

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
Approved June 17<sup>th</sup>, Board of Education Meeting

May 7, 2025  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Board President Stanley J. Neron called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the May 7, 2025, regular agenda/business meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education and read the following statement:

“Good evening and welcome to our Board of Education Meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education. This is a combined regular agenda and business meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was sent to The Star-Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on May 2, 2025. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

“We want to welcome everyone present here at School No. 51 and to our television viewers to this May 7, 2025, meeting of the Board of Education. We are here to govern, provide management oversight, and make policy for the district. The Superintendent manages the district. This is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.

“This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. So that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking.

We ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, we may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities.

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must personally sign in prior to the start of the public participation portion so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, telephone number, and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment.”

We are pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us here for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.”

Present: Dr. Barbosa,, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs (arrived at 7:10 p.m.), Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Messer’s Rivera, Neron-9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Jennifer Cedeno, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch-Johnson., School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy Jr, Interim Assistant School Business Administrator Rajeev Malhotra, Deputy Counsel, Heather Savage Ford, , Chief of Operations, Frank Cuesta, and Co-General Counsel, Edward Kologi Esq., of Kologi Simitz Law Office, were in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member Stephanie Goncalves Pestana

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Board Member, Charlene Bathelus.

Board President Stanley Neron asked Student Representative Mr. Christ Villard to present his report to the community.

Good evening, Board members, Superintendent Dr. Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendents, Principals, Vice Principals, Administrators, Teachers, Staff, Fellow Students, and families. My name is Christ Villard, and I am honored to serve as the student representative of Admiral William F. Halsey Health & Public Safety Academy. Tonight, I stand not just as one voice, but as a reflection of many of the vibrant, diverse, and dynamic student body that makes our school truly exceptional. At Halsey Academy, diversity isn't just a statistic-it's a lived experience. Every hallway, every classroom tells a different story. We come from diverse cultures, speak different languages, practice different traditions, and hold different perspectives. Yet it is in that difference that we find strength, creativity, and connection. It's that unique blend of backgrounds and experiences that will prepare us for a future in a global, interconnected world. Halsey provides the space for every student to explore their passions and reach their potential. And that is what I am excited to share more about with you tonight.

Throughout the school year each one of the school's representatives had to collaborate with administrators and teachers to improve our schools and make them a place where everyone feels comfortable and motivated to learn. We recognize that education is essential and that everyone learns differently, so we try to find creative ways to reach everyone in their educational experience. A perfect example of this at Halsey was our Interclass Sporting Event, at which I had the privilege of spearheading. It was more than just a competition-it was a celebration of school spirit and unity. With approximately 1,000 students in attendance, this event brought together students from grade nine through twelve and included staff from Halsey Main and Annex campuses. You got to see students who might not usually interact, all cheering each other on, playing side by side, and representing their class with pride. The positive feedback from students and staff after this event was overwhelming, and it demonstrated how impactful community-centered activities can be in fostering school spirit and unity.

This is just one example of the incredible work we've done together. Our commitment to our school community doesn't stop there. At Halsey we also care about the environment. You can see that in our student-led environmental clubs, recycling initiatives and working in our greenhouse and gardens. These efforts reflect how much students care about making a positive impact, and Halsey students are leading that charge with creativity and passion. We also grow beyond the classroom. In September, Fundraising events throughout the year do not just raise money-they build community. Whether it's for class trips, charity causes, or special school events, they bring students and teachers together for a common goal. Some highlights are:

The Ninth Grade ORT Farm Field Trip & Corn Maze which was an immense success where students learned about biodiversity, climate awareness and sustainability practices. In addition, Halsey hosted visits from universities like Kean University, William Paterson, NJIT, Montclair State, Rutgers (Newark), and Bloomfield College to help us plan our futures. Accordingly, the Ninth-Grade students hosted an HBCU College Fair, organized Thank You Grams for the staff and closed out the year with an impressive Holiday Dance Performance, all of which represent Halsey's commitment to student involvement.

