

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Official Minutes
(Approved Board Meeting November 14, 2024)

October 17, 2024
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Board President Charlene Bathelus welcomed everyone to the October 17, 2024, regular agenda/business meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Ms. Bathelus called the meeting to order and read the following statement at 5:39 p.m. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, 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 October 11, 2024. In addition, this notice is posted in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street and a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

“We want to welcome everyone present here at School No. 51, and to our television viewers to this October, 17, 2024, 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 for the recording to 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 comment 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 for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.

Present: Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres. (arrived at 6:13 p.m.), Mr. Jacobs, (arrived at 6:52 p.m.) Mrs. Moreno Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Ms. Bathelus-8

Absent: Mrs. Barbosa-1

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Jenifer Cedenio, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Rafael Cortes Jr., Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy Jr., Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, Deputy Counsel. Heather Savage Ford, and Co-General Counsel, Michael Simitz of Kologi Simitz Law Office, were in attendance.

A Moment of Silence was held in memory of:

Nathan Dodge McBean, Husband of Michelle McBean, Future City Inc., and former Internal Auditor at the Elizabeth Public Schools.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Vice President Stan Neron

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Board Member Maria Carvalho

The Star-Spangled Banner by Francis Scott Key was played.

Board President Charlene Bathelus introduced District Superintendent Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer and asked her to present the Student Representative to the Board of Education for the month of October. Dr. Hugelmeyer introduced Emely Herrera, a senior at Frank J Cicarell Academy, where she was recognized as a Capstone Scholar athlete and is a member of the National Honor Society. She is President of the Student Government, as well as a captain of the Speech and Debate team. In addition, to these time-consuming activities, Emely is a member of the Varsity Soccer Team and also conducts Bible studies for the younger members of her Church. Dr. Hugelmeyer asked Miss Herrera to come forward and take her seat on the dais.

Ms. Bathelus asked Mr. Kennedy to memorialize Miss Herrera's attendance in the official proceedings of the meeting. This was noted and Miss Herrera's attendance is recorded in the official minutes of the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus 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.”

Ms. Bathelus called upon the first public participant, Christina Morreira, to address the Board.

Ms. Morreira spoke about the need for Dyslexia Screening in schools.

Ms. Bathelus thanked her for her comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Mr. Little spoke about the District Uniform policy.

Ms. Bathelus thanked him for his comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next public participant, Michelle Santos, to address the Board.

Ms. Santos suggested incorporating yoga into the Special Needs Afterschool and Saturday programs.

Ms. Bathelus thanked her for her comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Mrs. Lorenz spoke about the District’s Vape policy and alleged Program cuts.

Ms. Bathelus thanked her for his comments.

Since there were no other public participants signed up to address the Board, Ms. Bathelus closed this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus introduced the October Board Initiative Hispanic Heritage Month .

As Board President, my continued vision is to promote community engagement and to unite board members as a team. As I had mentioned in my January opening remarks as Board President, each board member was asked to contribute and sponsor a specific initiative each month throughout the year.

During the month of October, Board Member Isaias Rivera chose to sponsor Hispanic Heritage Month to highlight the rich diversity of Elizabeth Public Schools and the outstanding work being done in our schools to ensure ALL students learn and achieve at high levels regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, neighborhood, household income or home language.

In the highlight video, you’ll experience Hispanic Heritage Month as a time for us to celebrate the rich contributions of Hispanic Americans to our country's history and culture. It is also a time to learn more about the diverse cultures and traditions of Hispanic communities in Elizabeth. The full video will be made available on the district website at the end of the month.

Mr. Rivera recounted his experience as a Bilingual/ESL learner when he and his family moved to Elizabeth from Ecuador when he was still a student. It was a challenging time in his life but thanks to the rigorous academic programs in place he was able to thrive as a student. He further reiterated the importance of equity

and inclusion in our schools and creating an environment where all students can learn and achieve. He is very proud of the work being done by this Board in recognizing and implementing programs for all students.

Board President Charlene Bathelus asked Schools Superintendent, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, to present the announcements for the month of October. Dr. Hugelmeyer showed a series of Power Point Slides that highlighted the following:

Through the use of the District's web site (www.EPSNJ.org/flu-rsv) or the Flu-RSV icon on the District homepage students, families and staff may avail themselves of resources to protect themselves from flu and RSV this school year.

October 23rd will be the Fall, College Board, PSAT/SAT testing day for all high school students in grades 10-12.

After School and Saturday Programs are or will be in process as seen below.

