

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

June 16, 2011
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called on June 16, 2011 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 Marie Munn presented the following statement at 7:34 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a special 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 Monday, June 13, 2011. 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 to this June 16, 2011 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. 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.”

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion 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, telephone number and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment.”

Present: Pastor Burgos, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Nazco, Perreira, Trujillo (arr. 8:07), Mrs. Munn – 8

Absent: Mr. DaSilva –1

Superintendent of Schools Pablo Muñoz, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Schools Jennifer Barrett, Assistant Superintendent for Family and Community Outreach Jerome Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Aida Garcia, Assistant Board Secretary Donald Goncalves, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Olga Hugelmeyer, Executive Director of Human Resources/Labor Attorney Karen Murray, and members of the public were in attendance.

Pastor Burgos gave the invocation.
Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Muñoz stated that as we end one journey of becoming one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey we begin a new journey of becoming one of the best school systems in America and led everyone in the Pledge of Ethics.

Core Beliefs and Commitments

Personnel Report – Returning from Leave of Absence, etc.

A motion was made by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Pastor Burgos, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Nazco, Perreira, Mrs. Munn – 7

Negative: None

Mrs. Munn presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphones 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 sixty 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 participants shall apply: time limits will be strictly enforced, no personal attacks on individuals, no vulgar or indecent language, a person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting, speakers should refrain from naming individuals, and comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated. As a reminder, this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

Since there were no citizens to address the Board, Mrs. Munn declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Superintendent Pablo Muñoz stated that over two years ago the Elizabeth Board of Education applied and was accepted into a program called Reform Governance in Action® which was a very selective national competition to receive training in reform governance by the Center for Reform of School Systems and largely funded by The Broad Foundation. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board went through the training with four off-site and ten on-site visits and continues with the Sustainability workshops which were held just a few months ago. Mr. Muñoz stated that one of the elements of the training was to make sure the Board and its governance team understood that its function in most respects is to provide oversight of the school district to make sure that management is delivering the vision and the mission. Mr. Muñoz stated that there are additional functions including setting policy and selecting the chief executive officer of the district. Mr. Muñoz stated that tonight we will focus on their oversight responsibility and that the Board has a schedule for conducting management oversight workshops each quarter of the calendar year. Mr. Muñoz stated that in most cases school districts that do workshops and those that participated in Reform Governance in Action® largely focus on the business operation side. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board does focus on those and in July there will be a management oversight workshop on finance, the management oversight third quarter presentation will be on construction management and facilities maintenance and in the fourth quarter the presentation will be on security. Mr. Muñoz stated that what makes the Elizabeth Board of Education unique is that we also do management oversight workshops on our core business which is teaching and learning. Mr. Muñoz stated that tonight the workshop is on teaching and learning with a focus on our theory of action managed instruction and the content areas of bilingual/ESL education and special education. Mr. Muñoz introduced Olga Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, who presented the team members responsible for the management oversight workshop on managed instruction and special education and bilingual education.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, stated that she appreciated the opportunity to come before the Board with members of the staff to present the management oversight workshop on managed instruction and special education and bilingual education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Michael Ojeda, Interim Director of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Michael Ojeda, Interim Director of Elementary and Secondary Education stated that the purpose of the workshop is to provide the context and details for both systems and to shed light on the critical role of the special education and bilingual education departments in our first core belief and commitment, “We believe all students can learn and achieve at high levels. We will ensure that all students graduate prepared to pursue a post secondary education.” Mr. Ojeda introduced team members including Assistant Directors Lisette Calvo and Daphne Marchetti, Interim Supervisor of Bilingual and ESL Veronica Tapanes, Supervisors of Special Services Scott Cohen, Valerie Dunn, Andrew Morris, and Anne O’Dea, Bilingual and ESL Instructional Coaches Mary Fodera and Sandra Nunes, Special Education Coaches Belquis Fernandes and Kathleen McGee and two Supervisors, Michael Orlando and John Moretti, who were not present.

Mr. Ojeda stated that the presentation tonight will focus on our theory of action managed instruction and the critical role of special education and bilingual education in addressing the unique learning needs of our students. Mr. Ojeda stated that the theory of action provides a stable, long-term framework for improving student achievement in the Elizabeth Public Schools and contains seven essential elements. Mr. Ojeda stated that the first element is curriculum and the Elizabeth Public Schools must have a district curriculum that covers preschool, every subject for every grade in elementary school and every course in middle and high school, and the curriculum must be coherent, aligned, and detailed down to individual lesson plans, teaching materials, and sample assessments all of which must be available to teachers for easy and timely access. Mr. Ojeda stated the second element is that to teach the curriculum, the Elizabeth Public Schools must maintain a workforce of effective instructional leaders and teachers and that human resource policies, structures, and practices must support this objective. Mr. Ojeda stated the third element is that the Elizabeth Public Schools must put into place a comprehensive professional development system that centers on the curriculum and effective ways to teach it, based on the best evidence-based research and that this system may include curriculum coaches in the schools, daily monitoring including observation of teaching and just-in-time professional development to support teachers in the classroom. Mr. Ojeda stated the fourth element is that periodic formative and summative assessments of student achievement must be conducted and the results must be disaggregated by classroom, subject, ethnicity, gender, poverty level, teacher, or in any other way useful to drive continuous improvement. Mr. Ojeda stated the fifth element is that this will require the establishment of a comprehensive student information system. Mr. Ojeda stated the sixth element is that interventions by child, by teacher, by subject, and by school must be carefully calibrated, appropriate, and timely. Mr. Ojeda stated the seventh element is that the Elizabeth Public Schools must put into place an accountability system that holds people responsible for meeting standards, changing behavior, and delivering excellent results and that the accountability system, for schools and other functional units, must identify important performance indicators, measure performance using these indicators, collect and distribute performance data, and apply predetermined consequences (rankings, rewards, sanctions, and/or interventions) for achieving predefined outcomes. Mr. Ojeda stated the vision that the Elizabeth Public Schools will be one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey, and in five years one of the best in America. Mr. Ojeda 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. Mr. Ojeda introduced Veronica Tapanes, Interim Supervisor of Bilingual and ESL, who presented the first part of the workshop on managed instruction and bilingual/ESL education.

Veronica Tapanes, Interim Supervisor of Bilingual and ESL, explained the services and tests given to a sample student who entered the Pre-Kindergarten Dual Language Program and was recently chosen student of the month in his bilingual class. Miss Tapanes explained that the student, whose parents are from Mexico, is proud of his Mexican heritage and proud to be an American. Miss Tapanes explained that one of the tests for English Language Learners (ELLs) is ACCESS that assesses language and students’ English language acquisition on a yearly basis. Miss Tapanes stated this student’s progression went from a language proficiency level of entering to a level of expanding and that his test results are proficient and advanced proficient.

Miss Tapanes explained that acquiring a language is from natural communication and that language learning is direct instruction of the rules of language and that knowing the rules may assist in passing an English test in grammar but not necessarily be able to accurately read, write, and speak the language. Miss Tapanes stated that second language acquisition has two areas, conversational language and academic language, that experts call conversational language Basic Interpersonal Communication (BIC) and is social language, takes between 1-3 years to attain, and uses phrases such as hello and what's up. Miss Tapanes stated that experts call academic language Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) which takes 3-7 years to attain and includes new meanings for words such as table, content words such as atom and molecule, and general academic words such as act upon, attach, and inquiry.

Miss Tapanes stated the purpose of the bilingual/ESL program is to deliver rigorous, grade level instruction in the native language while providing second language instruction in English, to ensure that mainstream curriculum is accessible to English Language Learners (ELLs), and to obtain knowledge and skills in their first language, in order to later transfer to a second language (English). Miss Tapanes stated that if there is stronger academic instruction in the native language, then the result will be stronger academic English. Miss Tapanes explained the focus areas including creating excellence in academics by providing and ensuring equal educational opportunities for ELLs through the use of research-based best practices and the delivery of instruction that meets the needs of all students, boosting students' performance on state tests by providing intensive instruction in the listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension of English to cultivate strong academic language and skills, changing our district's culture by celebrating and appreciating the linguistic and cultural diversity of our district's population and strengthening our professional learning community by orienting and involving parents. Miss Tapanes introduced the Bilingual/ESL Instructional Coaches Mary Fodera and Sandra Nunes and stated that in grades K-8 there are 53 self-contained K-3 bilingual teachers, 47 in-class support K-8 bilingual teachers, and 54 K-8 ESL teachers and that in grades 9-12 there are 11 ESL teachers, 8 bilingual mathematics teachers, 5 bilingual social studies teachers, and 5 bilingual science teachers.

Miss Tapanes stated that the New Jersey Bilingual Advisory Committee includes language experts, bilingual/ESL supervisors, coaches, and/or teachers and the committee serves to create and revise educational policy and inform instruction, curriculum and best practices at a state-wide level and that a representative from the Elizabeth Public Schools bilingual/ESL department currently serves on the Advisory Committee for Bilingual Education. Miss Tapanes stated that the bilingual/ESL department maintains a positive relationship with the NJDOE, that every three years the district must submit a plan to the NJDOE regarding the services and programs we provide for the ELLs, and that many other reports regarding district student demographics and program structure are submitted on a yearly basis. Miss Tapanes stated that for the 2010-2011 school year, the district's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Title III allocation was \$663,432. to support supplemental costs for ELLs including supplemental programs, professional development, bilingual/ESL coaches, assessment, and school-wide allocation and that the 2010-2011 local budget for the bilingual/ESL program was \$14,176,435. Miss Tapanes stated that the bilingual component is instruction in the native language to support academic achievement and that the ESL component is development of the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and that all students who receive bilingual services also receive ESL instruction. Miss Tapanes explained that the three district-wide bilingual/ESL program types including full time bilingual, part-time bilingual, and ESL Only. Miss Tapanes explained that the full time bilingual program is for students who receive content area instruction with a certified bilingual teacher, that the part-time bilingual program is for students who are assigned to mainstream English program classes but are scheduled daily for their developmental reading and mathematics instruction with a certified bilingual teacher, and that the ESL Only program is for students who are assigned to mainstream English program classes and receive a daily, developmental, second language program of instruction based on student English language proficiency which teaches aural comprehension, speaking, reading and writing in English. Miss Tapanes stated that district-wide there are approximately 3,000 students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) and that over 80 countries are represented and more than 30 languages

