

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Official Minutes
Pending Board Approval

October 2, 2024
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Board President Charlene Bathelus read the following statement at 12:46 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon. 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 using an on-line platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on September 30, 2024. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.”

“There will be an on-line public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must register on-line up to the start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The public participation form states the name, email, phone number of the person who wants to comment. Members of the public who prefer not to, or do not have the means to, participate using the on-line platform, may continue to participate by emailing statements relative to agenda items and/or educational matters to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org. All statements received will be read into the record during the Meeting’s Public Comment Portion. All emails must be submitted and received by the Secretary of the Board up to the start of the meeting and, as is always the case, must include the public member’s full name for the record. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. Emails received but not read after the 60-minute duration will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this meeting.”

Present: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Ms. Bathelus-9

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy Jr. Co-General Counsel, Edward Kologi of Kologi Simitz Law Office, and John F. Malone, J.S.C., Retired, Esq., of LaCorte, Bundy, Varady and Kinsella Attorneys at Law were present.

Board President Charlene Bathelus read the following Public Participation Statement. Citizens may address the Board

“At this time, the meeting is open for public comment on-line to those who have registered with the on-line participation form prior to this session. I shall call individuals to participate based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. The following rules for public participation shall apply:

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

“If the 60 minute public comment period expires before all registered on-line participants have been called, remaining participants can email their statements to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org and they will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this 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 participant, Soraya Hernandez, to address the Board.

Ms. Hernandez did not respond.

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

Ms. Morreira spoke about uniform policy and assistance to families in need and consistency across the District. She also spoke in support of the Football Coach.

Ms. Bathelus thanked her for her comments and asked that Dr. Hugelmeyer meet with school principals to make sure that families needing assistance were given the help they needed.

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

Mr. Dos Santos did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant, Yasmeen Mayers to address the Board.

Ms. Mayers did not respond.

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

Ms. Lorenz spoke about District policies and against the dismissal of the Football Coach.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Robin Ruiz to address the Board.

Ms. Ruiz did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant, Paloma Siva to address the Board.

Ms. Siva did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant, Fairlynn Chisolm, to address the Board.

Ms. Chisolm did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Hazel Gomez to address the Board.

Ms. Gomez did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Adrian Vasquez to address the Board.

Ms. Vasquez did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Yenny Ceden0 to address the Board.

Ms. Ceden0 did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Yanisleidys Batista to address the Board.

Ms. Batista did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Flor Martinez to address the Board.

Ms. Martinez did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Jaelen Ramirez to address the Board.

Mr. Ramirez did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Jimmy Josue Ortega Yanes to address the Board.

Mr. Ortega Yanes did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Jason Robinson to address the Board.

Mr. Robinson did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Yaneth Espinoza to address the Board.

Ms. Espinoza did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant John Fiore to address the Board.

Mr. Fiore spoke against his termination as Football Coach due to questions regarding his son's residency.

Ms. Bathelus thanked him for his comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Caren Fiore to address the Board.

Ms. Fiore spoke in support of her son John Fiore Jr. being an Elizabeth resident.

Ms. Bathelus thanked her for her comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Deserie Mccray to address the Board.

Ms. Mccray did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Doris Romero to address the Board.

Ms. Romero did not respond.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Steve Farsiou to address the Board.

Mr. Farsiou Esq., spoke as an attorney for Mr. John Fiore Sr., disputing the actions taken to date.

Ms. Bathelus thanked him for his comments.

Ms. Bathelus called upon the next participant Sonia Nicholas to address the Board.

Ms. Ruiz did not respond.

Having no one else registered to address the Board, President Charlene Bathelus, closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Co-General Edward Kologi addressed some of the remarks that Mr. Farsiou had made and assured the Board that he, Mr. Varady and Judge Malone had been in communication with Mr. Farsiou and as in any litigation matter, there are different opinions as to matters of law.

President Bathelus thanked those in attendance via the on-line platform for participating in the discussions today and during the past several weeks regarding the issue at hand. However, due to potential litigation, attorney client privilege, legalities and privacy rights there is certain information that cannot be shared at this time. The Board as a whole is working in the best interests of all our students.

Ms. Bathelus asked Mr. Kennedy to present the two Resolutions for this meeting.

Resolution 10 – Adopting Residency Committee Hearing Recommendations Regarding J.F., Jr. Residency Issues

Resolution 10a – Ratifying and Adopting Superintendent’s Action Removing Head Football Coach and Rescinding 2024-2025 Stipend for Such position.

Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and a second to adopt Resolutions 10.

A motion was made by Mrs. Moreno Ortega and seconded by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, to approve Resolution 10

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Ms. Bathelus -9

Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and a second to adopt Resolutions 10a.

A motion was made by Mrs. Barbosa and seconded by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, to approve Resolution 10a

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Ms. Bathelus -9

Mr. Neron thanked Ms. Bathelus for her leadership in this matter and also thanked the Board for their efforts in resolving this situation.

Ms. Bathelus asked for a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mr. Rivera to adjourn the meeting. .

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary