

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

June 8, 2019
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called on June 8, 2019 at 8:00 a.m., in the iLeap Center at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, 123 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Stephanie Pestana presented the following statement at 8:45 a.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning. 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 June 3, 2019. 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 8, 2019 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 morning 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 may sign in up to the 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: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez (arr. 11:00 a.m.), Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Pestana – 8

Absent: Mr. Neron – 1

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., and members of the public were in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Stephanie Pestana presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in. 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.”

Mrs. Pestana called upon the first public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Kason Little, student, stated that he is being harassed for skipping class.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the requirement for student attendance and stated that she will follow up with the teacher with regard to the attendance of the student. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the information that she has is that he was attending the City Council Youth in City Government Meeting that was held in the afternoon and the teacher brought this matter to the principal's attention. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students should be in school at that time unless they had been invited by Mr. Mazza to attend the City Council Meeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the student says he was in physical education class and the record shows that he was not in class and that is something that she has to properly investigate.

Mrs. Pestana thanked him for his comments. Since there were no other public participants to address the Board, Mrs. Pestana closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Pestana welcomed Dr. Adrienne Bailey and Gail Davis who will be facilitating our governance retreat.

Dr. Adrienne Bailey welcomed everyone and acknowledged the availability of the Board members today for the retreat. Dr. Bailey commended the Board members on the wonderful things the Board does to support the educational community and that they should be proud of their accomplishments. Dr. Bailey introduced her colleague, Gail Davis who will be facilitating the retreat with her.

Dr. Bailey reviewed the general meeting norms including being fully present, operating from an agreed upon agenda and timeframes, respecting differences of opinions, being easy on people and hard on ideas, assuming the best intentions, being as concise as possible, enabling all opinions to be heard, expecting non-closure on some items, and deciding the retreat follow-up and next steps. Dr. Bailey reviewed the background resources including the 2015-2020 EPS Strategy Map, EPS Steps to Success, Three High Leverage Strategies, Promise Goals, and Achievable Results (AR) Strategies.

Dr. Bailey stated that the overall goal is to further the Board's effectiveness in essential areas of governance. Dr. Bailey stated that the objectives are to maintain commitment to sustainability and continuation of good governance practices, understand the governance role of the Board in the review, use, and dissemination of data, conduct an annual self-evaluation, and review the Board accomplishments for 2018-2019 and determine future Board governance goals.

Dr. Bailey reviewed the agenda including the retreat start-up with the President's Welcome, the purpose and introduction of the facilitation team, retreat norms, rules of engagement, review of the retreat objectives and agenda; sustainability plan check-ins including communications working agreements, work plan, superintendent's evaluation process and calendar for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, and institutionalizing the work; policy committee update; Board self-evaluation including a review of the areas of improvement identified for current year 2018-2019, evaluating the 2018-2019 results and two-year trend data, identifying the priority areas for improvement for 2019-2020, and approving the 2019-2020 calendar aligned with superintendent's evaluation; Board goals including a review of the progress on 2018-2019 accomplishments and setting draft goals for 2019-2020. Dr. Bailey stated that the retreat closure includes recommending future topics and retreat dates, plus/delta assessment, and next steps.

Dr. Bailey stated that the first area of work is the sustainability plan including the communications working agreements, work plan, and the superintendent's evaluation process and calendar. Dr. Bailey instructed the Board members to review the working agreement components including board to board, board president, board communication to superintendent, board communication to staff, and board communication to community. Dr. Bailey led the Board members in a group discussion of the communication working agreements and protocols and asked four probing questions including if the Board as a whole follows the practices described in the agreement; if the agreements have served a useful purpose in defining/clarifying their role as

a responsible individual Board member; which of the recommended areas of practices do they feel have created barriers or inhibited their functioning as an effective Board member; and what additions and changes are needed. Dr. Bailey stated that the second area of the sustainability plan is the work plan and led a group discussion of the probing questions including if the Board is satisfied with the current work plan, if the content provides a road map for understanding the major decisions and timelines the Board must address throughout the year, what is the development process, what is the revision/updating process, how is the work plan being used; does the work plan improve their effectiveness in carrying out their responsibilities as a Board member; and what changes they would like to see. Dr. Bailey stated that the next area is the superintendent's evaluation process and led the Board members in a discussion of the probing questions including what process, protocols, and time line will the Board follow to evaluate the superintendent for the 2018-2019 school year; was the NJ School Boards Association training helpful in understanding the updated process and content protocol and if additional training would be helpful; is there agreement on the 2019-2020 calendar with regard to the process, protocols, and timeline the Board will follow to evaluate the superintendent, and integration of the superintendent's evaluation process and timeline; and what are the next steps to ensure a meaningful and aligned process leading to the establishment by June or July 2019 of the Board and superintendent goals for 2019-2020 and who is responsible for follow-up and oversight. Dr. Bailey stated that the Board agreed that the NJSBA superintendent evaluation document will be used for the school year beginning July 1, 2019 and the current evaluation document will be used for the 2018-2019 school year.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer reviewed the timeline for the superintendent's evaluation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the evaluation data and evaluation document will be provided to the Board on June 13th and the superintendent evaluation will be completed at the June 27th Board meeting with June 28th as a deadline for Board members not in attendance at the June 27th meeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that between June 30th and July 17th the general counsel will compile the evaluation data in preparation for the July 18th Board meeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the final Board goals and superintendent goals will be presented at the July 18th Board meeting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the compilation of the results of the evaluation will be presented to the Board and superintendent. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the calendar for the self-assessment and superintendent's evaluation for 2019-2020 will be adopted at the July 18th Board meeting.