represented district-wide. Miss Tapanes explained a chart showing schools with the highest percentage, mid-percentage, and lowest percentage of ELLs. Miss Tapanes stated that according to the bilingual administrative code if there are more than 20 students of one language represented in a school, a bilingual program must be implemented. Miss Tapanes stated that if there are less than 20 students of one language represented and within a certain range of grades an ESL program can be implemented instead.

Miss Tapanes stated the seven components of the theory of action managed instruction and explained that the first component of managed instruction is curriculum which provides a framework for instruction, facilitates the development of the English language through the four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and supports an environment for students to think and question, communicate and create, and enjoy the process of learning. Miss Tapanes stated that the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) is a consortium of 25 states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for ELLs. Miss Tapanes stated that the WIDA standards provide a curriculum and assessment resource anchored in academic content and establish a common definition and measurement of how ELLs acquire language across the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Miss Tapanes stated that the curriculum includes social and instructional language, and the languages of mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies.

Miss Tapanes introduced Bilingual and ESL Instructional Coaches Mary Fodera and Sandra Nunes who modeled an activity of understanding the WIDA standards using an orange and began by describing the orange using the WIDA standards of social and instructional language. Mrs. Fodera and Mrs. Nunes explained the language of social studies with descriptions such as grown in Florida, only found in tropical areas, and sold for money, that the language of science includes descriptions such as healthy, Vitamin C, citric, grows on a tree, and is a fruit, that the language of mathematics includes descriptions such as spherical, globe-like, radius and circumference and that the social and instructional language has descriptions such as sweet, sour, smells good, juicy, and hard to peel. Miss Tapanes thanked them for their presentation.

Miss Tapanes explained the curriculum materials, resources, and lesson plans, and stated that our curriculum establishes district-level expectations including benchmarks and CAN DO descriptors using a description of English language proficiency skills that a student can exhibit and that it provides consistency with materials being reviewed and selected at the district level with involvement of coaches and teachers.

Miss Tapanes stated that the second component of managed instruction is a workforce of effective instructional leaders and teachers and that human resource policies, structures, and practices must support this objective. Miss Tapanes explained the team of coaches and teachers who service the bilingual/ESL department and stated that we are committed to recruiting highly qualified teachers with multiple certifications and that the workforce is maintained by providing additional support to new teachers, ongoing professional development provided by coaches and supervisors, accountability through formal and informal observations and evaluations, professional development plans, and implementation of the district's coaching model.

Miss Tapanes stated that the third component of managed instruction is professional development and explained the professional development offered including teaching Spanish literacy, native language transfer, administration of ACCESS for ELLs, ESL benchmarks, ACCESS data interpretation and developing objectives for the CAN DO descriptors and sheltered instruction, modifications for ELLs and the expected results.

Miss Tapanes stated that the fourth component of managed instruction is assessment and quoted the Theory of Action, "Periodic formative and summative assessments of student achievement must be conducted, and the results must be disaggregated by classroom, subject, ethnicity, gender, poverty level, teacher or in any other way useful to drive continuous improvement." Miss Tapanes stated that formative assessments are aligned to WIDA standards and provide data for the teacher to adjust instruction and address individualized needs using benchmark assessments, mid-term exams, and reporting which includes mid-marking period progress reports, report cards at the end of each marking period and parent/teacher conferences. Miss Tapanes stated that the summative assessments include district final exams, TerraNova,

SUPERA, NJASK, NJPASS, and HSPA and explained the graphs for the summative assessment results.

Mr. Muñoz stated that students new to this country are taking an English language exam designed for students in the 11th grade who have command of the English language and that it is the same exam that the students take in Millburn or high achieving and high wealth places. Mr. Muñoz explained that to be able to have cognitive command of the English language students need about 3-7 years of quality education and many of these students have been here only 1, 2 or 3 years. Mr. Muñoz stated that it is fairly challenging and that this gives a perspective on why these scores are different. Mr. Muñoz stated that the reverse would be if a student went to Germany and had to take a high school exam in German and asked how would a fifteen year old new to the country compare after one or two years of German.