To welcome 2025, we had a Resolution Wall, where students shared their goals for the new year. I am proud to be part of a school that values not just academic success, but personal growth as well. In February, our Volunteer Social Emotional (SEL) Group visited classrooms to help students feel more connected and included. This helped more students join clubs like the National Honor Society, Arts & Music Club, Math Club, and the YES Program. We also had a Hot Chocolate and Cookie Sale to raise money for the Senior Class. Groups like our Honor Societies and leadership clubs offer students a place to connect, belong and build their confidence. We celebrated Black History Month with fun events like a dance show at school, a door-decorating contest, and a dance performance at the Board of Education meeting. We even had Students vs. Students games, which were a big hit with all grades to promote that wonderful school spirit that Halsey has. At Halsey, no one must go through high school alone. One of our most powerful examples of our inclusive spirit is how we celebrate one another, especially during months like Women's History Month. At Halsey, it is not just a calendar event. We decorated classroom doors to honor important women and show how we value the challenging work they did to get where they are today. It's time when we lift the voices, stories, and accomplishments of women in history and our school community. A perfect example of this is celebrating our Girls ROTC Team who did great in the JROTC Fitness Competition, coming in fourth out of fourteen teams. At Halsey Academy, every achievement matters, every voice is valued, and every student has a place.

At Halsey we promote inclusivity, as seen in April where we celebrated Autism Awareness and through the Treat All Peeps with Kindness event, where we promoted kindness and school spirit. Halsey excels at this with our ongoing activities like the Give Someone a Reason to Smile Today Bulletin Board, Daily Shoutouts during Announcements, and weekly R.I.S.E. Shout Outs, which highlight the kindness and character of Halsey students.

In closing, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the Board of Education and our dedicated school leaders for giving me the incredible opportunity to serve as a student representative. It has been an honor to represent the voices of my peers and to advocate on behalf of Halsey Academy. This year, we have celebrated academic achievements, artistic talents, athletic victories and countless moments of leadership and growth among our peers. Thank you for trusting me with this responsibility and your continued commitment to all Elizabeth students. None of this could have been possible without the support of our amazing staff members and thank you for allowing me to represent a school of which I am so proud. It has been a privilege to serve, and I am excited for the bright future ahead for Halsey Academy and all its students.

Mr. Neron thanked Mr. Villard for his report and applauded all his accomplishments and wished him the very best in the future.

Mr. Neron then read the following statement:  
Citizens may address the Board.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone based on the order of the sign-in. 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 comments shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. Each speaker shall comply in all respects with Board Policy 9322 (copies were provided next to the sign in sheet)”.

The following rules shall apply:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced.
2. No personal attacks on individuals or the naming of individuals.
3. No vulgar or indecent language.
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting.
5. Comments will not be debated.

Any person in violation of the Policy will be warned, and their comments terminated if needed. If such violation continues, this individual may be escorted from the meeting.”

“As a reminder this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

Mr. Neron called upon the first participant, Brian Guzman, to address the Board.

Mr. Guzman spoke about the Year-end exam rules and protocols.

Mr. Neron thanked him for his comments.

Since there were no public participants signed up to address the Board, Mr. Neron closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Neron commenced a review of the Evening’s Agenda.

Tab 1a) Official and Private Minutes (April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025) were added to the Agenda.

Tab 1b) Treasurer/Secretary’s Report (March 31, 2025) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 2a) Personnel Report(s) 2a and 2b were added to the Agenda.

Tab 3) Tuitions Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4) Superintendent’s Reports were added to the Agenda.

Tab 4a) Considerations was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4b) Use of Facilities was added to the Agenda

Tab 4bb) Use of Facilities was added to the agenda

Tab 4c) Field Trips was added to the Agenda

Tab 5a and Tab 5b) Authorizations Report was added to the agenda.

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 7 Award of Contracts Report was added to the Agenda.

Mr. Neron asked the student Representative to present her report to the community.

Mr. Neron asked the Board Committee Chairmen to present their reports for the month.

### **Special Education Committee**

May 1, 2025

2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**Attendees:** Stan Neron, Board President, Iliana Chevres, Chairperson of the Special Education Committee; Board Member, Diane Barbosa, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools and Dr. Michael Ojeda, Director of Special Services.

The committee finalized the review of the SEPAC policy and regulation and recommended them for first reading at the May board meeting.