At the elementary level there is an Academic English Language Arts/Mathematics Afterschool Program – Students in Grades K-8 will be offered an academic program focusing on English Language Arts and Mathematics standards. Students will learn through an adaptive, personalized experience utilizing SuccessMaker. Families will be notified by your principal if your child needs to attend. General education and in class Support students will be included. The ASP-Academic Program will include “Homework Help” for the first (ten) 10 minutes and SuccessMaker will be implemented for the remaining (fifty) 50 minutes. The program will run on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from October 15, 2024, to May1, 2025, from 3:05 p.m. -4:05 p.m.

Point of Entry Afterschool Program – This afterschool program is designed for new entrant elementary ELL students. The purpose of the program is to provide students with scaffolded grade level instruction in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies via engaging activities. Social, emotional support and activities are provided by our district bilingual psychologist. Families will be notified by your principal if your child needs to attend. The selection of the students chosen for their participation in the program is based on ELA and Mathematics need. The program will run on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from October 15, 2024, to May1, 2025, from 3:05 p.m.-4:05 p.m.

Social Emotional Learning Afterschool Program – ESL Point of Entry program. This program is offered to students in the ESL Point of Entry program. The district's bilingual Psychologist will conduct social emotional learning activities and sessions with students in the ESL Point of Entry program. Families will be notified by your principal if your child needs to attend. The selection of the students chosen for their participation in the program is based on ESL academic needs. and Mathematics need. The program will run on Monday's – Thursdays plus Saturdays, from October 15, 2024, to June 6, 2025, from 3:05 p.m. -4:05 p.m.

Social Emotional Learning Afterschool Program – The Elizabeth Public School's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL After School Program is designed to empower students with essential life skills. Your School Counselor or School Social Worker will reach out to discuss the benefits of your child attending this program. The program offers a safe and supportive environment where children can explore their emotions, develop empathy, and strengthen their interpersonal skills through group discussions, arts, and crafts, team-building exercises, and mindfulness practices. This program is led by our School Counselors and School-based Social Workers. The program will run on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from October 22, 2024, to May 22, 2025, from 3:05 p.m.-4:05 p.m. (K-8) and from 2:30 p.m.to 3:30 p.m. (9-12).

Arts Enrichment Afterschool Program – The Arts Enrichment Afterschool Program is a stimulating program that blends the arts, literature, and technology in a creative atmosphere that offers elementary and middle level students

an opportunity to explore their imagination and artistic talents. This program runs from 3:05 to 4:05 on Mondays and Thursdays from October 21, 2024, to May 16, 2025. Registration may be done via an online form.

Fall Saturday Youth Athletic Program – The Athletic Department will facilitate the Fall Saturday Youth Athletic Program; this program is for students in Grades 1-8. The purpose of the Youth programs is to provide a safe and healthy environment that promotes physical development by teaching the fundamentals of sports. Registration for the Fall Youth Athletic Program will take place online. The program will run from October 19, 2024 - December 14, 2024. Times are as follows: 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. (grades 1-2) 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (Grades 3-5) 10:31 a.m. -12:00 p.m. (Grades 6-8).

There are two programs that are open to both Elementary and High School Students.

Special Education Support Afterschool Program – The Special Education Support Afterschool Program provides students in Kindergarten through 12th grade with homework support and tutoring to assist in meeting, classroom, school and district expectations. This is a voluntary program for all students with disabilities. It will run from October 22, 2024 – May 29, 2025, on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Registration for this program will take place online.

Arts Enrichment Saturday Program – The Arts Enrichment Saturday Program is an innovative program providing middle level and high school students an opportunity to learn in a creative atmosphere, while incorporating fine arts and music into creative literature and technology. The program will be held on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. from October 26, 2024-May 17, 2025.

High School Afterschool and Saturday programs at the High School Level are also in process as outlined below.

Lunchtime and Afterschool Tutoring Program – Multiple Tutors are available during lunch period and can help with English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies skills. During the Afterschool session there are multiple faculty members available to help students. Tutoring is offered at all high school academies. The tutoring program runs from September 6, 2024, to June 19, 2025, Monday through Friday. This covers all lunch periods, and the Afterschool program runs from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Afterschool Tutoring Program – Princeton Review – Princeton Review's Tutor.com offers a range of tutoring services for High School students. It provides personalized one-on-one tutoring in various subjects, including math, science, English, and test preparation. Key Features include:

- Live Tutoring: students can connect with tutors in real time for immediate help
- On-Demand Help: Access to tutoring sessions 24/7 for homework assistance and study support
- Subject-Specific Resources: Study guides, practice problems and instructional videos to enhance learning
- Test Prep: Specialized support for standardized tests like the SAT, ACT, and more.

Students or parents are able to request the tutoring services by notifying the respective School Principal. This Program runs Monday through Fridays October 15, 2024 – June1, 2025.