Mr. Nazco excused himself from the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Miss Tapanes thanked Mr. Munoz for the explanation. Miss Tapanes stated that the bilingual/ESL department handles the two WIDA assessments, Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) for ELLs which assesses the students' English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing and the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) which is administered to new entrants who speak a language other than English at home and determines eligibility into the program. Miss Tapanes explained the proficiency levels including entering, beginning, developing, expanding, and bridging and the three tiers. Miss Tapanes explained a chart showing the score reports available for parents/guardians, teachers, student roster, school frequency, and district frequency, the audience or stakeholder, and the types of information. Miss Tapanes stated that parents/guardians receive a letter to accompany a parent/guardian report and the reports are available in 19 languages.

Miss Tapanes stated that another component of managed instruction is that this will require the establishment of a comprehensive student information system. Miss Tapanes explained that PowerSchool is our student information system and that it is a centralized system for registering new entrant students, monitoring student enrollment, eligibility, test scores and attendance, that parents are able to view their child's academic records through password-protected access and that it has state and federal reporting with coding, eligibility and placement, and projections for yearly enrollment.

Miss Tapanes stated that intervention is another component of managed instruction and quoted the Theory of Action, "Interventions by child, by teacher, by subject, and by school must be carefully calibrated, appropriate, and timely." Miss Tapanes stated that interventions are learning strategies or programs that help teachers individualize instruction and make accommodations for students with specific learning needs including the Language Acquisition Program for K-12, High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) Intensification Program for 11th grade, ESL Summer Enrichment Program for K-12, and Sheltered Instruction for K-12.

Miss Tapanes stated that the seventh component of managed instruction is our accountability and stated that districts funded by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Title III are accountable for ELLs development and attainment of English language proficiency while meeting state academic content and achievement targets and that districts are required to meet three Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) including percentages of students moving up one proficiency level per year, numbers of students attaining English as measured by exiting the bilingual/ESL program in 4 full years or less, and the ELL subgroup making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on standardized assessments. Miss Tapanes stated that the NJDOE has revised how the AMAO results are calculated beginning with the results of the ACCESS for ELLs test administered in 2009-2010 school year and explained a chart for each of the three objectives and graphs for the bilingual/ESL department meeting Title III AMAO.

Miss Tapanes stated that there are new initiatives in bilingual/ESL department including K-1 Spanish Literacy Program for bilingual students, LEADS in grades 4-5 and grade 9 for all students, and Point of Entry Program for Spanish speakers.

Miss Tapanes asked if there were any questions.

Mr. González thanked Miss Tapanes for the informative report and asked if the Point of Entry Program is going to be a separate class for students coming from other countries who did not have education or only a few years and are not at the level they should be and asked for more information.

Miss Tapanes explained that the Point of Entry Program will take place at the high school level for grades 9-12 and will be taught by a bilingual certified K-8 teacher for Spanish literacy. Miss Tapanes stated that there will be one class depending on how many students are eligible. Miss Tapanes explained that there are a lot of students lacking education at the high school level and we may look at expanding the program for grades 4-8 since many students coming into the country lack education.

Mr. González stated that a lot of students are not afforded the opportunity to be educated in their country and it is great that we are doing this program and the students deserve a right to have an education.

Mr. Perreira asked what happens to the other nationalities.

Miss Tapanes explained that the materials we have found right now are in Spanish. Miss Tapanes stated that another majority group that comes with interrupted formal education is the Haitian-Creole community and we have been doing research to find materials in that language but because it is a newer language it is harder to find. Miss Tapanes explained that they are looking to offer this for other majority languages but at this point it is not possible.

Mr. Gonzalez asked if there was an increase in the Haitian students coming to our district especially after the disaster in Haiti.

Miss Tapanes responded that she does not have the statistics but will get the information.

Mrs. Munn asked what languages are covered in the bilingual program.

Miss Tapanes responded that the bilingual programs are for Spanish speaking students, which is the majority, Creole speaking students, and Portuguese speaking students. Miss Tapanes explained that the students speaking other languages are provided with an intensive English as a Second Language program. Miss Tapanes stated that it is very difficult to find certified bilingual teachers in some of the other languages such as Arabic bilingual or Bengali bilingual.

Mr. Trujillo asked how the budget situation is affecting the bilingual/ESL program as Mr. González mentioned that a large part of our community are Spanish speaking foreigners moving into Elizabeth.

Miss Tapanes responded that it is challenging district-wide and has impacted our department especially last year and it was a challenge to service all the students. Miss Tapanes stated that we have a great team and did what we could to provide the services to the students.

Mr. Trujillo commented that the department has a great team and it is a tribute to all of you for the services that are provided and stated that he is concerned with the budget problems because if there were more resources we could serve the children better and going forward hopefully we can allocate more to this area to service our community.

Mr. González stated that we exceeded the State's standards even with fewer resources and that it is commendable to the staff.