Based on guidance from Christina Topolosky at the Division of Individual & Family Support Services from Union County, the district cancelled the parent resource fair (originally set for Saturday, May 10) due to a scheduling conflict with a large county-wide event scheduled for that day in Plainfield. Instead, for our second parent event for this school year, the Division of Special Services is surveying our SEPAC parents on their recommendation for a workshop topic. The proposed choices are:

- Post-Secondary Program Options for Students with Disabilities
- Challenging Behaviors: Strategies and Support for Families

The results will be available by Friday, May 9, and will plan for the event to be during the last week of May (virtually). Dr. Ojeda presented to the committee the efforts of the Division of Special Services to recognize all Special Education team-members for their contributions to our students, in recognition of New Jersey School Boards Association *Special Education Week* for 2025. The event will take place this year from Monday to Friday, May 12-16. In addition to recognizing a number of special education programs via our social media platforms, two special events will take place:

- ***Thank-A-Paraprofessional Day.*** Currently, over 1,000 paraprofessionals serve our students each day in our classrooms. Students will make thank you cards for their paraprofessionals. To assist, the Division of Special Services sent to each school a care package of markers and construction paper.

- ***Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day.*** Our schools are full of teachers and other staff who go out of their way each day for students. As part of this day, the Division of Special Services sent each school three faculty/staff appreciation slips per student, as well as instructions to follow for each class. At the start of the day, each student will receive his/her three slips and be asked to recognize any three team-members in the school throughout the day.

### **Negotiations Committee**

May 2, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Attendees:** Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Negotiations Committee; Stephanie Goncalves Pestana, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools, Rajeev Malhotra, Interim Assistant School Business Administrator, Dieter Lerch and Julius Consoni, Financial Consultants.

The Committee was briefed on the negotiations meeting with the EEA that took place on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The discussion included salaries and longevity. Several offers and counter offers were exchanged, and additional dates were confirmed.

### **School Properties Committee**

May 5, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

**Attendees:** Maria Carvalho, Board Vice President/Chairperson, Iliana Chevres, Board Member, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member, Ed Kologi, Co-General Counsel, Chris Kinsella, Co-General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools, Rajeev Malhotra, Interim Assistant School Business Administrator, and Luis Milanes, Director of Plant, Property and Equipment.

The Committee reviewed a report with the count of custodians with boiler licenses. A total of 47 Head Custodians and 71 Custodians hold a boiler's license. The committee discussed the need and strategies to staff custodian positions with boiler licenses to ensure proper coverage in the district's 37 buildings.

The committee reviewed a report on the status of all projects requested by the committee, including 12 HVAC E-SIP projects, Dwyer/Halsey Window Restoration project, School 19 Gymnasium HVAC project, Security lobby projects, installation of TCUs at Battin Annex, Perimeter security enhancement at nine schools, Playground restoration at School 5.

The committee discussed the use of facility fees including reimbursement of security and custodians and rental fees for use of buses out of district by community organizations

### **Finance and Accounting Committee\**

May 5, 2025

1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Attendees: Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Stephanie Goncalves Pestana, Board Member, Ed Kologi, Co-General Counsel, Chris Kinsella, Co-General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools, and Rajeev Malhotra, Interim Assistant School Business Administrator.

The committee discussed the use of facility fees including reimbursement of security and custodians and rental fees for use of buses out of district by community organizations. In addition, the committee reviewed budget allocations and an increase of \$14.9 million in state aid.

The committee discussed the state mandated closure of 21 district classrooms and 9 Provider classrooms resulting in the reduction of 435 seats. The committee reviewed the projected enrollment for 2025-2026, the current number of registered preschoolers for September as well as available seats. The total number of available seats for 2025-2026 is 450 seats as of May 5, 2025.

### **Education Management Committee**

May 5, 2025

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Attendees:** Stan Neron, Board President, Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member/Chairperson of the Education Management Committee; Maria Carvalho, Board Vice President, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Board Member, Michael Simitz, Co-General Counsel, Chris Kinsella, Co-General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee reviewed the 2025-2026 School Calendar and noted starting on September 4<sup>th</sup>, two half day professional development sessions in September being added on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> and Easter week being moved to the week before Easter.