Best of Both World Afterschool Program – This program is designed for High School new entrant Multi-Lingual students whose English language Proficiency is between Level 1 and Level 2. The purpose of the program is to provide foundational literacy and math skills. The skills and strategies taught will assist students in enhancing comprehension skills in the second language. You will be notified by your school principal if your child needs to attend. The program will run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. from October 15, 2024, to May 30th, 2025.

CTE Afterschool Tutoring Program – This program provides academic support and enrichment to the CTE programs (Auto tech, Collision and Cosmetology), in addition to providing additional seat hours for industry valued credentialing requirements as per state or licensing bureaus. Students are selected/recommended based on need. This program started in September 2024 and will conclude in May of 2025. The hours of the program are from 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

CTE Saturday Program – This program provides academic support, career counseling and mentoring to students enrolled in and to increase awareness and non-traditional program enrollment. Students are selected based on interest, need and parents' enrollment and availability through Power School Forms. Session 1 is from October – December and Session 2 runs from February through April. These sessions take place on Saturday mornings 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (6-8) and 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (9-12).

APEX Saturday Program – Apex Learning is the leading provider of blended and virtual learning solutions to the nation's schools. Their digital curriculum provides an active learning experience that engages all students in rigorous coursework to prepare them for college and work. The standards-based digital curriculum – in Math, Science, English, Social Studies, World Language, Electives and Advanced Placement- is widely used for original credit, credit recovery, intervention, acceleration and exam preparation. Students are selected is based on the need for accrual or recovery of specific courses needed for graduation. This program which takes place on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. started on September 21, 2024 and will run through May 2024

High School Afterschool Clubs – A broad spectrum of afterschool clubs are provided among the eight district high schools. Students should check with their respective school to find out the available clubs in which you wish to participate. Current Clubs include:

- Fitness Club
- Autism Awareness Club
- Art Club
- Community Service Club
- Literacy Club
- Community Outreach Club
- Spanish Club
- Outdoor Appreciation Club
- Future Business Leaders
- STEM National Honor Society
- Forensics Club
- Journalism & News Club
- Visual Arts Club
- Music Club
- Digital Media and Music in Technology Club
- Radio & Technology Club
- Mindfulness Mediation Club
- New Jersey Future Educators Associations Club
- Performing Arts Club
- Analog Gaming Club
- Rho Kappa – National Social Studies Honor Society
- Chess Club
- WE Have Character Club

- Yearbook Club
- Environmental Club
- Interact Club
- Haitian Club
- Multicultural Club
- Prism, LGBTQ+ Club
- Gay-Straight Alliance Club
- Girls who Code
- Key Club
- Character Club
- Student Government
- Freshman/Sophomore/Junior/Senior Clubs
- Art Honor Society Club
- Science Honor Society
- National Honor Society
- English Honor Society
- Mathematics Honor Society
- Science National Honor Society
- History Honor Society
- Portuguese Honor Society
- Spanish Honor Society
- Fall Play and Fall/Spring Musical
- Art and Literacy Club
- AVID Leadership Club
- AVID Reader Club
- Creative Arts Society Club
- Chess and Game Club

Dr. Hugelmeyer showed a series of slides highlighting information from the Inside EPS News from Central newsletter.

Fourteen (14) schools within the Elizabeth Public School District received gold level recognition from the New Jersey Safe Routes to School (SRTS) in 2024 as part of the organization's recognition program. SRTS enables and encourages safer and more accessible walking and bicycling environments for children in New Jersey, through education, training, and research. Schools' # 4,6,7,8,9,19, 21, 22, 26, 27,29, 30, and 51, along with Edison Career and Technical Academy were gold award recipients. School #'s 1 and 13 received this year's Bronze award while School #'s 5 and 14 as well as Hamilton Preparatory Academy, received the First Steps award.

Elizabeth High School Boys Soccer Coach, Jacques Gonzales earned his 100th career win with a 4-1 victory by the No. 18 Minutemen over Cranford at Williams Field in Elizabeth on September 30. Coach Gonzales reached the 100-win mark in only six plus seasons including the shortened 2020 season. Moreover, his teams have only once lost more than four (4) games in a season and Elizabeth has gone 100-21-12 with him at the helm. Several Elizabeth players have earned postseason recognition during his tenure, including all Conference, all Group and All State designations.

Elizabeth High School – Frank J. Cicarell Academy (EHS-FJC), Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy and John E. Dwyer Technology Academy once again were among New Jersey’s schools to earn a place on the College Board 2024 AP School Honor Roll schools for meeting or exceeding the criteria of three data metrics, including college culture, college credit, and college optimization. EHS-FJC earned Platinum tier status, while both Dwyer Technology Academy and Hamilton Preparatory Academy achieved Bronze status, though both earned gold status in the college culture a subcategory.