Mr. Trujillo stated that his only concern is that the State's standards are lower than where we are aiming and that we never settle for the middle and that this is a growing need.

Mr. Donoso asked if there is a philosophical divide or school of thought between ESL and bilingual.

Miss Tapanes explained that the programs work together and that there is not one without the other. Miss Tapanes explained that if you look at the research using the native language and being educated in the native language first actually promotes the stronger academic language in English. Miss Tapanes stated that without the bilingual component the ESL and acquisition of academic English would suffer.

Mr. Donoso asked about the Dual Language Program.

Miss Tapanes explained that the Dual Language Program is for pre-kindergarten students in the three Centers for Early Childhood Education and is overseen by the Early Childhood Department, and that the children are instructed in both languages.

Mr. Donoso asked how is the first language assessed and at what point can students get out of the bilingual program.

Miss Tapanes explained that past immigrants were educated at home as well but now there are many students in the bilingual program who have parents that cannot teach them at home due to their own lack of education. Miss Tapanes explained that the students transfer their Spanish language into English in kindergarten and first grade and that the transfer component will facilitate the way.

Mr. Trujillo asked for advice for his children who speak Spanish at home and stated that it is harder for his daughter to make the transition in grade 2 as the curriculum expanded and that he is concerned about the transition for his son who is in pre-kindergarten. Mr. Trujillo asked if children who learn how to read in their native language excel later just as well as other children and asked if there is any data.

Miss Tapanes responded that they are collecting information on former ELLs so that we can track them and see how well they are doing after having gone through the bilingual/ESL program. Miss Tapanes explained that Mr. Trujillo's daughter is probably going through the transfer piece and needs additional guidance. Miss Tapanes explained that we are starting a new program that has a transfer component, that teachers will be trained and have a curriculum to follow and that it will be a guided approach so that students aren't transferring on their own.

Mrs. Munn stated that a lot of statistics and data was presented and asked if there is a comparison of the data to other districts.

Mr. Munoz responded that Mrs. Gil, Director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment has the comparative data and it will be sent home.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded that the data on students exiting the program shows that our district is outperforming others.

Mr. González commented that the presentation was very informative and that it is good to know this information when we are talking to people especially that we have 80 countries represented with more than 30 languages. Mr. González stated that there have been a lot of improvements in the bilingual/ESL programs over the years and the children are benefitting. Mr. González thanked the team for working hard to make our non-English speaking population feel at home and to provide them with a great education. Mr. Gonzalez stated that bilingual/ESL program is very important because we have a large population of immigrants in Elizabeth and hopefully we will have the funds so we can continue and offer the program in Haitian-Creole which is another community that needs help and can benefit. Mr. González commented that he agrees with Mr. Munoz that the workshops on teaching and learning will make us different from other districts and that we do not just want to know the business side of the operations we also want to know about the instructional aspect.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina commented that this is an excellent program in Elizabeth and that other districts do not have Dual Language Programs. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina commended the team for their hard work.

Mrs. Munn thanked the entire staff for their time and effort to put together this excellent presentation and commented that the Board looks forward to having an opportunity to understand the programs that we have in our district.

Mr. Muñoz thanked Miss Tapanes, Mrs. Fodera, Mrs. Nunes and the bilingual/ESL staff for an excellent presentation.

Daphne Marchetti, Assistant Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, introduced Scott Cohen, Supervisor of Special Services, who presented an overview of managed instruction and special education.

Mr. Cohen explained the services given to a sample student who entered the Elizabeth Public Schools in the first grade and was found eligible in the second grade to receive special education services due to specific learning difficulties including written language and reading comprehension. Mr. Cohen stated that in grades 2 through 4 the child received resource pull-out program services for reading and language arts and various accommodations and modifications within the academic setting, that in grade 6 the child received in-class support for reading, math, and language arts and continued to make improvements in grades 7 and 8. Mr. Cohen stated that in ninth grade the child was accepted to Elizabeth High School and received in-class support in his core academic areas throughout high school and has made continued improvements while receiving special education services. Mr. Cohen explained that in preparation for his transition out of high school the student will develop functional career awareness and discuss job seeking skills in addition to identifying realistic future life goals and their relationship to his current functioning ability. Mr. Cohen stated that the student was accepted to NJIT with a career goal to be a mathematics teacher.

Mr. Cohen stated that many students with disabilities require accommodations and/or modifications in order to participate, access, and progress in the general education curriculum. Mr. Cohen stated that special education teachers provide accommodations and modifications to support high levels of student learning. Mr. Cohen stated that the accommodations include a change in the format, schedule, setting, response, delivery or timing of a learning or academic task and that the student is expected to complete the same assignment as other students. Mr. Cohen stated that the accommodations do not alter what the task, test, or assignment measures but allows for greater access to the general education curriculum.