The June graduation dates were confirmed for June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup>

Tab 9) Claims list was added to the Agenda

Board President Neron asked Schools Superintendent, Dr. Hugelmeyer to present the Community Announcements. She showed and commented on a series of slides as follows:

Teacher Appreciation Week is from May 5<sup>th</sup> to May 7<sup>th</sup>.

National Nurses Week is May 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>.

The final Scholarship & FAFSA Completion Night will be at Dwyer Academy on May 14<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. For Scholarships, please create a GOING MERRY account prior to attending a session [www.GoingMerry.com](http://www.GoingMerry.com) For FAFSA sessions please create an FSA ID prior to attending. Please bring a laptop and tax documents. These items are a must. Counselors will be

available to assist with scholarship applications. For more information, please contact Aimee Saluccio, the District's College & Career Coordinator at 908-436-6669 or [saluvvioai@EPSNJ.org](mailto:saluvvioai@EPSNJ.org)

Please save the following dates for the following Parent Development Workshop Series for 2024/2025.

- Keeping Your Kids Safe Online: Learn About Online Dangers and Cyber Safety Habits. April 29/7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Learning About Artificial Intelligence: Basic AI – May 6<sup>th</sup>/7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Teamwork for Success: Building Effective Communication and Relationships with Schools and Teachers – May 13/ 7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Improving Self-Esteem to Enhance Your Educational Self-Improvement: May 20<sup>th</sup>/ 7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Growing Confident Kids: Boosting Motivation & Self Esteem in Your Children: May 27/7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Dollars and Sense: Building Financial Literacy in Your Youth: June 10/7:00 p.m. Virtual
- Financial Foundations: Money Management and Financial Literacy For Parents: June 17/7:00 p.m. Virtual

Virtual Link will be sent via both Text and Email. Please contact [Etienssa@EPSNJ.org](mailto:Etienssa@EPSNJ.org) for more information.

Dr. Hugelmeyer showed a slide containing Spring 2025 Assessment updates.

- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) / April 8-May 28/ Students in grades 3-8 and 1 in place of NJSLA
- Advanced Placement (AP Exams / May 5- May 16/ High School students enrolled in AP Courses
- NJ Student Learning Assessment (NJ SLA) ELA, Math, Science / May 6-May 23/Students in grades 3-8 and high school-Specific dates for grade level are on the District web site.

Superintendent Hugelmeyer presented a series of slides showing the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Ceremonies.

Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

- George Washington Academy School No. 1
- Benjamin Franklin School No.13
- Abraham Lincoln School No. 14
- Madison – Monroe School No. 16
- Robert Morris School No. 18
- John Marshall School No .20
- Victor Mravlag School No. 21
- Sonia Sotomayor School No .25
- Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27



- Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29
- Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy School No. 30

Monday, June 23rd at 1:00 p.m.

- Nicholas S. LaCorte – Peterstown School No. 3
- Joseph Battin School No. 4
- Toussaint L'Overture – Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6
- Terence C. Reilly School No. 7
- iPrep Academy School No. 8
- Woodrow Wilson School No. 19
- Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23
- Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26

Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>

- Winfield Scott School No.2
- Mabel G. Holmes School No.5
- Jerome Dunn Academy School No. 9
- Elmora School No. 12
- Christopher Columbus School No.15
- Victor Mravlag School No. 21
- William F. Halloran School No. 22
- Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School No. 28

Dr. Hugelmeyer showed an additional slide with High School Graduation/Class Award Ceremonies

- Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy – June 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. with an arrival time of 7:30 a.m.
- John E. Dwyer Technology Academy – June 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. with an arrival time of 10:30 a.m.
- Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughn, Mary Jackson STEM Academy – June 24<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. with an arrival time of 1:30 p.m.
- Admiral William F. Halsey Health and Public Safety Academy – June 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. with an arrival time of 4:30 p.m.
- Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy – June 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. with an arrival time of 7:30 a.m.
- Thomas A Edison Career and Technical Academy -June 25<sup>th</sup>. At 11:30 a.m. with an arrival time of 10:30 a.m.
- Elizabeth High School – Frank J. Cicarell Academy – June 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. with an arrival time at 1:30 p.m.
- J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy – June 24<sup>th</sup> – at 5:30 p.m. with an arrival time of 4:30 p.m.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Excellence Awards Dinner will take place on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The top 100 seniors from the Class of 2025 will be recognized for their accomplishments.