The Elizabeth High School Marching Band competed in the Ludwig Musser Classic USBands competition at Met Life Stadium over the weekend of October 11-13th. The marching band scored 89.5 in their performance, earning first place over Hillsborough High School and South Brunswick High School who are both known to have great music programs. Elizabeth also won special awards for Best Color Guard, Best Visual and Best Visual Effect.

Both Board President Bathelus and Superintendent Hugelmeyer asked Peter Vosseler, Supervisor of Anti-Bullying to present The Self-Assessment of the District’s Performance under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act for the 2023-2024 School Year.

Mr. Vosseler stated that the State of New Jersey requires that in October of each year, Districts do a Self-Assessment of their performance as it relates to the provisions of the Anti-Bullying Act for the prior school year. He began his presentation by showing a series of slides showing activities within the Elizabeth School System to combat Bullying -some of the examples presented “Why a No Bullying Zone is important to our School Community” and how positive thoughts, words, behaviors, habits, and values help prevent Bullying. Students were reminded that each day is a clean slate, and they are given two options, writing a meaningless sketch or making history. For the past five years, Elmora School 12 has dedicated the month of April to raise awareness and acceptance of Autism by educating students and the entire community on the topic of autism through educational presentations, media, art, music, dance, and wearing blue and other colors of the spectrum. This month always brings the school together and reminds all of the school learning community to be kind, respectful and accepting of others.

Mr. Vosseler explained how the Elizabeth Public School are graded in the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.

- Rubric was developed, by the State, to aid districts in assessing schools’ efforts and improving them.
- Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (ABR) programs
- The Rubric consists of Eight (8) Core Elements and 26 indicators
- Each indicator can receive a score of 0-3 points
- The Rubric is designed to be a growth model intended to enhance district/school programs and implementation(s).

The Eight Core Elements of the Self-Assessment

- 1) Programs, Approaches, Initiatives
 - The school annually establishes HIB programs, approaches and initiatives.
 - The school annually implements and documents HIB programs, approaches or other initiatives.
 - The school’s HIB programs, approaches or other initiatives are designed to create school-wide conditions to prevent and address HIB
 - The School Safety team (SST) has identified patterns of HIB and reviewed school climate and school policies for the prevention of HIB
- 2) Training on BOE HIB Policy

- School Employees, contracted service providers, are provided training on the HIB policy
 - The HIB policy training includes instruction on preventing HIB on the basis of protected categories enumerated in the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights and other distinguishing characteristics that may incite incidents of discrimination or HIB
 - The HIB policy was discussed with students, in accordance with the district's process for these discussions.
- 3) Other Staff Instruction and Training Programs
- Each teaching staff member completed at least two (2) hours of instruction in suicide prevention that included information on HIB, in each five-year professional development period.
 - Each teaching staff member completed at least two (2) hours of instruction on HIB prevention, in each five-year professional development period.
 - The school anti-bullying specialist was given time during the usual school schedule to participate in - service training in preparation as to act as the ABS
 - The members of the school safety team (SST) were provided with professional development in effective practices of successful school climate programs or approaches.
 - School leaders have received information on the prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying as part of their training on issues of school ethics, school law and school governance.
- 4) Curriculum and Instruction on HIB and Related Information and Skills
- The school provided ongoing, age-appropriate instruction on preventing HIB in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.
 - The school observed the "Week of Respect", during the week beginning with the first Monday in October recognizing the importance of character education by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on HIB prevention.
- 5) HIB Personnel
- The Principal appointed a school Anti-Bullying Specialist (ABS)
 - The ABS met at least two times per school year with the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator (ABC)
 - The School Safety Team (SST) met at least two times per school year.
- 6) School Level Incident Reporting Procedure
- The school implemented the district's procedure for reporting HIB that includes all required elements
 - The school implemented the district's procedure for reporting new information on a prior HIB report.
- 7) HIB Investigation Procedure – The school followed the BOE -approved policy on HIB investigation procedures which provides for:
- Notification to parents of alleged offenders and alleged victims in each reported HIB incident
 - Completion of the investigation within ten (10) school days of the written incident report
 - Preparation of a written report on the findings of each HIB investigation
 - Results of the investigation were reported to the chief school administrator (OSA) within two (2) school days of completion of the investigation.
- 8) HIB Reporting

- The school has a procedure for ensuring that staff member reports (i.e., verbal and written) include the required information for all incidents of violence, vandalism and HIB.
- The district posts all HIB assessment scores on their web site.

Scoring Ranges and Parameters for Scoring

- 0-Does not meet the requirements
- 1-Partially meets the requirements
- 2-Meets all requirements
- 3-Exceeds the requirements

The highest possible score is 78 – this means that Every Indicator exceeded the requirements.