Dr. Bailey stated that the work plan needs to include the 2019-2020 calendar information for the Board's self-assessment and the NJSBA superintendent evaluation process. Dr. Bailey stated that this Board has stepped forward and grown. Dr. Bailey asked if the state has any special recognition for outstanding school Board performance.

Mr. Jacobs excused himself from the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Dr. Bailey asked how they are going to memorialize and institutionalize the work so that five or ten years from now they can say what their Board goals were. Dr. Bailey stated that she met with the superintendent and agreed upon the following recommendations including that the policy attachment is the memorialization of the policy monitoring procedures; the work plan is on the cloud and on the new BoardDocs; the working agreement will be on the cloud and an icon on the laptops; and the new member on-boarding will be on the cloud and an icon on the laptops. Dr. Bailey led a discussion of the Board goals being on the website and the cloud. Dr. Bailey stated that it shows the progress of the Board to have the goals being made public on the website.

Mr. Jacobs returned to the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Dr. Bailey stated that the next area of work is the policy committee update and led the Board members in a discussion of two probing questions and asked if they are satisfied that they are effectively fulfilling their role in this policy arena and if not, then what else needs to happen

for the Board to become more effective; and what specific next steps are needed to ensure this Board goal is brought to full completion and for priority policies to be monitored. Dr. Bailey stated that Mr. Jacobs is the chairperson of the policy committee.

Mr. Jacobs stated that the policy committee has been very active and he is very excited with the support of the Board members and administration that we passed the Equity Policy this year. Mr. Jacobs asked the superintendent if we are on track to have the implementation plan this Thursday.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we just completed the Comprehensive Equity Plan, which is due to the State on June 14th. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we also completed all of the documentation for that plan. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we also created a corrective action plan that she will be sharing with the Board this Thursday and that we need to focus on in the upcoming school year based on our data. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that will coincide with the implementation plan and our policy.

Mr. Jacobs stated that as part of their work here, the Board needs to make sure that they monitor this policy and the effects and metrics associated with it and to see that we are actually effecting change in our district for our children and our community. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is one of our primary goals here as Board members. Mr. Jacobs stated that this is one of the key policies that they just adopted in the last few years and it will be interesting to see its effect going forward. Mr. Jacobs stated that a review was completed by Lester Taylor, Esq., of all of our policies and we will be presenting an updated policy manual of all of our updated policies that have also gone through the NJSBA policy check. Mr. Jacobs stated that the process has been completed. Mr. Jacobs stated that the policy committee has been very busy and one of the issues that they did address is what policies we would like to focus on in the upcoming year.

Dr. Bailey stated that there are two probing questions and asked what new policies the Board wants to create and what priority policies does the Board want to continue to monitor. Dr. Bailey asked if the committee has a recommendation.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he would like to continue monitoring the data dashboard policy and the promotion and retention policy. Mr. Jacobs stated that the constituent services policy is covered and they are working on that through our communication working agreements. Mr. Jacobs stated that we do need to continue with the student code of conduct policy in terms of how it relates to our equity policy.

Facilitator Gail Davis stated that the student code of conduct is aligned to the promotion and retention policy.

Dr. Bailey stated that the recommendation is to continue the monitoring of the data dashboard, promotion and retention, and student code of conduct. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion of any additional policies that the Board would like to monitor and the Board agreed to include the equity policy. The Board discussed the NJSBA Wellness Check Report of the policy manual and agreed to have the report on the cloud. The Board agree to have a policy to formalize the process and include it in the on-boarding of new Board members. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion of any proposed revisions of policies and referral to the policy committee including the communications protocols - social media policy, SEPAC policy, and the student uniform policy. Dr. Bailey reviewed the recommendation for the policy committee to revisit the student uniform policy. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion with regard to the necessary Board actions regarding the adoption of all the policies recently reviewed by Lester Taylor, Esq., and NJSBA.