Dr. Hugelmeyer shared the following from the Inside EPS Newsletter.

Elizabeth Public Schools Coordinator of School Nurses, Marie Verdon, has been named School Nurse Administrator of the Year, by the New Jersey State School Nurses Association (NJSSNA).

The New Jersey State School Nurses Association's School Nurse Administrator Award is presented annually to publicly recognize and honor a practicing New Jersey School Administrator for outstanding leadership in school nursing.

Candidates for the distinguished award must exhibit many outstanding leadership qualities, including engaging , supporting and empowering all levels of school nurses from novice to expert, acting as a resource for providing evidence based practice and professional development to the nurses they lead, establishing policies and procedures at the district level , collaborating with school district partners , sharing and promoting a common vision for school health and school community promoting the professional role of school nursing and advocating for partnerships and collaboration at the state level, among others.

Dr. Hugelmeyer showed a slide featuring celebrations, commemorations and the honoring of various heritages.

- May 1 School Principals Day
- May 5-9 Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 6 National Teacher Day
- May 6-12 National Nurses Week
- May 7 National School Nurses Day
- May 11 Mother's Day
- May 18 Haitian Flag Day
- May 20 Cuban Flag Day
- May 26 Memorial Day
- Month of May-Better Speech and Hearing Month
- Month of May -Asian-Pacific Heritage Month
- Month of May – Portugal Heritage Month
- Month of May – Haitian American Heritage Month
- Month of May - Mental Health Awareness Month
- Month of May- Kindness Awareness Month
- Month of May – National Military Appreciation Month

Tab 9) Claims list was added to the Agenda

Resolutions 10 through 10r were added to the agenda.

Mr. Kennedy did the First Reading of the Following Policies

- 1112.4 EXPECTATIONS FOR CONDUCT AT INTERSCHOLASTIC COMPETITIONS/EVENTS
- 1221 SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- 1221 SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- 4151.1/4251.1 PERSONAL ILLNESS INJURY/HEALTH HARDSHIP
- 5113 ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND EXCUSES
- 5131.1 HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING
- 5131.5 VANDALISM/VIOLENCE
- 6164.1 INTERVENTION AND REFERRALK SERVICES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS
- 9200 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING OF BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Neron stated that the President requests a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of: Legal Matters – specifically Workman’s Compensation C.P., D.M. S.D. and M.S., Legal Settlement Doe vs. EBOE.

Personnel – Interview, Personnel Report

The Board will reconvene in public and may take formal action.

A motion was made by Mrs. Carvalho and seconded by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega to go into private session at 7:45 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Dr. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Messer’s. Rivera. Neron. - 9

Negative: None

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Carvalho to return to public session at 10:53 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Dr. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Messer’s Rivera, Neron – 9

Negative - None

The following items were added to the Agenda:

- Resolution- Settlement Agreement Doe vs. EBOE
- Resolution – Appointment of Assistant School Business Administrator – Rajeev Malhotra
- Resolution- Settlement of Workers Compensation Case M.S..

Dr. Hugelmeyer opened the public hearing on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying by stating the following:

Welcome to the Public Hearing on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) and our Student Safety Data System Reporting for the period starting July 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2024.

In July 2011, the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights was signed into law as P.L. 2010,

In accordance with this law, all New Jersey public school districts must designate the first full week of October of each year as a “Week of Respect.” During the Week of Respect, school districts are expected to organize activities, including but not limited to, age-appropriate instruction and opportunities for student discussion on conflict resolution, issues of diversity, and tolerance.

A resolution was put before the Board in September declaring the week of October 7-11, 2024, Week of Respect. Each of our schools planned appropriate activities for this week.

In fulfilling the reporting requirements pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46, two times each year between September 1 and December 31 and between January 1 and June 30, the school board shall hold a public hearing at which the Chief School Administrator will report to the Board of Education and the public any acts of violence, vandalism and harassment, intimidation and bullying which occurred during the previous reporting period.