Self-Assessment Process/Requirements

- Complete the Assessment
- Input the information onto NJDOE website
- Present the results to the public
- Obtain approval from the Board of Education
- Obtain Superintendent's assurances
- Submit the Self-Assessments to NJDOE

Scoring Notes

- A score of 52 indicates that on average, the indicators have been met
- Our school scores ranged from 62 to 78
- All 37 schools scored a 62 or higher
- The average score across all schools was 70, which is up from a 68 for the 2022-2023 school year.

HIB Self-Assessment School Grades for the 2023-2024 School year.

- Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25 – Score of 78
- Terrence C. Reilly School No. 7 – Score of 77
- Benjamin Franklin School No. 13 – Score of 76
- Juan Pablo Duarte – Jose Julian Marti No. 28 -Score of 76
- Elmora School No. 12 – Score of 75
- Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy School No. 30 -score of 74
- John E. Dwyer Technology Academy -Score of 74
- Donald Stewart School No. 51 – Score of 73
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 52 – Score of 73
- William F. Halloran School No.- 22- Score of 73
- Abraham Lincoln School No. 14 - Score of 72
- Christopher Columbus School No. 15 – Score of 72
- George Washington School No 1 – Score of 72
- Mabel G Holmes School No. 5 - Score of 72
- Toussaint L'Ouverture- Marquis De Lafayette School No. 6 – Score of 72
- Victor Mravlag School No. 21 – Score of 71
- Winfield Scott School No. 2 -Score of 71
- Frances C Smith School No. 50 – Score of 70

- John Marshall School No. 20 - Score of 70
- Joseph Battin School No. 4 - Score of 70
- Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23 – Score of 70
- Madison – Monroe School No. 16 – Score of 69
- Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No 26 – Score of 68
- Elizabeth High School – Frank J. Cicarell Academy – Score of 68
- Jerome Dunn Academy – School No. 9 – score of 68
- Nicholas S. LaCorte -Peterstown School No. 3 - score of 68
- Woodrow Wilson- School No 19.
- J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy – Score of 67
- Admiral William Halsey Health and Public Safety Academy – Score of 66
- Dr. Antonio Pantoja - School No. 27-Score of 66
- Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy – Score of 66
- Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy – Score of 65
- Dr. Albert Einstein Academy - School No. 29 – Score of 65
- Thomas Jefferson Academy -Score of 65
- iPrep academy – School No. 8 - Score of 64
- Robert Morris – School No. 18 – Score of 62
- District Average 62

Mr. Vosseler pointed out highlights of the work done so far:

- Week of Respect – First full week of October
- HIB & Character Education Programming:
Panorama Education – Student /Parent Surveys & SEL
Character Strong- SEL Trainings/Curriculum
Positive Behavior Supports in Schools (PBSIS)
Harmony Power – Sensei John Mirrione
Therapeutic Learning Connections – Connie Palmer
Relationship Violence Training
Bully Busting Curriculum
Bound for Greatness Program
- State /County Training for ABC
- District HIB & SEL Trainings for Team Members
- Guest Speakers at Schools
- Cyber- Bullying / Internet Safety Training – “Kid’s Spreading Kindness” Union County Prosecutors Office
- HIBster electronic reporting system – now in its 11th year.

Listed below are areas that will be focused on by the HIB Prevention Team in the 2024-2025 School Year

- Analyze Self-Assessment by school
- Ensuring ongoing parental involvement on our School Safety/Climate teams for all our schools.
- Focus on providing the most effective and appropriate interventions and consequences for each HIB investigation

- Implementing and proactively addressing SEL/HIB/Character Education in person and virtual programming for all schools.
- Panorama Education – SEL Program expanded and continuing in all 37 Schools

Mr. Vosseler presented the monthly H.I.B. report to the Board.

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 September 19, 2024, and through October 10, 2024, our school counselors and school based social workers have completed 32 HIB investigations. Of these investigations 14 cases were Founded for HIB as per New Jersey law. There were 13 males, 21 females, 29 regular education students and 5 special education students that were the alleged victims. There were 24 males, 31 females, 47 regular education students, and 8 special education students that were the alleged offenders. Of the 14 cases Founded for HIB, 3 cases were Founded based on Race/National Origin, 1 case was Founded based on Color, 2 cases were Founded based on Gender, 1 case was Founded based on Gender Identity and Expression, 1 case was Founded based on a Mental, Physical or Sensory disability and 12 cases were Founded based on “Other” identifying characteristics. Of the services provided and actions taken for these investigations, there were 12 skill development lessons/trainings, 23 counseling sessions, 5 referrals for outpatient mental health treatment, 10 changes of classroom, 3 changes of school placement, 1 administrative counseling session, 10 in school detentions, 22 parent conferences, 14 out of school suspensions, and 12 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, that the Board issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision. There were no new cases reported to the Board at the September Board meeting, due to the beginning of the school year, so there are no cases to vote on for this meeting.