Mr. Cohen stated that the purpose of the special education program is to ensure that students with disabilities are educated to their fullest potential, increase student achievement on state and district assessments, ensure that all students are educated appropriately according to their needs, to assist in preparing students for a postsecondary education, ensure that all students with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE), safeguard students' and families' rights outlined in state and federal code and regulations, and collaborate with parents to address children's needs in and out of school.

Mr. Cohen stated that the Department of Special Services oversee all programs, services and duties relating to special education and also oversees duties in the field of general education and student services including home instruction, alternative education programs for general education students, Section 504 plans district-wide, nursing, attendance officers, special services to students in non-public schools and federal grants including IDEA and IDEA-ARRA. Mr. Cohen stated that his areas of responsibility include instructional programs and child study teams in each high school academy, speech-only services within the district, Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI), alternative education programs for general education students, Juvenile Justice Commission and state reports. Mr. Cohen introduced each supervisor who explained their duties.

Valerie Dunn, Supervisor of Special Services, stated that she is responsible for the programs, teachers, assistants, and the child study teams in School Nos. 3, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 26, out-of-district students, attendance liaisons, attendance officer, home instruction program for all students, state reports, worked on the extraordinary aid application and this summer will be supervising the extended school year program PK-8.

Mr. Cohen explained that John Moretti, Supervisor of Special Services, was not present and stated that his duties include School Nos. 4, 16, 18, 20, 23, 26, 27, and 28, initial referral process for school age children, alternative proficiency assessment, occupational therapy and physical therapy, Rec program and state reports.

Andrew Morris, Supervisor of Special Services, stated that his duties include high school special education teachers, child study team and initial evaluation school age children from 5-21, state reports and this summer will be supervising extended school year and initial referrals.

Anne O'Dea, Supervisor of Special Services, stated that her responsibility is to provide oversight for the preschool disability program including the identification and evaluation process, supervision of programs and services in district centers for early childhood and community based centers, IDEA federal entitlement grant, services to students in non-public schools and shares duties with Michael Orlando to provide oversight for Section 504.

Mr. Cohen explained that Michael Orlando, Supervisor of Special Services, was not present, and stated that his duties include Schools No. 1, 2, 5, 6, 19, 21, 22, 26, 29, and 30, instructional programs in grades K-8 district-wide, state reports, nursing services district-wide, and shares duties with Anne O'Dea on IDEA, ARRA, and Section 504.

Mr. Cohen stated that the special services team has 239 classroom teachers, 118 classroom assistants, 31 speech-language specialists, 23 social workers, 21 school psychologists, 20 learning disability teacher consultants, 6 supervisors, 2 special education instructional coaches, 1 behaviorist, and 1 audiologist. Mr. Cohen stated that the special education program in-district program includes 5 preschool disabilities programs and co-teaching implemented in select programs, that at the elementary level there are 46 learning and/or language disability programs, 8 autism programs, 6 behavioral disabilities programs, 4 cognitive impaired mild programs, 1 cognitive impaired moderate program, 4 multiple disabled programs, co-teaching programs in select kindergarten programs and in-class support programs in all school grades K-8, and that in the high school there are 20 learning language disabilities programs, 2 cognitive impaired moderate programs, 2 cognitive impaired mild programs, and in-class support programs in all academies grades 9-12. Mr. Cohen stated that the out-of-district services include 52 private schools, 17 public programs, 3 regional schools and the program types include multiple disabled programs, hearing impairment programs, autism programs and behavioral disabilities programs.

Mr. Cohen stated that in 2010-2011 the Elizabeth Public Schools received approximately \$6.7 million in federal funds via the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to support supplemental costs in special education, \$11,466,168. in State aid to provide services to special education students, and \$1,920,297. in extraordinary aid to support students with severe needs who receive educational services in both in and out-of-district facilities. Mr. Cohen stated that the district's classification rate, not including speech, has declined from 11.1% in 2007 to a classification rate of 9.7% in 2010, that the Department of Special Services has increased the percentage of students included in general education for more than 80% of the school day from 34.1% in 2009 to 41.9% in 2010, and that special education placements in separate private or public schools decreased from 15.1% in 2009 to 12.9% in 2010. Mr. Cohen stated that there are 2,284 students who receive special education services within the Elizabeth Public Schools which is less than 10% of the total population of the district, and that students can be found eligible in communication impaired, autism, auditory impaired, cognitive impaired mild, cognitive impaired moderate, emotionally disturbed, multiple disabled, other health impaired, preschool disabled and specific learning disabilities.

