knew how great the school system is and that goes right to the heart of the matter. Mr. Monteiro stated that both families are choosing to move here because of our school system. Mr. Monteiro stated that it wasn't too long ago that people were fleeing the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that you could disagree on a lot of things and not like certain things but you can't run from the facts. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are the No. 1 Urban School District in the State of New Jersey and we have 3 National Blue Ribbon Schools and possibly one more on the way and there is no other city in the State of New Jersey that has more National Blue Ribbon Schools. Mr. Monteiro stated that all of the accolades and all of the achievements that the Superintendent spoke about are so many and we should be proud as a City. Mr. Monteiro stated that could you imagine the possibility if we could really stop all the nonsense that goes on between what happens in City Hall and the attacks with

the Board of Education. Mr. Monteiro stated that many of the attacks are vile and offensive and we can get through that if we could work together. Mr. Monteiro stated that everyone knows and wants that and the City deserves that and we deserve better. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have to stop the nonsense and the personal attacks and everything that goes on. Mr. Monteiro stated that we can walk out of this meeting and it won't be seconds after we are out that members of our City will be tweeting vile things about what took place here at the Board tonight and tweeting how this budget shouldn't pass and it is a disgrace but you get through that. Mr. Monteiro stated that some people you won't change their perspective or opinion of the City but he has faith that people will do the right thing. Mr. Monteiro stated that this team continues to do the right thing and they deserve better and our staff, teachers, custodians, security, and our students and children of the City deserve better. Mr. Monteiro stated that he is supporting this budget and is asking all of his colleagues to do the same. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are going to hire new teachers because we have an enrollment that is exploding in the City of Elizabeth with over 27,000 students and a projection of another 1,000 students. Mr. Monteiro stated that in the year 2000 we had 20,000 students and now we have 27,000 students and people want to invest in the public school system. Mr. Monteiro stated that there are those who want to be negative and tear you down and knock you down. Mr. Monteiro stated that he experienced that as a child and there are those kids that will try to knock you down and you go through it. Mr. Monteiro stated that you have to believe in yourself and believe in what you are doing is bigger and the cause is bigger. Mr. Monteiro thanked the Superintendent and his colleagues on the Board. Mr. Monteiro stated that he knows his colleagues are going to do the right thing and have a unanimous vote on this budget. Mr. Monteiro stated that it would be really disheartening to many of the teachers and the students if they don't vote for this budget and it would be an incredible shame.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that we have made progress in the City and she, too, loves her school. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she appreciates our teachers, staff, and Superintendent. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she knows we have good schools but we cannot sit back and not address the issues that we have at hand. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she was elected to do a job and she can't sit here and say this is good enough, it is not good enough. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she cannot sit here and vote for a budget that is cutting back on our police and that is still not cutting back on our lawyers. Mrs. Carvalho stated that still today we have a private attorney sitting here tonight getting paid for absolutely no reason. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she cannot support a budget that is allowing a company, Source4Teachers, to come in and privatizing and controlling the people who are teaching our children. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she still has not seen any information about this company. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she apologizes but you deserve better. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she was voted to make sure it happens.

Mr. Rodriguez thanked Mr. Sciarra from the Education Law Center who is truly a champion for education. Mr. Rodriguez stated that Mr. Sciarra and everyone at the Education Law Center really does fight for every single dollar not just for this district but for all districts. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the ELC holds the current Governor and the Legislature, regardless of what side, accountable for not fully funding the School Funding Reform Act which damaged many school districts including ours. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the one thing he asked Mr. Sciarra about over the years we have been underfunding our own school system for many reasons. Mr. Rodriguez stated that is also damaging us and is something that we are going to have to deal with this year and for many years on.

Mr. Rodriguez thanked the Superintendent, Mr. Kennedy, Dr. Greene, and the Finance Committee and stated that they pretty much work on this budget all year long. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he really appreciates the work they do and he can't imagine the amount stress and the hours that go into it along with everything else you have to do. Mr. Rodriguez stated that everyone keeps talking about the success of our district and all of that praise needs to go to the