From September 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, there were **142** HIB investigations conducted by appropriate school staff. Of those cases investigated, **56** were confirmed cases of HIB. The following Anti-Bullying Specialists, Anti-Bullying Specialist Alternates and Anti-Bullying Coordinator conducted these investigations:

- Catherine Calderon
- Jameelah Ward
- Nafeesa Freeman
- Brieem Towns
- Dinorah Mejia
- Fabi Ramos
- Andreia Giuca
- Melissa De La Cruz
- Yessenia Torres
- Gabrielle Gonzalez
- Meghan Courtney
- Sofia Verma
- Jacqueline Lupones
- Jada Nicholson
- Judith Lantigua
- Yomaira Carrero-Iglesia
- Cindy Goncalves
- Chris Lopez
- Samiyah Simpson
- Tanya Santucci
- Jessica Ortega
- Daniela Damiani
- Shayra Bustamante
- Kathy Amato
- Cindy Lichtenstein

- Melvin Luciano
- Maria Cabrera
- Antonio Sapio
- Nagwa Elsamra
- Kelly Connolly
- Sarah Brown
- Kathy Santos
- Kailey Monteiro
- Colleen Reynolds
- Christine Flaherty
- Cassandra Pedrosa
- Karen Slusher
- Kerry O'Connor
- Laura Bellevue
- Imani Lewars
- Edson Martinez
- Ishmael Medley
- Jessica Sepulveda
- Judith Valdez
- Felice Fabiano
- Jessica Sofranko
- Valerie Hendon

- Briana Kane
- Christine Rappa
- Chanise Hurst
- Daniela Grinienko
- Yasmin Maher
- Desann Brown
- Ilona Sekiewicz
- Jill Aller
- Safiyyah Howell and
- Peter Vosseler

Of the Founded cases for HIB there were 13 incidents based on Race/National Origin, 7 incidents based on Color, 4 incidents based on Sexual Orientation, 2 incidents based on Gender, 2 incidents based on Gender Identity or Expression, 3 incidents based on a Mental, Physical or Sensory Disability and 38 incidents based on other targeted bases.

Of the Founded incidents, 33 incidents were verbal. 19 incidents were physical. And, 9 incidents involved an electronic communication.

For all HIB investigations, there were 46 out of school suspensions, 30 in school detentions, 20 classroom changes, 7 changes of school placement, and 9 administrative counseling sessions.

Additional services such as counseling, skill development sessions, classroom lessons, behavioral interventions, referrals for outside mental health treatment, referrals to outside agencies, and parent conferences were offered to all involved students.

- Between September 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024, the district provided appropriate in person and virtual HIB training to school counselors and social workers, and to new staff

and support staff in the district. Additionally, all district certified staff received the 2-hour mandatory virtual HIB training, which is required every 5 school years. The district also provided extensive in person and virtual specified training to the Anti-Bullying Coordinator and to all Anti-Bullying Specialists and their alternates. Non-certificated staff also received training. New school level administrators and new HIB staff received virtual/in-person training in the HIBster reporting program.

- From September 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024 there were 168 substance abuse incidents districtwide. There were 194 incidents of Violence, 22 incidents of Vandalism, and 10 Weapons incidents, which are broken down amongst our 37 schools.
- Is there anyone who would like to comment on tonight's report?

Superintendent Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer presented the H.I.B report for the May Board Meeting.

1.) Pursuant to Board Policy 5131.1, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, and New Jersey Statute 18A:37, "The results of each investigation shall be reported to the Board of Education no later than the date of the next board meeting following completion of the investigation and include: 1) Any services provided; 2) Training established; 3) Discipline imposed; or 4) Other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator."

2.) Since our last Board of Education meeting on April 17, 2025, and through April 30, 2025, our school counselors, and school based social workers have completed 25 HIB investigations. Of these investigations 13 cases were Founded for HIB as per New Jersey law. There were 9 males, 17 females, 22 regular education students and 4 special education students that were the alleged victims. There were 22 males, 18 females, 34 regular education students, and 6 special education students that were the alleged offenders. Of the 13 cases Founded for HIB, 1 case was Founded based on Race/National Origin, 3 cases were Founded based on Gender, and 10 cases were Founded based on "Other" identifying characteristics. Of the services provided and actions taken for these investigations, there were 7 skill development lessons/trainings, 22 counseling sessions, 2 referrals for outpatient mental health treatment, 2 changes of classroom, 3 administrative counseling sessions, 9 in school detentions, 16 parent conferences, 2 referrals to outside agencies, 11 out of school suspensions, and 2 cases are continuing to be monitored.