Mr. Cohen stated that the first component of managed instruction is curriculum and that many students with disabilities require accommodations and/or modifications in order to participate, access, and progress in the general education curriculum, that special education teachers provide accommodations and modifications to support high levels of student learning, and that the use of the accommodations and/or modifications is part of the process of developing individualized education programs for students with disabilities. Mr. Cohen stated that these decisions, under the guidance of supervisors, are based on a review of each student's present level of academic and functional performance and that it is a deliberate decision-making process which is designed to consider and meet the individualized needs of each student. Mr. Cohen stated that accommodations include a change in the format, schedule, setting, response, delivery or timing of a learning or academic task, that the student is expected to complete the same assignments as other students, that the accommodations do not alter what the task, test or assignment measures but allows for greater access to the general education curriculum, that in a testing situation individualized accommodations provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. Mr. Cohen stated that modifications include an adjustment to a learning task, assignment or test based on each student's individual needs, that the modification is used on a limited basis and usually for students with the most severe disabilities, and that the accommodations and modifications are written into each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Mr. Cohen explained the instructional strategies used including multisensory instruction which links auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile pathways of learning, that in the area of reading almost any specific, sequential reading program can be adapted to address auditory, visual, kinesthetic and tactile modalities in instruction, and that in mathematics many interventions include conceptually-based instruction and the use of manipulatives to demonstrate mathematical concepts.

Mr. Cohen stated that another aspect of the curriculum is home instruction which entails oversight of special education and general education teachers who provide educational services to students who are unable to attend school due to medical, disciplinary, or child study team recommendations. Mr. Cohen explained that home instruction includes facilitating the placement of all students needing home instruction and reviewing the IEP's reports, and mandated documents for appropriate due-process procedural safeguards. Mr. Cohen stated that the total number of students serviced on home instruction for the 2010-2011 school year was 234, that there were 46 students on administrative home instruction including special education and general education students, there were 34 students serviced on home instruction by the child study team, there were 154 on medical home instruction, and that there are four full time teachers and approximately 40 part time teachers who service students on home instruction.

Mr. Cohen stated that the second component of managed instruction is a workforce of effective instructional leaders and teachers and stated that the special education staff is composed of classroom teachers, assistants, speech/language specialists, social workers, school psychologists, learning disability teacher consultants, supervisors, special education coaches, a behaviorist and an audiologist. Mr. Cohen explained that the child study teams (CST) are composed of professionals who provide consultative, evaluative services to students, teachers, and parents and that each Elizabeth Public School has at least one CST member assigned to it. Mr. Cohen explained the responsibilities of the learning disabilities teacher consultant, school psychologist, school social worker, speech/language specialist, audiologist, and behaviorist, the roles of the special education supervisors, and the responsibilities of the special education instructional coaches at the high school level. Mr. Cohen stated that we are committed to recruiting highly qualified teachers with multiple certifications and that the workforce is maintained by providing additional support to new teachers, ongoing professional development provided by coaches and supervisors, accountability through formal and informal observations and evaluations, professional development plans, and implementation of the district's coaching model.

Mr. Cohen stated that another component of managed instruction is professional development and that the primary function of the professional development of special education teachers is to increase their capacity to facilitate student progress in the general education curriculum, that the primary function of the child study team professional development is to plan

for and meet the unique individualized needs of students with disabilities. Mr. Cohen stated that throughout the 2010-2011 school year the special services staff has invested more than 500 hours toward professional development.

Mr. Cohen stated that the next component of managed instruction is assessment and that special education students participate in district and state-wide assessments with appropriate accommodations as dictated by their individualized educational program (IEP) and that special education teachers utilize formative and summative assessment data to inform instructional practices. Mr. Cohen explained that formative assessments include benchmark assessments, midterm exams and final exams, mid-marking period progress reports, report cards at the end of each marking period and parent/teacher conferences. Mr. Cohen explained that summative assessments include TerraNova, New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK), New Jersey Proficiency Assessment of State Standards (NJPASS), and High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and explained the charts for growth for the summative assessments. Mr. Cohen explained that the Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA) is designed to measure progress toward achieving the State's educational standards for those students with severe disabilities who are unable to participate in the NJASK or the HSPA. Mr. Cohen explained the special education charts for TerraNova, NJASK, NJPASS, and HSPA.

Mr. Cohen stated that another component of managed instruction is a student information system and that PowerSchool is a centralized information system for students with disabilities in grades preschool through 12. Mr. Cohen stated that PowerSchool is used by special education to register new entrants to the district and that in 2010-2011 there were 277 new entrants, that it monitors student enrollment, attendance, grades, and state and local assessment results. Mr. Cohen explained the special education screen that monitors 42 data fields including IEP dates, state testing accommodations, APA, Tier 4 related services such as speech, counseling, OT, nursing and extended school year (ESY) and is utilized for the submission of the ASSA report and ADA report to the New Jersey Department of Education. Mr. Cohen stated that TIENET is used for IEP documents for initial, reevaluations and annual documents and that it monitors related services and progress towards goals and objectives through quarterly progress reports. Mr. Cohen stated that EASY IEP monitors the related service documentation as per the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) and the documentation of IEP meetings.