teachers, support staff, paraprofessionals, administrators, food service workers, custodians, and security guards. Mr. Rodriguez stated that those are the people who come in every day and try to make sure our children succeed whether they are serving them a lunch, keeping them safe, teaching them and making sure they get what they need because many times they don't get it at home. Mr. Rodriguez stated that they come to school and they take care of them so they deserve all the praise. Mr. Rodriguez stated that this week was Teacher Appreciation Week and we do appreciate what you do and we know that what you do matters and thanked them.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that this budget is tough and in the presentation once again one thing that we do not like and continue to say is when the City budget is compared to the Board of Education budget. Mr. Rodriguez stated that as Mr. Neron has said it is comparing apples to oranges. Mr. Rodriguez stated that when you break down how much tax each entity takes the City services 124,000 people and the Board of Education services 26,000 students. Mr. Rodriguez stated that when you break it down the school spends \$2,200. per student of taxpayer money and the City only spends \$1,100. Mr. Rodriguez stated that if you want to compare apples to oranges it is not a very good comparison.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that for this budget one of his main concerns was that the four of us and he is speaking for Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Mr. Neron, and himself, and he hopes they agree but they were never included in the process. Mr. Rodriguez stated that his colleagues may say that they had an opportunity to have input and they were right that we had the opportunity five days after it was due to the County Superintendent to give what we thought about the budget. Mr. Rodriguez stated that at that time five days after it was due we did have a meeting with the Superintendent, Mr. Kennedy, and Dr. Greene at which they did stay very late with us to discuss many options. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he put out a proposal that he thought was better and whether they agreed or not it did not come to fruition. Mr. Rodriguez stated that there is a better way and if they were asked and we were made to be a part of this budget maybe we could work together. Mr. Rodriguez stated that they were never made a part of this. Mr. Rodriguez stated that they will say they were here and available and that is true but after the fact. Mr. Rodriguez stated that is after the fact and they would like to be included at the beginning. Mr. Rodriguez stated that it is just another step into how we are locked out by the majority members and we are stymied and not allowed to help and put in work. Mr. Rodriguez stated that they are dying to help and to get their hands dirty to get into the nitty gritty to give our ideas but we are not allowed to. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he is a special education teacher and in a couple of weeks he is graduating with a master's in special education yet he was removed from the special education committee. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he thinks that is proof enough that we get locked out. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we try to help. Mr. Rodriguez stated that this is the majority members' budget and one of their members is not here today and you want us to pass your budget because we have not been included. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he does not feel like he has been a part of this and no matter what they say he does not feel like he has been a part of this. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he knows the central office administration has tried to reach out to us and meet but the first time we were asked to meet was five days after it was due to the County Superintendent.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that along with this major issue he has some other issues. Mr. Rodriguez stated that all of our police officers are going to be cut from the high schools and in this day and age the way security is and sadly with school shootings becoming almost commonplace he thinks that is a very dangerous cut. Mr. Rodriguez stated that no cut is easy. Mr. Rodriguez stated that by him nitpicking these little things he doesn't want to be disrespectful if it may sound that way because there is nothing easy when you have to cut. Mr. Rodriguez stated that to him it is something that is unacceptable but he is only one of nine. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he knows the Superintendent stated that we are hiring 36 teachers but he knows that there is also a staff reduction of some sort and overall we are only going to be gaining two new teachers from last year from the addition and subtraction. Mr. Rodriguez stated that to him it is an issue but we do what we can with the money. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he could talk for

hours in terms of what he thinks but he has never been asked to give his opinion until it was too late so he is going to spare the public that. Mr. Rodriguez stated that if the budget were to not pass he would hope the majority members reach out and ask him what he would like to say and what he would like to do. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he hopes that the finance committee reaches out before Tuesday. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he would love to meet with him and he really hopes that they reach out and he is glad that the next meeting is only a few days away so maybe we can correct this now.

Mr. Monteiro requested that the Superintendent clarify some of the points made by Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Monteiro stated that this is not the Board's budget and it is the Superintendent presenting the budget. Mr. Monteiro asked the Superintendent to also clarify the point about the net two teachers. Mr. Monteiro stated that a lot of misinformation was given out by Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Monteiro stated that Mr. Rodriguez said he never had any chances to meet with the Superintendent. Mr. Monteiro stated that the Superintendent made it very clear to all of us that her office was open.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to the budget process it is absolutely correct that it is a year-round process. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we started in the early fall and we make ourselves available to all Board members to be able to have those conversations that are critical with regard to the future of the organization. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in terms of availability we have made ourselves available and we have scheduled several meetings to have Board members come together to meet with the administration and review what it is that we are projecting for the following school year and to review what our needs assessments are showing us and to be able to sit and discuss our common goals for the organization.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in terms of teachers we will be hiring 36 new teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in her presentation that as part of the process of the development of this budget there was a reallocation of funds so that we could bring on board 7 additional literacy coaches and the same as with the 36 teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that was the need and we had to ensure that those positions were included in the budget. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in order to be able to fund those 36 positions we did reallocate and she did state that in her presentation from within in order to ensure that we were opening up the new classrooms and providing the support services that were necessary.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to the budget she believes that today is the last day in order to make recommendations for changes to the budget. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Board meeting on Tuesday would be to take the vote but the time period from May 8 to May 12 does not include the opportunity to propose changes.