Board President Charlene Bathelus asked Student Representative Emely Herrera to give her report to the community.

Good evening, members of the Board of Education, Dr. Hugelmeyer, and ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure to meet with you all today. My name is Emely Herrera, a senior at Elizabeth High School Frank J. Cicarell Academy. It is an honor to be of service in becoming a representative for students in the Elizabeth Public School Community. As a Salvadoran American I’m proud to recognize the events our schools have hosted in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, as well as other events and accomplishments.

The J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy celebrated with various activities ranging from Flag Face Painting to Pinata Making, as well as their student ambassadors reading the ‘Pinata Book’ to their autism program. William F. Halsey Academy celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month through studying empowering Hispanic figures, wearing sports jersey representing their home countries, and performing energetic Merengue and Zumba dances with vibrant choreography.

FJC recognized important Hispanic figures through reading quotes during morning announcements, painting Latin American Flags on windows that can be seen from City Hall, and lastly putting on a showcase, dancing Salsa and Mambo, as well as a special performance featuring our Autism program. FJC showed their school spirit in hosting a Fall Pep Rally where members of the football team and fall sports were recognized, making sure to include our Marching Band and Cheerleading Team. FJC has also introduced Math, English, Social

Studies, and Science Honor Societies, where our student will soon be inducted into these prestigious programs. FJC's Student Government has also introduced a student run school news production called 'First Take' where students can inform their peers while creatively expressing themselves. Our school teams have done an amazing job, with our Boys Soccer Team playing their first round of counties tonight against Cranford to our Elizabeth Marching Band and Color Guard placing 1st in their competition at MetLife Stadium. JVJ Stem Academy hosted a Breast Cancer Awareness Walk today, donning pink and raising funds in support of the cause. Upcoming Events include Jefferson's Halloween Dance on October 18th, FJC's Spooktacular on October 25th, Haunted Hallways from both FJC and Jefferson. And lastly Jefferson's Production of Peter Pan from October 24th-26th and Greece the Musical on December 5th –7th. That concludes my report on the significant events and activities in which our community and students have been engaged in. I'm looking forward to working with you for the remainder of the school year. Thank you for this opportunity

Board President Charlene Bathelus commenced a review of the evening's agenda.

Tab 1a) Official and Private Minutes (September 19, 2024) were added to the Agenda.

Tab 1b) Treasurer/Secretary's Report (August 31, 2024)

Mr. Kennedy took the opportunity to reiterate to the Board that during the Fiscal Year Budgeting process, it was taken into account that American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding would cease at the end of September. It was the wish of the Board, especially Education Management Committee Chairperson, Stephanie Goncalves Pestana, Board Member Rosa Moreno-Ortega and Special Education Committee Chair, Illiana Chevres that Programs that were funded by ARP be carried over into the District's Operating Budget. Some examples include the Port of Entry Program, the 9-12 Bi-Lingual tutoring program, The Social Emotional Learning Program for students in K-12, the Saturday Youth Athletic Program, and the Arts Enrichment program all are fully funded within the 2024-2025 budget. In addition, Mr. Kennedy gave a quick history of Stipends paid for Afterschool and Saturday programs for the following School Years

- 2021-2022-\$ 7.2 million dollars
- 2022- 2023 \$ 9.1 million dollars
- 2023-2024 \$10.1 million dollars
- 2024-2025 \$13.8 million dollars

It was Mr. Kennedy's contention that these facts contradict the notion that Programs or Services are being cut.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega complimented her Fellow Board members and the Superintendent's team for keeping the various programs afloat. Board Vice president Stan Neron echoed those comments and was happy to see much needed programs kept in place.

Tab 1b Treasurer/Secretary Report (August 31, 2024) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 2a) Personnel Report. – Mrs. Moreno-Ortega wanted to take time to salute those Teachers and Staff members who were listed as retiring in this month's report. The years of service that these retirees gave the District was commendable and dispels the perception that we are losing teachers to other districts.

Tab 2a) Personnel Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 3) Tuitions Report was added to the Agenda

Tab 4) Superintendent's Reports

Tab 4a) Considerations was added to the Agenda

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

Tab 4bb) Use of Facilities – Considerations was added to the Agenda

Tab 4c) – Field trip Considerations – Board Member Isaias Rivera asked that additional adults be added as chaperones to Field Trip # 10.