Dr. Bailey stated that the next area of work is to review the progress of the 2018-2019 Board Goals. Dr. Bailey instructed small groups of Board members to engage in a self-assessment of the Progress Report for the 2018-2019 Board Goals indicating the progress made on each goal since February 2019. Dr. Bailey reviewed the goals including agreeing on annual

Board governance goals and work plan; develop, update, and monitor policies/procedures in the priority areas including data dashboard, constituent services, promotion and retention, and student code of conduct; learn and support the district's teaching and learning agenda; participate in professional development through retreats and workshops, set an annual calendar, complete and review Board self-assessment results with attention to priority areas of improvement; provide increased opportunities for community engagement with the Board; engage in policy development by establishing a district-wide equity policy; and engage in the comprehensive review and monitoring of all policies. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion of the probing questions for the priority areas for establishing Board goals for 2019-2020 including which goals have been satisfactorily completed during 2018-2019; which goals should be continued or reaffirmed; are there goals they would like to keep but revise or modify; which goals should be eliminated; what new governance goals would they like to prioritize; and how will the alignment of the Board goals with the superintendent's goals be achieved. The Board agreed that the two goals that have been completed are engaging in policy development by establishing a district-wide equity policy and engaging in a comprehensive review and monitoring of all policies. The Board agreed to reaffirm the remainder of the goals. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion about the high priority items they would like to add as goals. The Board discussed priority areas including eliminating the achievement gap and an equitable distribution throughout the schools. Dr. Bailey summarized that at the July Board meeting, the Board goals for 2019-2020 should include the reaffirmed goals as a starting point, a list of ideas for the Board to decide on collectively, and then add one or two additional priority goals that may be joint goals with the superintendent.

Dr. Bailey stated that the last area of work is the priority areas for improvement for 2019-2020. Dr. Bailey reviewed the 2018-2019 Board self-evaluation and the highlights identified by the Board to spend more time on which include conducting more efficient and effective Board meetings; the district's philosophy of teaching and learning that provides an overarching strategy for achieving goals seems to lack full clarity for some members; and effective communications with and engagement of the community to inform Board decisions. Dr. Bailey reviewed the raw data survey results that were compiled by the district staff of the areas identified as in agreement, disagreement, and need of improvement. Dr. Bailey instructed the Board members to review and identify one or two areas of concern using the trend data. Dr. Bailey led a discussion of the probing questions including what are the most positive points of agreement showing evidence of effective governance practices in which the majority of the Board assessed the practices as fully present; what areas indicated disagreements in which there were mixed reactions with high and low scores; which governance scored the lowest suggesting a specific need for improvement; and what areas of governance practices should be prioritized for improvement during 2019-2020 and what specifically will be done to address and monitor these areas. Dr. Bailey led a group discussion of the priority areas for Board improvement including that the work plan incorporate the management oversight meetings that address teaching and learning for an opportunity to discuss topics further through the education management committee; meetings with community groups to assess our priority areas for the development of the new Strategic Plan for 2021-2026 and holding two town hall meetings in 2019-2020; the work plan needs to incorporate the scheduling of finance committees prior to the monthly Board meeting as needed; full budget reports provided to the Board members prior to the budget approval; and scheduling of budget meetings with two cohorts of Board members to provide sufficient opportunity to discuss all aspects of the budget prior to approval. Dr. Bailey stated that the areas that need further discussion include respect of the Board, being a fairly cohesive Board to advance the work of the Board, and the structure of the committee, agenda, and business meetings.

Mr. Kennedy stated that this is the last retreat with Facilitators Adrienne Bailey and Gail Davis. Mr. Kennedy stated that there are still a lot of items on the table for retreats for next year and asked the Board if they would like to move forward with a contract for next year. The Board authorized the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary to develop a contract with Facilitators Adrienne Bailey and Gail Davis.

Dr. Bailey and Ms. Davis thanked the Board for allowing them to have the opportunity to serve the Board. Dr. Bailey commended the Board members and administrators on their remarkable work.

Mr. Jacobs stated that the National School Boards Association Conference was in Philadelphia this year and Texas last year. Mr. Jacobs stated that we do not have any visibility at the meetings and it may be good professional development. Mr. Jacobs stated that it would be good to be aware of the conference.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega responded that she has information for the National School Boards Association.

Dr. Bailey stated that the possible dates for the next Board retreats are October 26, 2019, February 8, 2020, and May 30, 2020.

Ms. Bathelus excused herself from the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Mrs. Pestana thanked Dr. Bailey and Ms. Davis for facilitating this retreat. Mrs. Pestana thanked her colleagues and administrators for their work today.

On a motion by Mrs. Carvalho, seconded by Mrs. Hernandez, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs,
Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Pestana – 7

Negative: None

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