John Geppert, Jr. Esq., Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC, stated that is correct that today is the last day to make any changes to the budget and the purpose of the public hearing this evening.

Mr. Trujillo thanked the Superintendent for her very informative presentation. Mr. Trujillo stated that he sat through several of these now and that was probably one of the most detailed ones. Mr. Trujillo stated that he appreciates it because he knows there have been a lot of questions and even some of the questions that were asked here during public speaking were actually answered in the presentation. Mr. Trujillo thought it was great that the Superintendent was able to anticipate some of the questions that the public may ask.

Mr. Trujillo stated that in reference to public speaking he was here as a member of the Board when we adopted the current policy. Mr. Trujillo stated that the idea behind the policy was to assure that the public had an opportunity to speak and that they spoke about educational issues and not to make it a public spectacle or a show and that they had respect and the respect would be

mutual to the Board and to the public. Mr. Trujillo stated that he is the first one to say that he agrees that every citizen has the right to speak their mind and they should address their elected officials in public. Mr. Trujillo stated that he encourages that and this room should be full today and there should be more people here and the public should be here. Mr. Trujillo stated that unfortunately he has been in this room when budgets passed and there were a lot less people so this is an improvement. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has passed budgets when no one came to speak and there was little or no interest in what was going on which is very sad.

Mr. Trujillo stated that the Education Law Center has been a big advocate on our behalf and a very important partner. Mr. Trujillo stated that every year we adopt to donate \$1.00 per student to the work that they do and we have asked over the last couple of years for the City to match those funds. Mr. Trujillo stated that as Mr. Rodriguez said we service the children but they are the City's children as well. Mr. Trujillo stated that unfortunately he doesn't think that they have ever adopted that resolution and done the same but that money could go a long way for their hard work. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is a very small investment and a big return on what we have been able to invest over the years with them. Mr. Trujillo stated that as Mr. Sciarra mentioned we were able to recoup a lot of the money that was held from us over the years through their work. Mr. Trujillo stated that with that money we were able to do a lot of capital improvements especially to our older buildings. Mr. Trujillo stated that it made it a lot easier to educate our children and made it safer for our staff and a lot better overall. Mr. Trujillo stated that we were very happy to receive that money because for a long time we were hurting for it and he remembers the boiler at School No. 15 breaking down, Edison Tech sinking literally, and a lot of this was able to be repaired because of the funds recuperated and the work done by the Education Law Center.

Mr. Trujillo stated that he is really concerned with the tone that these meetings have taken and he believes there is a small group who pretend to represent a larger group. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has said this before that he is grateful that his children are healthy and never had to have the challenges of special needs or anything of that sort. Mr. Trujillo stated that he thinks it is shameful to take and to prod into the hurt and the pain and the frustration that those parents feel and try to stir it up for political reasons. Mr. Trujillo stated that he supports advocacy and if they are really for the children and feel that we lack providing a service you have every right to make those comments and to come here and advocate and he supports that. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has offered his help and unfortunately (at which time he was interrupted)

John Geppert, Jr. Esq., Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC, spoke to the member of the public.

Mr. Trujillo stated that there was an opportunity for the taxpayers to make comments and we listened to them. Mr. Trujillo stated that there are rules to how this meeting is conducted and that is with mutual respect and that is the reason why we have the policy in place. Mr. Trujillo stated that we want everyone to have an opportunity to speak but there is no need to attack each other. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has a right to his opinion and has been elected to this seat three times by the citizens of this City and he is sure they want to hear what he has to say. Mr. Trujillo stated that his concern remains that this level of disrespect for the Board and the work that the Superintendent is doing and the misrepresentation that we are not providing the services especially to special education children throughout the district is shameful. Mr. Trujillo stated that it just isn't true that we are cutting trips to small children and leaving them behind. Mr. Trujillo stated that he talks to parents every day and deals with many of their concerns and these are not concerns that are being brought up because they don't exist. Mr. Trujillo stated that they are making them up and playing to the cameras to believe that this is reality and it isn't and it is shameful. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has never seen the Superintendent not address them and usually the concerns are taken care of at the school level where we have great principals. Mr.

Trujillo stated that we have excellent staff throughout the district who really care for the children. Mr. Trujillo stated that this is his personal opinion and he can't speak for the Board but it is disheartening that these things continue to happen because there is a policy in place. Mr. Trujillo stated that the policy was passed by the previous Board and it is the rules and regulations of how we operate the meetings and they need to be respected. Mr. Trujillo stated that he doesn't want to sit here and go back and forth and getting into a yelling contest with a small group of people who just are content with doing just that disrupting the meeting and disrespecting everyone.

Mr. Trujillo stated that this is a very important budget as they all are. Mr. Trujillo stated that some of them are difficult and this one is extremely difficult. Mr. Trujillo stated that as the Vice President of the EEA said no one wants to lose services. Mr. Trujillo stated that we don't want to lose services and he has children in the district. Mr. Trujillo stated that he doesn't want to cut services because he has already seen what cut services are. Mr. Trujillo stated that he doesn't want to lay people off. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has done that and sat here and had to cut a budget and lay people off and it took a long time to hire them all back. Mr. Trujillo stated that he knows many of them and it is very hard and it is very difficult when you have a reduction in force because you know it is going to impact the children directly in the classroom. Mr. Trujillo stated that these folks are working people who have families and children of their own, mortgages, college loans, and everything else that goes on living in this great country. Mr. Trujillo stated that there are very difficult decisions. Mr. Trujillo stated that he had ample time to be part of the process. Mr. Trujillo stated that quite frankly had he felt that he wasn't going to be part of the process you would have heard it and you wouldn't have heard it tonight you would have heard it several months ago and you would have been hearing that he wasn't part of the process. Mr. Trujillo stated that he was part of the process and he is very happy that he was and he understands the budget well.

Mr. Trujillo stated that we can't sit here and say that the City budget and the Elizabeth school board budget don't have something to do with each other because they do. Mr. Trujillo stated that the taxpayer at the end of the day is the one that is burdened with paying the tax. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have had the difficult job of balancing a great educational system with parity which is most important. Mr. Trujillo stated that parity is a very key word here because when we pay our teachers we needed to make sure they were paid well to want to work in Elizabeth because as Mr. Monteiro said for a long time people were leaving. Mr. Trujillo stated that we weren't able to hire the best and we weren't able to recruit and we weren't a good paying district and people didn't want to work here because it was a tough place to work. Mr. Trujillo stated that we were able to start paying better and become competitive and now we don't have a problem hiring good teachers. Mr. Trujillo stated that we attract a lot of good talented people who could probably work somewhere else but have decided to work here and they want to work here. Mr. Trujillo stated that is a testament to what the Superintendent has done and was here as the Assistant Superintendent before so she has been involved with turning around this ship for a long time and deserves a lot of the credit as does Mr. Munoz who is no longer with us.

Mr. Trujillo stated that it was very difficult and these choices have to be made. Mr. Trujillo stated that we don't raise taxes because we are afraid to crush the taxpayer and we don't want people to leave and we want people to be able to afford the homes they are buying. Mr. Trujillo stated that we want them to buy homes here and we want them to choose Elizabeth because it is good for the economy. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have a City administration who has their own cost and their own reason to raise taxes. Mr. Trujillo stated that what really bothers him is when they give away all the tax breaks to the large corporations like IKEA, the Mall, and he knows recently City Council is in talks of giving another tax break to a FoodTown that they are going to build on the old Daffy Dan's property which is another twenty year abatement that they won't be paying taxes to the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Trujillo stated that this is revenue that we can be making and we are giving away our City to developers and in the meantime it is

costing us money. Mr. Trujillo stated that it makes it very difficult not to say that they are not intertwined one without the other (at which time he was interrupted)

There were disruptive members in the audience.

Mrs. Amin called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Monteiro stated that for the EEA members he hopes all of them understand the importance of the next meeting because the budget is not being voted on tonight. Mr. Monteiro stated that the livelihood and the progress of this school district is at stake. Mr. Monteiro stated that all that has been accomplished over the ten years is now at stake and he hopes that message is conveyed to all members, staff, and everyone in our school district. Mr. Monteiro stated that he hopes this room is packed on Tuesday because it is clear by what has been said here tonight that this won't have the five votes necessary unless the support is here on Tuesday because a lot is at stake. Mr. Monteiro stated that the progress of this district is at stake and this is what it is at stake about to disrupt this meeting and it won't happen.

On a motion made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, the meeting was adjourned at 12:02 a.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 4

Abstain: Mrs. Carvalho did not register her vote – 1

Negative: Mr. Rodriguez – 1

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