Tab 4c) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 5) Authorizations Report – The following Authorizations was added to Tab 5) Recommended: That the Elizabeth Public Schools be authorized to participate in the 55th Anniversary Celebratory visit of Kitami, Japan's sister city relationship with Elizabeth, New Jersey, scheduled for the week of November 12-15, 2024. This event promises to be a vibrant showcase of rich history and culture, providing our students – from PreK and Kindergarten at Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26 to high schoolers in choir, band and dance at EHS-Frank J. Cicarell Academy and Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy, as well as Thomas A. Edison Career & Technical Academy culinary students - an invaluable opportunity to engage with the Japanese community and our Senior Citizens. As we continue to finalize specific dates, locations and a detailed timeline in collaboration with the City of Elizabeth, this initiative will not only celebrate our shared heritage but also inspire creativity, cultural exchange and a deeper understanding of global relationships among our students. There is no charge to the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Mr. Rivera spoke about an Authorization to enter into a partnership with the Lead agency Union College of Union County New Jersey to apply for an Adult Basic Skills and Integrated English Literacy Grant. As a member of an immigrant family when he was younger, Mr. Rivera stated that this type of program was invaluable to his parents. This will help many newcomers acclimate themselves to English and be able to help their students with homework etc.

Tab 5) Authorizations Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report – Board Vice-President asked Mr. Milanes for an update on the status of Air Conditioning/Chiller projects within the schools. Mr. Milanes said that Schools #18, #87 and #87 annex are finished and the contractors are doing stress testing etc., before the projects can be considered complete. Electrical supplies for Schools # 19 and # 4 are awaiting delivery. School # 5 has abatement issues that have to be completed when students are not in school, and thus the Air Conditioning installation won't be complete, till the Summer of 2025. Several other buildings require power shutdowns before work can proceed, and the District is waiting for Utility Company clearance. Other than School # 5, all projects should be finalized by the Spring of 2025.

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report was added to the agenda

Tab 6a) Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds was added to the Agenda.

Tab 7) Award of Contracts – Board member Rosa Moreno-Ortega asked for further information on the contract with SCOIR (pg. 4). Mr. DiDonato explained that SCOIR is our college and career planning platform, and those services are now being offered to those students in grades sixth through eight. Students will be able to use career aptitude tests, build college resumes and familiarize themselves with the college admissions process. Mr. Jerry Jacobs sought additional clarification regarding the contract with the Princeton Review (pg.3). Mr. DiDonato said that with the carryover of Title 4 funds, the District will be able to offer Princeton Review services to all high school students, that had previously been only available to a select number of students at

Cicarell Academy through private funding. Within the services provided are virtual one on one tutoring, self-paced academic modules across all subjects, PSAT/SAT Test preparation and College Essay assistance and college resume building. Mr. Jacobs was pleased that these services are now available to all students, a cause he has been passionate about over the last several years. In response to Mr. Jacobs' inquiry about the contract with Pro Athletes, Inc, (pg.14) Mr. Vosseler explained that this was a mentoring program being offered to students in ten schools across the Elizabeth Public School System. Students who will be selected are those who school officials believe would benefit from mentorship. The program will run for 5 months and will assist students inside and outside of the classroom.

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

Board President Charlene Bathelus thanked all the Department Directors and staff who were at the meeting for providing information and insight for the Board members.

Tab 8) Committee meeting Reports –
Educational Management Committee

October 7, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Stephanie Goncalves Pestana, Board Member/Chairperson of the Educational Management Committee; Jerry Jacobs, Board Member, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The Educational Management Committee reviewed the current staffing needs of the district. The Superintendent shared an update regarding the vacancies and presented the supports identified for the schools. Following a discussion regarding state assessment data, the Superintendent presented the focus for the school year defined as “Literacy across the curriculum” and “Numeracy across the curriculum”. This ensures that all content areas have both a focus on literacy and mathematics. In addition, the 90 Day Instructional Review Plan was presented. The plan serves as the focus of the Professional Learning Communities scheduled for all principals and vice principals throughout the month of October. The plan includes an initial assessment, the implementation of instructional strategies and evaluation and adjustment of the plan based on the data for both literacy and mathematics.

The committee discussed the current Afterschool program offerings for the 2024-2025 school year and the importance of publishing the programs for the school community. Lastly, the committee engaged in a discussion regarding the American Rescue Plan programs that were funded in the 2024-2025 district budget.

Finance and Accounting Committee

October 9, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Finance and Accounting Committee; Stan Neron, Board Vice President, Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Rajeev Malhotra, Comptroller and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee discussed possible incentives for retaining and attracting substitute bus drivers. A request for an analysis of the multipurpose bus attendants holding the Commercial Driver's License was requested for the next meeting. A current inventory of small passenger buses was requested for further discussion.

The committee discussed the shortage of custodians holding a Black Seal boiler license and a request for an analysis by school of the custodians possessing the license was requested for the next meeting.

The committee reviewed usage reports for the district sponsored Employee Assistance Program. In connection with the board's continuing initiative of the National Self Care awareness, a communication to all employees about the availability of the One Source Employee Assistance Program was recommended.