3.) The HIB statute further requires that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after board members receive the initial report of HIB investigations, the Board issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision pertaining to the 70 cases that were reported to you at the last Board meeting on April 17, 2025. In order for you to do so, the investigation summaries from those investigations which were reported to you at the last board meeting have been provided for your review prior to voting.



Mr. Neron asked for a motion to approve the entire Agenda

Opening Calendar

Official and Private Minutes (April 17, 2025)

Treasurer/Secretary's Report (March 31, 2025)

Personnel Reports

Tuitions Reports

Superintendent's Reports

Authorizations Reports

Finance and Accounting Report – Pay Vouchers

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Award of Contracts Report

Claims List

Resolutions:

Haitian Heritage Month

Portugal Day

Cuban American Day

Approving Agreement with HP, Inc. to Purchase 2100 Student Laptops

Payment for Unused Sick Days

Accepting Purchase Offers for Out of Service Vehicles Sold Through Public Sale

Approval of Submission of School No. 27 Flood Mitigation Renovation

Approval of Long Range Facility Amendment

Insurance Coverage Dental – Atena Dental

Insurance Coverage Health Benefits – Atena

Insurance Coverage Prescription – Benecard

Insurance Coverage Vision Care – National Vision Administrators (NVA)

Transfer of Capital Reserve Funds

Transfer of Maintenance Reserve Funds

Appointing American Wear, Inc. – Food Service Uniforms

Appointing Cream-O-Land – Fluid Juice

Appointing R.P. Baking, Inc. d/b/a/ Pachter's – Bread and Rolls

Appointing Frank M. Gargiulo and Sons, Inc. – Produce Items

Appointing Nardone Brothers – Pizza Products

Workers' Comp Settlement – M.S.

Appointment of Assistant School Business Administrator – Rajeev Malhotra

Increment Withholding – Certified Discipline

Increment Withholding - Performance

Settlement Agreement – J. D.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Ms. Bathelus to approve the entire agenda.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmmes. Dr. Barbosa, (with an abstention on Tab 4c Items #35& 36) Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho with an abstention on (Tab 2a pg.20 Employment of Tenured and Non-Tenured Certified Personnel. Tab 2a pg. 20 Employment of Tenured and Non -Tenured Non-Certified Personne, Tab 4b Item#1 City of Elizabeth Dept. of Recreation use of School 30 Fridays 5/9 and 5/15 and Saturdays 5/10 to 6/14 at times listed in the Use of Facilities Request. Tab 4b Item#2 Elizabeth PAL use of Dunn Sports Center Swimming Pool 5/9 and 5/15 on Weds and Fridays at times listed in the Use of Facilities request. Tab 4b Item#3 Elizabeth PAL use of Williams Field on Sunday 6/15 for football game(s) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mrs. Chevres with an abstention on (Tab 2a pg.20 Employment of Tenured and Non-Tenured Certified Personnel. Tab 2a pg. 20 Employment of Tenured and Non -Tenured Non-Certified Personnel, Mr. Jacobs, Mmmes Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Messers. Rivera and Neron with an abstention on Tab 2a pg. 16 Mr. Colomb Thomas Petit as an administrator for after School Programs at School No. 5, Tab 2a pg.20 Employment of Tenured and Non-Tenured Certified Personnel. Tab 2a pg. 20 Employment of Tenured and Non -Tenured Non-Certified Personne, Tab 4b Item#1 City of Elizabeth Dept. of Recreation use of School 30 Fridays 5/9 and 5/15 and Saturdays 5/10 to 6/14 at times listed in the Use of Facilities Request. Tab 4b Item#2 Elizabeth PAL use of Dunn Sports Center Swimming Pool 5/9 and 5/15 on Weds and Fridays at times listed in the Use of Facilities request. Tab 4b Item#3 Elizabeth PAL use of Williams Field on Sunday 6/15 for football game(s) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. - 9

Negative: none

On a motion made by Ms. Bathelus and seconded by Dr. Barbosa, the meeting was adjourned at 11:02 p.m..

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative. Dr. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Messers. Rivera, Neron-9

Negative: none

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