Mr. Cohen stated that the sixth component of managed instruction is interventions and that within the context of special education interventions are part of the individualized educational program developed for students with disabilities to increase their progress in the general education curriculum and that the focus is to provide instructional activities and materials to support student's learning as well as to provide specific interventions in a targeted area. Mr. Cohen explained the implementation and results of the early intervening services to struggling learners in general education in order to decrease the number of referrals to special education. Mr. Cohen explained the Alternative Education Programs which support general education students whose academic, behavioral, or social-emotional needs are not being met in a traditional school setting and who can function more effectively and achieve more in a supportive, individualized learning environment, that the Alternative Education Programs meet the graduation requirements of the Elizabeth Public Schools and that the programs focus on specialized instructional approaches, supportive services, and opportunities for individualized self-pacing to provide assistance to students in developing responsible patterns of behavior. Mr. Cohen stated that there are currently over 190 students in alternative programs including Hillcrest Academy, Essex Academy, Somerset Academy, and Middlesex Academy and that throughout the 2010-2011 school year there have been 71 referrals for alternative education. Mr. Cohen stated that Behavior Therapy Associates provides behavioral consultation for specific areas of need including programs at Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5, Toussaint L'Ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6, and Robert Morris School No. 18.

Mr. Trujillo excused himself from the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Mr. Cohen stated that the seventh component of managed instruction is accountability which includes early intervening services, accommodations for district and state assessments,

support for elementary and high schools to increase student achievement and readiness for college, supervision and evaluation of team members to ensure fulfillment of our shared mission, and providing guidance and leadership to schools and team-members to ensure the rights of students with disabilities and their families are protected.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Perreira thanked Mr. Cohen for the presentation and stated that a lot of information was presented and asked why there is a decline in the NJASK score grades 5-8 from 2007-2010 and what are we doing to improve.

Mr. Ojeda responded that we have increased our services to readers and it is still an area to improve and that any change of less than ten points does not register and some of our decreases were in that range.

Mrs. Munn thanked the special education staff for the great presentation and asked about the process, what a parent has to go through and how long does the process take if a child is struggling.

Mr. Morris stated that the basic process is the same for school age students from age 5 through 21 and explained that first the parents should meet with the classroom teacher, then with the guidance in order to meet with the I&RS committee which is a panel of teachers, administrators, guidance counselor, nurse, and a master teacher. Mr. Morris explained that the parent and current classroom teacher would meet with the panel to discuss the concerns of the parent as to what is going on with the child. Mr. Morris stated that the classroom teacher would implement the recommendations and tutorials of the I&RS committee for a period of 6 or 7 weeks and then a second meeting would be scheduled to determine if there was improvement. Mr. Morris explained the timeline and evaluation process if additional services were needed.

Mrs. Munn commented that it is an extensive process and may take quite some time.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina commented that the 504 is a different committee and is not child study team driven. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that the 504 is for children taking medication including attention deficit disorder and that the accommodations are made for the child to succeed in the classroom.

Pastor Burgos excused himself from the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

Mr. Donoso stated that the process is long and asked how many files are pending and if there is sensitivity training.

Mr. Morris explained that they received 321 initial referrals for evaluation of school age children which is a very high number and that 298 were parent requests.

Miss O'Dea commented that there were 281 referrals for preschool children and that the students we find eligible as preschoolers with disabilities is 6.5% of the overall preschool population.

Mr. Perreira asked if a parent sends a letter in haste to the special education team for their child, bypassing the I&RS committee in their school, is it due to a lack of communication by the school to the parent to understand and can something be done to help that and if the process is being delayed.

Miss O'Dea responded that we need to strengthen our intervention system and increase the early intervening services in general education to struggling learners.

Mr. González commented that parents may not know and may need guidance and perhaps include the information in the packet sent home to the parents in the beginning of the year.

Mrs. Munn asked if a parent gets information from their doctor, psychologist, or social worker saying that their child needs additional services does that start the process and does it go quicker if you have a doctor's note.

Miss O'Dea responded that there are times when the child study team can make a determination at the I&RS meeting that an evaluation is warranted immediately sometimes based on a diagnosis of autism. Miss O'Dea explained that there is not always a delay, but that time is used to provide services in general education before we make a determination.

Mrs. Munn asked what type of development or training are teachers given to help them identify the child's status and can teachers initiate the process.

Miss O'Dea explained that teachers are part of the committee to review the child achievement levels and difficulties and stated that at the PreK level 37% of the referrals come from teachers.

Mr. González thanked the special education staff for the presentation and commented that this is a very complex area and a lot of data has been provided. Mr. González commented that it is important to get the scores to increase and to make sure the children have all the opportunities they deserve and gives a lot of credit to the teachers who work with the children.

Mr. Muñoz thanked the special education team for the wonderful presentation.

On a motion by Mr. González, seconded by Mr. Donoso, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Perreira, Mrs. Munn – 5

Negative: None

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