Various properties available for possible expansion needs were discussed.

Legal Committee

October 10, 2024

12:30 p.m. – 1:25 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Stan Neron, Board Vice President/Chairperson of the Legal Committee; Iliana Chevres, Board Vice President, Isaias Rivera, Board Member, Michael Simitz, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee reviewed a summary of the 2023-2024 Residency Investigations by grade level. A request was made for a three-year analysis of residency investigations to be presented at the next Legal Committee meeting.

The Superintendent briefed the committee on the 2023-2024 Strategic Plan indicator relating to suspension data and the current Code of Student Conduct policy. The alternatives to suspension and current protocols were discussed as well as future professional development sessions scheduled to take place at the end of October.

The committee also discussed the uniform policy and the current protocols.

Negotiations Committee

October 11, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Negotiations Committee; Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member, Isaias Rivera, Board Member Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Dieter Lerch and Julius Consoni, Financial Consultants Lerch, Vinci, Higgins, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Rajeev Malhotra, Comptroller and Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Dieter Lerch briefed the committee on a preliminary scattergram for the EEA and discussed how it is used to determine the base year contract salaries for negotiations. Further analysis of percent and number of employees and salary dollars at different steps of the guides was requested for the next meeting.

School Properties Committee

October 16, 2024

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus, Board President, Maria Carvalho, Board Member/Chairperson of the School Properties Committee; Iliana Chevres, Board Member, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools and Luis Milanes, Director of Plant, Property and Equipment.

The status of the ESIP projects were discussed. School No. 18, Edison Main and Edison Annex are operational. School Nos. 4,6,12,19 and Hamilton will be operational in the Spring 2025.

The committee reviewed a summary of capital projects including:

- Dwyer Academy and Halsey Academy window restoration
- Security Lobby Projects at six schools
- School No. 5 playground restoration-currently under construction
- Replacement of cabinets at School Nos. 1 & 9
- Auditorium renovation at Edison CTE Academy
- New Multipurpose Scoreboard at the baseball field
- Boiler and hot water system upgrades at various schools

The committee requested an office feasibility study for future office needs.

Tab 9) Claims List was added to the Agenda.

Ms. Bathelus wished to acknowledge the following celebrations /observances mentioned in the Resolutions for this evening's meeting as well as those not necessarily noted which the Board acknowledges in the month of November

- National Parental Involvement week
- Puerto Rican Heritage Month
- Veteran's Day – Thanking all that served.
- Anti- Litter Campaign
- National French week
- World Kindness Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Native American Heritage month

Mr. Neron thanked the schools and staff for participating in the anti-littering campaign. It is important to instill pride in your community and city at a young age. Keeping our city, parks and open spaces clean provides for a better environment for all.

Resolutions 10 to 10m were added to the Agenda.

Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and second to adopt the following agenda.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mr. Rivera to approve the entire Agenda.

Opening Calendar
Official and Private Minutes (September 19, October 2, 2024)
Treasurer/Secretary's Report (August 31, 2024)
Personnel Reports
Tuition Reports
Superintendent's Reports
Authorizations Report
Finance and Accounting Report – Pay Vouchers
Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds
Award of Contracts Report
Claims List

Resolutions:

National Parental Involvement Day
Puerto Rican Heritage Month
Veteran's Day
National French Week
Anti-Litter Campaign
Payment for Unused Sick Days
Payment for Unused Vacation Days
Requisition for Taxes
Extension of Route 22 Bus, LLC Contract for Student Transportation - Athletics
Transfer of Capital Reserve Funds
Transfer of Maintenance Reserve Funds
Approve Renewal of Existing Student Transportation Contract D & Z Signature Transportation
Approve Contracts for Winter Sports Athletic Equipment
Appointing V & A Tramontano – Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Carvalho, (with an abstention on 4b Items 3, 4, 5, Elizabeth PAL use of Gym at School 22 and Dunn Sports Center gym and wrestling room, Tab 5 Authorization for partnership with Elizabeth Police Dept. Tab 7 Contract with the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth) Chevres, (with abstention on Tab 4a Item 8- Training O. Cornet), Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, (with an abstention on Tab 2a pg.34 after School Administrator Program, Mr. Thomas -Petit, Tab 4b Items 3, 4, 5, Elizabeth PAL use of Gym at School 22 and Dunn Sports Center gym and wrestling room, Tab 5 Authorization for partnership with Elizabeth Police Dept. Tab 7 Contract with the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth), Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, (with an abstention on Tab 5 pg.1 Partnership with Union College of Union County N.J.)
Ms. Bathelus -8

Negative: none

It was noted that there would no need to convene a Private Session at this meeting.

Mr. Jacobs left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

On a motion made by Mrs. Carvalho, and seconded by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera,
Ms. Bathelus -7

Negative: none

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary